

CHOICES

WINTER 2016

THE CONFIDENCE ISSUE!

DISCOVER WAYS TO
BECOME MORE
SELF-CONFIDENT

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATRICIA FRIPP

NATIONALLY ACCLAIMED
PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

ACHIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE

WITH DEDICATION
AND CONFIDENCE,
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE



THE SECRET OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

WHY OVERCOMING FEAR CAN
LEAD TO A HAPPY AND MORE
CONFIDENT YOU!



YOU CAN BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

HOW TO OVERCOME SELF-
DOUBT AND FIND FAITH IN
OUR ABILITIES



OVERCOMING LIFE'S ROADBLOCKS

HOW TO MOVE FORWARD
WITH FAITH DESPITE THE
PROBLEMS WE FACE

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FROM THE EDITOR

The New Year is here! I get excited about the beginning of each New Year because I feel as if I have a chance to start totally anew. So, I spent New Year's Eve writing out my goals for this year and pasting pictures in my Achievement Journal of what I want to do, be, and have for 2016. I do this at the beginning of every year and usually by about June or July, it is all done. Yet, so many people write out their resolutions at the beginning of the year and before the year is half over, they have forgotten all about them. I believe they do this because they haven't attached their goals to a purpose.

W

hat about you? Did you write your resolutions for the year? Have you really decided what

you want to do and where you want to go? Have you thought about why you want those things or why you want to go to this particular place? Did you really write goals or just a wish list? Do you want to live your life so you never look back with regrets? If so, write down the thing you want most in life and then write down what steps you will have to take if you are to succeed.

The secret to getting what you want in life is to believe it is possible. Don't hold yourself back. Find out everything you can about what it is you want. Do your research. Find out what parts might be easy, what might be hard,

what might be good, and what might be bad. The more you find out, the more uncertainty you eliminate. This will help you alleviate your fears.

If you are still unsure, sit down and figure out what it is about your goal that is making you hesitate. Do you feel like you just don't have the education or the skill necessary? Do you feel you lack the interpersonal skills to get along with people? Maybe you feel you don't have the work experience, the time, the money, the energy or the resources.

Let's face it. The only thing that is really holding you back is fear! Accept the responsibility for your own success and be determined to move forward from this point. Any of the other things you are using as an excuse

can be overcome: you can get work experience, manage your time better, go back to school. At some point you need to either give up the fear or push through it.

All of us at *Choices* magazine believe in you and know you can make this your year! That's why we have themed this first issue of the new year "Confidence." Your success is waiting.

You are More Than Enough,

OUR TEAM

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CONFIDENCE IS A CHOICE

“The way to develop self-confidence is to do the thing you fear and get a record of successful experiences behind you.” - William Jennings Bryan

BY JUDI MOREO

Life is an adventure to be lived. Today is a new beginning. Imagine all the exciting things you could do, the wonderful relationships you could have, the fabulous places you could go, and the incredible person you could be if only you were confident.

Why is having confidence in ourselves and our abilities so hard? Why do many of us have the tendency to underestimate ourselves and overestimate other people's abilities and power? Why are we so concerned with what other people think about us? If we are to understand these things, we need to find out why we think, feel and act the way we do. We need to understand why and how we have become who we are, as well as why we react or respond in certain ways. When we understand ourselves, we can either accept the way we are or make changes so we will be able to accept ourselves.

What we believe and accept about ourselves determines our behavior and performance. These, in turn, create our

results and our results directly affect our confidence levels. If we have self-limiting beliefs, we will have self-limiting behaviors and will get poor results. If we have self-empowering beliefs, we will have self-empowering behaviors and get good results. In other words, if we think we can't, then we can't and if we think we can, we can! If we think we can, we will find a way. We will be more creative.

Most of our beliefs about ourselves have come from outside sources, people, education, and experiences. Many of us have allowed the opinions of others to become our opinion of ourselves. We've listened to people tell us we are not good enough and we've believed them.

There is a direct correlation between the quality of our relationships and our levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. If we are like most people, how we feel about ourselves, good or bad, is largely dependent upon the degree of acceptance we have felt from the influential people in our lives. If their self-esteem levels were low or they had

poor self-concepts, values, and beliefs, then that's where we learned it. If they felt inferior, inadequate, or unworthy, we probably adopted those qualities. When we are children, we go through an "imprint period" where we formulate our behavior patterns based on what is impressed upon our thought patterns by the adults who are instrumental in our development.

If we were compared negatively to other children, especially children outside of our immediate family, we might have believed those children had more abilities and were more popular than we were. That is when our feelings of inferiority started to set in. If we didn't receive appreciation or recognition for our achievements then, we may believe others are smarter, stronger, or better than we are now.

So, stop and take an assessment of your strengths. Make a list for yourself or you can ask someone who knows you well to help you. Once you have the list, imagine yourself using those strengths to accomplish what you dream about. Then enlist support. Select a good



friend or someone who believes in your abilities and ask him or her to encourage you and not let you quit when you get discouraged. But remember, the best friend you can have is you. You must encourage yourself. Turn any negative thoughts you have about yourself or your abilities into positive affirmations and repeat them to yourself daily. Visualize yourself accomplishing whatever you want to accomplish. Dare to be passionate about your desires. Passion is like a magnet. It attracts the things and people we want in our lives. Passion energizes us and helps us overcome fear and doubt.

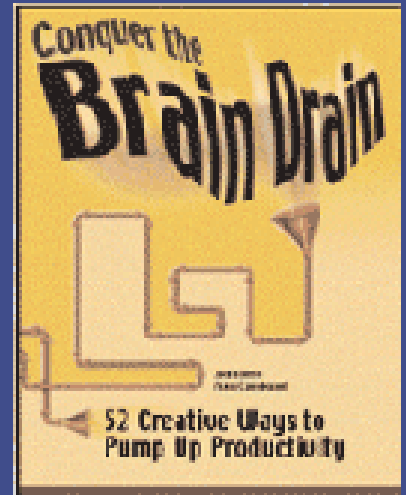
Think about how much time you have left to live, if you live to the average life expectancy of 77 years old. How much time do you have left? Do you want to spend it being afraid and not getting the things you want or do you want to finally live your life with confidence?

Start now! Establish some concrete goals for yourself within the framework of your strengths, talents, and interests. Defining your goals will put your



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judi Moreo is the author of the award-winning book, "You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman's Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power" as well as its companion, Achievement Journal. She is a Certified Speaking Professional who has spoken in 28 countries around the world. Less than 10 percent of the speakers in the world hold this highly respected earned designation. To contact Judi or book her for a speaking engagement, contact Turning Point International, (702) 896-2228 or judi@judimoreo.com.



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imagination to work. You will start to concentrate on what you really want to do, to have, and to be. When you decide what you want in specific detail, your mind will start to formulate a plan for it to happen.

Don't wait for the perfect circumstances. Start now. Translate your personal and professional wishes into goals today. Align your goals with your purpose, pursue your vision with passion, and soon you will be confident

that you can't fail, because you have unlimited possibilities and the power to choose your future. Confidence is a choice. Become the person you want to be. You are more than enough!



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STOP BLAMING, START GROWING

BY JOAN S. PECK

If only ... I wanted to but ... It wasn't fair that ... I had no choice but to ... I could have, however ... it's all his/her fault ... that was *my* idea not his/hers ... I was going to but ... blah, blah, blah!

Whenever something doesn't turn out the way we want it to or think that it should, it becomes the easiest thing in the world to start blaming someone or something (even the Universe) for not giving us what we want or think we deserve. In fact, the blame game is as easy to play as anything we will ever do in our lives! We all play that game from time to time, simply because it is a part of human nature that persists when living in this competitive society that we consistently support...one that says

we have to be the best and perfect in all that we do. The reality of it is that only when we are faced with competing with others do we become defensive and own the idea that if someone else has a better idea than we do or has success in a similar area as ours, we aren't good enough or have failed in some way. It eats away at us, gnawing on our self-esteem, making us unpleasant and uncomfortable to be around at the time. We feed that fear of "less than" and create negative chaos in the equilibrium of knowing who we are as part of the whole...a perfect being no matter our imperfections.

Not long ago, I blamed someone because they hadn't given me the proper information so that when I passed it on to someone else, it wasn't

the truth. I was annoyed beyond belief, and fussed and fussed over the fact that I now looked stupid for saying what wasn't true. But the reality was that what I had passed on wasn't important enough to make any significant difference in any way to those who had received the misinformation. So what was *my* problem?

It wasn't easy for me to look at myself and my reaction to this circumstance. I knew deep down that I was more annoyed with me than anyone else because I was looking outside myself for approval. I wanted everyone to think that I was the smartest and the best because whatever I said was the correct thing and I could be relied upon to relay the proper information. But, honestly! Why had someone given me the

incorrect information? Had they done so on purpose? Why tell me something if it weren't true? Blah, blah, blah. So it went and I slid further and further into the blame game in spite of knowing better.

Pretty soon the little voice in my head became louder and louder until it reached a high enough pitch to grab my attention. It demanded, "Did you forget so soon what you know to be true- that when someone says or takes action of any kind, they believe it to be the right thing at the time?"

Yes, I knew that to be so, but I had pushed it aside and played the blame game instead. The voice's reminder was a concept I had found hard to comprehend in the beginning, especially when the result was damaging and detrimental. That wasn't the case in my circumstance, so it was time to stop blaming and start growing. Why did I think it mattered what anyone else thought about me, anyhow? I have to answer to myself and what I do, not take

on what anyone else does or doesn't do. That would be exhausting. Who wants to live a life like that? Not me! It was definitely time to get off the merry-go-round of blaming others

"When you think everything is someone else's fault, you will suffer a lot. When you realize that everything springs only from yourself, you will learn both peace and joy."

Dalai Lama



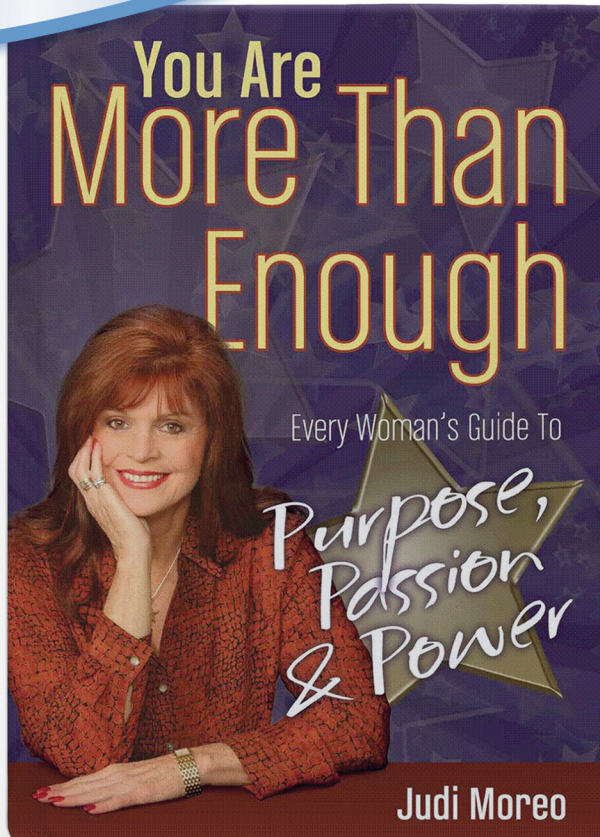
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joan S. Peck is an editor and the author of short stories, spiritual books and a contributing author to two Life Choices books. Her newest book is ***Prime Threat – Shattering the Power of Addiction***, a book written with her son from the other side.

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THIS WINTER, TAKE TIME TO DISCOVER
SELF-CONFIDENCE



In this high pressure, high stressed, fast-paced world, most of us set our dreams aside just to get by. In this powerful book, you will learn how to:

- realize and accept who you really are
- listen to your inner voice
- create self-empowering behaviors and stop criticizing yourself
- set boundaries
- make conscious choices about relationships, responsibilities and rewards
- communicate for understanding
- use the power of your subconscious mind to create the future you desire
- recognize your strengths and make things happen
- and much, much more!

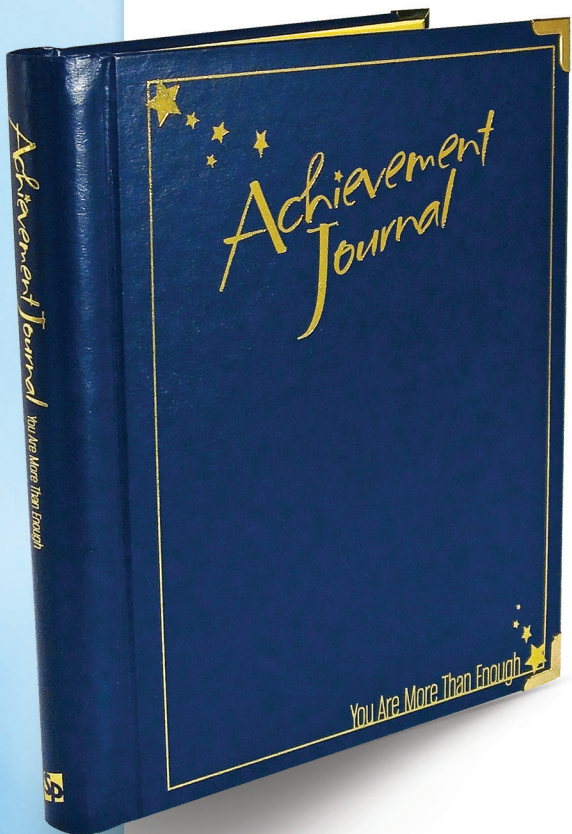
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- Sheryl Benzon, M.A., M.F.T.
President, Ventures in Excellence, Inc.

PROJECT CONFIDENCE

BY ANTHONY BURNSIDE



CONFIDENCE: a belief in oneself and one's powers or abilities; self-confidence; self-reliance; assurance.

In my old ROTC unit, my Army Instructor, J.U Matthews, always said, "If you fail to lead, then someone will come along, take over and take charge! Always stand up and be counted."

Confidence can be charming, sexy, powerful, arresting, and attractive. These are words that describe how confidence makes us feel. In business,

leadership, and personal relationships, it is germane to project real confidence. It's important to note that confidence is not to be misinterpreted as arrogance or narcissism. The latter is borne out of fear and insecurity. True confidence stems from knowing who you are and having core values and integrity. People love to follow those who are resolute. But sometimes in life, we have those moments that give us pause; moments when we don't feel strong and have self-doubt.

We sometimes fall victim to "circumstantial confidence" that is

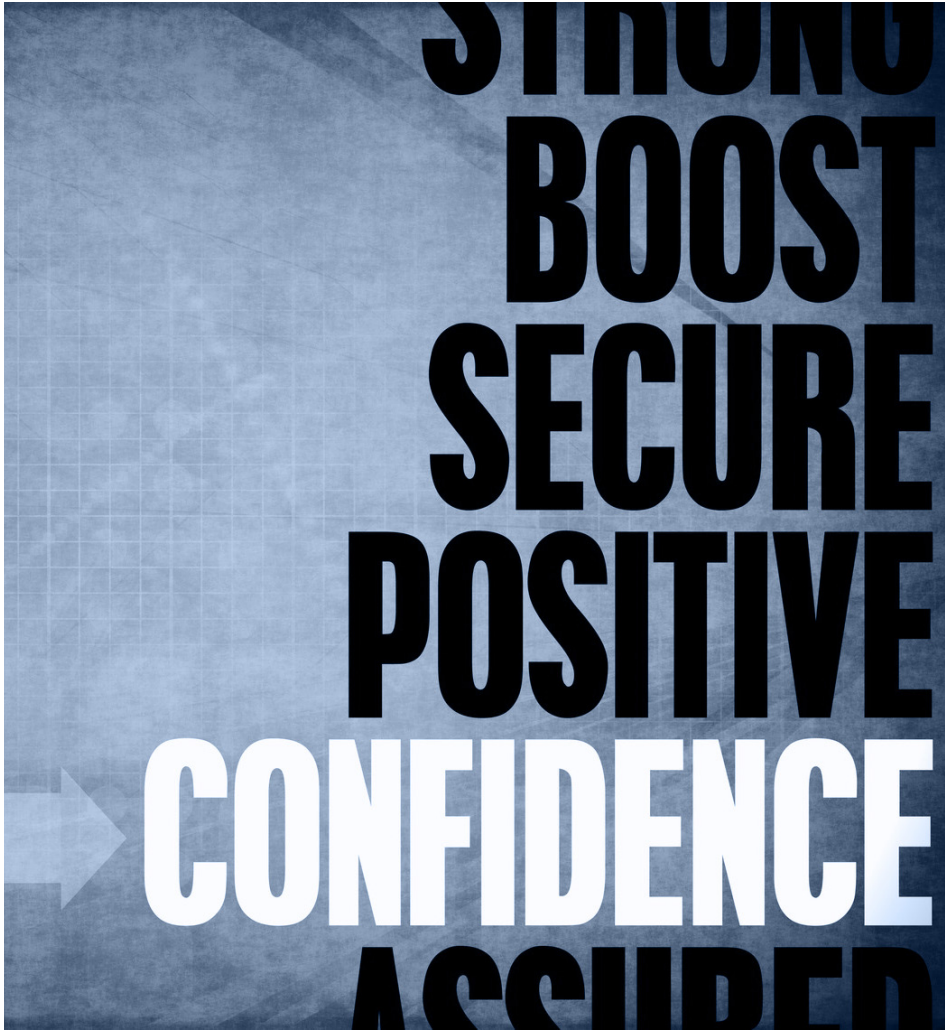
defined as favorable events which cause you some short term success (it makes you temporarily invincible.) When those dynamics are no longer present, then that person's confidence wanes considerably. Real confidence has to come from within. The criteria or elements of confidence can be broken down into three categories:

1. Confidence in yourself (knowing yourself)
2. Confidence in your team (company, industry, family)
3. Confidence in your abilities. (skills, talents)

Positive thinking and confidence are outcomes of careful lifestyle design and require a spirited investment of your time and energy. When we encounter those who are feeling less than confident, we often tell that person to "just think positive," but in reality, that is very similar to telling someone fighting obesity to "Hey, just be skinny." There must be core motivation for making these cognitive changes.

I have learned so much from reading books written by Napoleon Hill, Norman Vincent Peale, Claude Bristol and Dale Carnegie. I urge you to read their books also. The philosophies taught in these books have helped me keep my





confidence through life's storms. Now, with the advent of social media, there is a barrage of negativity, gossip, etc. so I am very careful of what I read and hear. I once learned from a famous client to not read junk. Instead, only read high class material (no matter the subject) that feeds your mind. You have to train your mind for success. Incidentally, a man that I have the pleasure of knowing, professor Richard Dawkins, coined the term "Mind Virus" (which means passing on useless, unproven and wrong information to others without verifying the validity.) In addition to his terminology, I have added the term

"Negative Mind Diet" (which means mentally ingesting negative, useless or wrong information, conversation or imagery.)

In contrast to that is "Positive Mind Diet" which means picking your friends and influences wisely as well as protecting yourself from the negative influences of others. I heard this quote somewhere, "Fear is an airborne disease caught by hanging out with and listening to the wrong people." Even on social media, we need to learn to use the hide button on those who constantly feed us negative or fearful information which

can influence our perspectives on life. Confidence is the belief that we will be successful in given situations. We are responsible to guard that belief with our choices, actions, and influences. You have to believe and know that you are the best person on this planet and the best at what you do. You are unique; there is no one on earth like you.

Now, stand up and be counted! Project confidence!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Burnside is a security expert and close protection operative and has traveled the world with his work. He has conducted protection operations at the S.S.I. Conference at the prestigious U.S. Army War College for a former White House official and at the United States Air Force Academy. He has also provided protection for VIP's at worldwide events like the Golden Globes, American Music Awards, Grammy Awards, etc. In addition to his background in security, he is an actor, voice over artist, author and speaker and lends his talents to television, radio and the motion picture industry and has written for several national magazines and also for the *Life Choices* book series.

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OVERCOMING LIFE'S ROADBLOCKS, DETOURS & COLLISIONS

BY JOHN POLISH



Many of us believe the only way to be happy is to be successful. We see others who are confident and successful and think, "If only I had what he had, then I'd be happy, too", or "It's easy for her to be happy, she gets everything she wants."

The truth is none of us get what we want all of the time. We all face obstacles and disappointments. To help overcome these disappointments, I have identified three types of obstacles we all face... three things that will stop us in our tracks and force us to look in a new direction.

I call the first type "roadblocks." When we face a roadblock it means the road we are on is no longer available to us. We must turn and go in a whole new direction. The second obstacle I refer to as a "detour." When we encounter a detour, it means the destination is still obtainable, but the path will not be as easy as we expected. We are often taken down some roads we do not want to be on before reaching our destination. The third obstacle is a collision. This is when a force much greater than us brings us to our knees in order to get our attention.

All people face roadblocks, detours and collisions. We all fail and fall short of expectations at one time or another. Most of us spend the majority of our time looking at the circumstances that surround us. We see the obstacles that prevent us from achieving our goals. We



feel the frustration, insecurity and anger that results from unmet expectations and we seek justice or vindication.

Happy and successful people have faced the same types of obstacles. Their confidence does not come from their successes, but rather from the peace in knowing that somehow everything will be okay. They have learned if they are willing to pick themselves up out of the wreckage and move forward, in faith, believing things can work out, then opportunities will come their way. But those opportunities will never meet them in the middle of the wreckage.

I've spent most of my life unsure if it was even possible to find happiness. I was constantly looking at my surrounding circumstances. The life I was living was

not the one I had planned for myself. I finally found my confidence in the least likely of circumstances. After losing my only child, my daughter, Abigail, and then going through a divorce, I found myself alone in my misery. I knew there had to be more to life than what I had been living. I began writing. The process of transferring my thoughts to a computer screen was therapeutic. It also revealed to me some great truths I had been denying. I was created for a purpose and Abby's life had meaning.

Now, I understand what it is like to have peace that surpasses understanding. I had to move in a new direction, but soon opportunities presented themselves. My original plans were unobtainable. While I still take time to mourn, I now walk in confidence with a new sense of

purpose. I have found my happiness, though it doesn't look anything like I had originally planned.

No matter what roadblocks, detours or collisions you are faced with, just know there is happiness out there for each and every one of us. We must be willing to pick ourselves up out of the wreckage, turn and look in a new direction and move forward in faith believing that things can work out.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Polish is an internationally recognized author, motivational speaker, and the host of the popular radio talk show, *Finding Your Happiness*.

John's books "Finding Your Happiness" and "A Healthier Happier Business" and seminars have helped people start businesses, save marriages and fight depression. John has a unique and systematic approach to helping people pick themselves up and move forward, so that circumstances do not dictate their happiness. He shares some of the same strategies he used to get unstuck after the passing of his only child, his daughter Abigail.

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“You wouldn't worry so much about what others think of you if you realized how seldom they do.”

Eleanor Roosevelt



LEARNING NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

BY JAANA HATTON

Riding a horse takes some nerve. Becoming a dressage rider takes a lot of nerve and hard work. Being a disabled, Olympic-level equestrian takes all you've got.

Birgitte Reitan, a 21-year-old Norwegian rider, visited the Alatheia Riding Center in Wenatchee, Washington on Feb. 21 to show it can be done. She was born with AMC (arthrogryposis multiplex genita), a condition that limits joint motion. Reitan cannot use her legs and the over 100-degree scoliosis prevents her from sitting straight. She gently guides the horse with two dressage whips, indicating the direction and tempo she wants to attain.

"Fortunately, my mother is a pusher," Reitan states. She found herself in the saddle at the age of 2. Her mother decided riding was a better alternative to the traditional therapy.

"I was scared at first. I don't like heights. But, eventually on our trips back home, I sat in the backseat repeating the word 'horse, horse, horse.'"

"I've always enjoyed all kinds of activities, like going to soccer games with my friends, camping in the summer, skiing in the winter, wheelchair dancing

and being captain of the floor ball team. Through riding, I've become even more stubborn. I've learned that nothing is impossible."

Reitan is currently busy attending law school and practicing dressage at an Olympic level. She is planning to compete in the 2016 Paralympic Games. Her therapy riding sessions took on a serious tone in 2012. Her new instructor, Marie Thurston Natten, encouraged Reitan to start practicing dressage for competitions. In July 2014, she entered the World Equestrian Games in Normandy as a member of the Norwegian national team, being the only contestant with a Fjord horse. She placed 15th in individuals.

Her success and skill caught the attention of Nancy Grette of Wenatchee, who owns the Alatheia Riding Center. Grette and her husband, Glenn, have been offering therapeutic riding sessions since 2011. They exclusively use Norwegian Fjords. The breed is calm and reliable, perfect for special-needs riders.

After Grette read Reitan's Facebook page, she contacted the young equestrian. Numerous emails and arrangements later, Reitan came to the United States, stopping in California and then giving a special demonstration at the Alatheia Center.

Dozens of program participants and interested visitors attended the event on the scenic hill. The Grettes run the program with a minimal staff and some volunteer help. The afternoon was perfectly organized from parking to free cookies, generating plenty of smiles.

Alatheia Riding Center is continuously looking for volunteers to help with the program. You can contact the Grettes at (509) 630-8710. The center is at 2170 Sleepy Hollow Heights, Wenatchee.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jaana Hatton was born in Finland in 1960. When she was twenty-three, she met her American husband, Ronald, and they spent the next twenty-five years traveling around the world due to his employment with the US government. They now live in Wenatchee, Washington. They have two grown sons.

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Paralympic equestrian Birgitte Reitan, left, and Alatheia Riding Center owner Nancy Grette pose for a photo during Reitan's visit to the riding center.

**“To be yourself
in a world that is
constantly trying
to make you
something else
is the greatest
accomplishment.”**

**Ralph Waldo
Emerson**





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It'll seem as though you are spending a half-hour with your best friend.
And who knows, you just might be!

A *m I Going to be Okay?* is an American story with a universal message. Ms. Whittam traces her history in the form of stories about her all too human, and sometimes unhinged family; she throws a rope to the little girl living there, and in adulthood, is able to pull her out safely, bit by bit.

Her history is peopled with folks from a different time, a time before therapy was acceptable, 12 steps unimaginable and harsh words, backhands and even harsher silences can be spun to appear almost normal. She writes of a mother who would not or could not initiate love nor give it without condition, and a father, damn near heroic at times, abusive at others, a survivor with his head down and his sleeves rolled up.

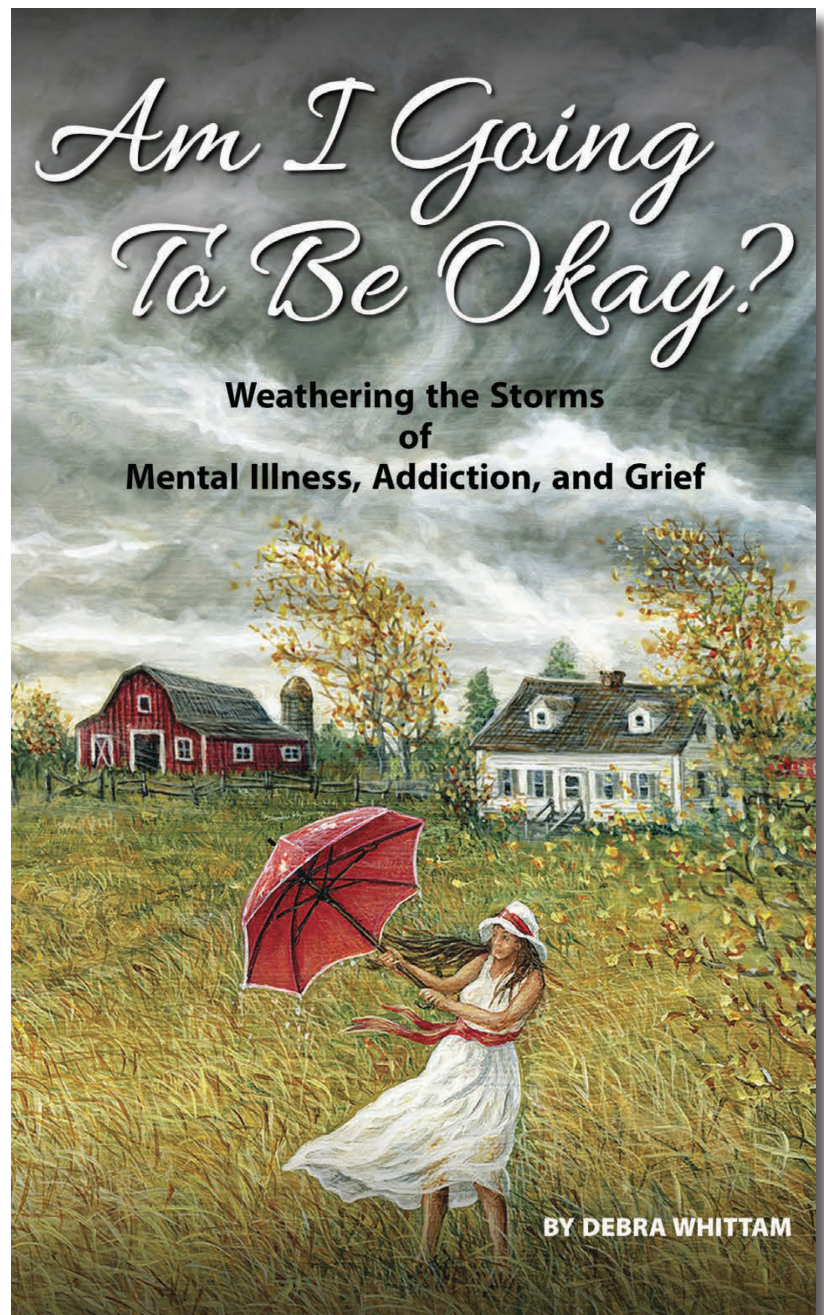
Ms. Whittam approaches her past with the clear-eyed, tough but sensitive objectivity necessary to untangle the shame from the source. She speaks of the people that affected her life so deeply with an understanding of their time and place in American culture; a family not far removed from immigrant roots when men carried their own water, emoted misplaced anger, and with fresh socks and food found on the trail, were confident, unflinching and at that same time tragically failing to the little ones they ignored.

Like many of us, details notwithstanding, Whittam responded by numbing, running and gunning. Alcohol gave her hope, soothed a crushed soul for a time and wrecked her on a train, until finally she had the courage to accept it wasn't working for her anymore. It was time to stop drinking and take inventory and accountability. It was time to accept, forgive and move forward. She healed where she was broken.

It is in the telling of this story that Whittam teaches us the difference between just surviving and surviving well; the importance of shared introspection and a careful eye on the wake we leave behind us in our actions. Her story is a guide to surviving abuse and addiction. It is also about witnessing and dealing with the shrinking faculties of aging parents in the unavoidable circle of life. Finally, she offers a realistic sense of hope, forgiveness and a life we can shake hands with.

AM I GOING TO BE OKAY?

REVIEW BY ERIC OESTREICH - ARTIST, AUTHOR, AND TEACHER



AVAILABLE ON AMAZON.COM MARCH 24, 2016



YES. I AM.

BY PETER SHANKLAND



es, I am male. Yes, I am a massage therapist. Yes, it is a predominantly female profession. And, yes, the confluence of these factors resonate greatly, as I pondered the issue of confidence.

As a male, massage clients who are male frequently look me in the face and say, "I would like a female, please." While there are numerous reasons for this request, the customer is always right, so a female therapist is assigned. Each time this happens, though, a bit of anger, a bit of frustration, a bit of disappointment manifests. I know my passion and skills for massage, and my confidence in delivering an extraordinary experience for the client, are exceptional. Yet, I am rejected, simply by virtue of my gender. Though, I am by no means, deflated.

I can only imagine however, how this type of scenario plays out thousands of times, in countless ways, for young women in our male dominated

culture. Like tiny pin pricks in a balloon that slowly leak air, how must it be for a young lady to experience endless variations of such a situation? How many times must she face such gender bias? And, what is she to do with the anger, frustration, and disappointments that arise? Moreover, how can she initially build the necessary self-confidence that allows her to effectively deal with such situations in the first place?

As I pondered answers to these questions, I arrived at a seemingly contradictory answer to instilling the necessary self-confidence. My answer: outside, external validation of her skills, intellect and self-worth. We gain internal strength and confidence when those around us, whom we love and respect, support and validate us. Our self-confidence takes root and flourishes when we are told of our own possibilities and potentialities and we believe what we are being told.

I can have complete confidence that the sky is yellow, but, if the

people around me constantly tell me otherwise, at some point, I will no longer have the self-confidence of my belief in a yellow sky. Apply this simple example to the myriad of issues young women, and men, face as they grow up, and the need to validate their skills, intellect, and self-worth become self-evident.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Shankland currently resides in Las Vegas, NV where he teaches massage therapy, and practices various complementary disciplines. See: www.peace.massagetherapy.com for more information.



“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be?”

Marianne Williamson

SELF-CONFIDENT SELF-TALK: THE KEY TO “WORKING” ANY ROOM

EXCERPTED WITH PERMISSION FROM *HOW TO WORK A ROOM*®
SILVER ANNIVERSARY EDITION BY SUSAN ROANE

SELF-TALK is a mingling menace. It's a big part of what stops us from mingling, circulating, and moving comfortably around a room— whether it's a professional event, client soiree or social party— and conversing with new people and former acquaintances. Thanks to Dr. Pamela Butler's classic book, *Talking To Yourself*, I've been aware of the issue and included it in the inaugural issue of *How To Work a Room* in 1988 and each subsequent reissue. It's based on self-perception, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

Dr. Butler was one of the first psychologists to write about the concept of self-talk, which has become more widely-recognized in the last twenty-five years. These are the things we say to ourselves—either out loud or silently— often unaware that we are saying them. Some people talk themselves out of meeting people and feeling at ease when talking with them.

Self-talk can be either positive or negative. Dr. Butler says that we can change negative self-talk to positive self-talk, and this transformation can have benefits in all areas of our lives.

If we feel uncomfortable when attending an event, meeting or party, it's helpful to remember the



research on shyness: about 90% of American adults self-identify as shy. That means we are in a lot of good company.

That VOICE In Our Heads

Here is some negative self-talk that might come up when we think of working a room:

- “I’ve always had trouble meeting with people. It’s just the way I am.” (Or today’s version: “I’m an introvert.”)
- “I can’t make—and despise—small talk...it’s such a waste of time.”
- “I don’t have anything important or interesting to say. I’ll just embarrass myself. Better to keep quiet and be cool.”
- “Why would anyone want to listen to me? All these people have more important things to do.” Or...
- “I’m too busy to take the time to meet people I don’t know or hardly know.”

Take a moment to write down any negative self-talk you may have, and then rewrite those statements as positive ones. The above comments might be rewritten as:

- I’m having fun practicing meeting people, and I’m getting better at it all the time. I’m enjoying mastering a new skill.
- Small talk is a great way to get to know new people.
- I want to extend myself to

other people and know that I have much to offer. If I’m open, interested and generous with my sources, recommendations and ideas, I’ll feel good about myself and so will they.

- We’re all busy, but connecting with other people is enjoyable, an opportunity to learn and even make a new friend!

Let’s practice telling ourselves: “I’m a valuable, likable person. Extending myself is a gift that others—who may be shyer than I am—will appreciate.”

Positive Self-Talk (PST) Works!

I attended a party and met a nice couple. The wife told me that before her marriage, her professional networking group used my book for their discussion forum. She committed to revising her “self-talk” and attended a party. She saw a nice man, whom she learned was single, and struck up a conversation about their host, which led to other topics of mutual interest. That nice man? You guessed it . . . he is now her husband! Yenta, the Matchmaker takes her bow. The fact that she used my business advice to enhance her personal life had a tremendous payoff!

When we attend any event with a positive mindset and the goal of making people comfortable, the onus is off of us and the possibilities are endless.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan RoAne is an international “Kick-off” Keynote speaker who sets the tone for interaction, connections and conversation for corporations and associations, meetings, conventions and events.

Susan’s clients include Apple, Linked In, UnitedHealth Group, Yale University, Hershey, Kraft, Price Waterhouse, Stanford University, Boeing and the NFL. She has been featured in and on media around the world including CNN, Wall Street Journal, The BBC, Financial Times, New York Times and BuzzFeed.

Susan’s presentations are known for her easy to implement practical strategies, common sense and her sense of humor—which she says one must have when working any room.

To Hire Susan:
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 415 461 3915
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“It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves.”

Sir Edmund Hillary



PATRICIA FRIPP

AN INTERVIEW

BY JUDI MOREO

It was the national convention of the National Speakers Association and the woman on stage was a powerhouse. She was intelligent, articulate, and attractive. She had on a dynamite ensemble and wore a fabulous hat.

She seemed to hold the audience in her hand. I was mesmerized. I would have sworn she was ten feet tall. You can imagine my surprise when I later stood next to her and discovered she was only 5'1". Patricia Fripp has a gigantic personality, a gigantic passion, a gigantic talent, and a gigantic heart. She is kind, generous, and highly respected. Today, Patricia Fripp is a giant in the speaking industry. She is an executive speech coach, sales presentation skills trainer, Hall of Fame keynote speaker and Past President of the National Speakers Association. In fact, she was the first female President of NSA. When we met, we instantly became friends and I won't tell you how long ago that was as it would give away both of our ages.

She encouraged, mentored, and inspired me. I came to know this incredible person as one of the sharpest, most

disciplined, and determined people I have ever met. She made such a positive impact on my life, I want to share her with you now. So, here goes. Meet Patricia Fripp!

When we first met you were beginning to make your name as a speaker. However, at that time you were still a men's hairstylist with a salon in San Francisco's Financial District. Give us a snapshot of your background.

I was born in a small town in England. My father was a successful, self-made entrepreneur in the real estate business. My mother, a coal miner's daughter, left home at 18 as did I. During the war, Mother was the major breadwinner; Father's real estate business flagged because, with bombs dropping, no one was buying homes. Judi, my mother was always dressed to the nines; she was our kind of woman, and I've always wanted to emulate her style! I have one brother, Robert, who has always been my soul mate. One year younger than I, he became a world-renowned guitarist.

At school Brother was a brilliant scholar, whereas I was more average and felt that I demonstrated artistic talent rather

than academic prowess. At age 15 I served an apprenticeship to become a ladies' hairstylist. That is when I came into my own. Interacting with interesting people and learning from great stylists was exhilarating.

In those days, what we knew about America we had learned from the movies. One did not often meet many people who had been to the States. I emigrated simply because it seemed like a good idea at the time, an opportunity for a promising future! As it turned out, that was the case.

I arrived in San Francisco from England at age 20 as a hairstylist with no job or contacts and little money. I learned my good work ethic from my parents, and that has always stood me in good stead. Additionally, my personality, my genuine interest in people, some hairstyling skill, and enthusiasm for what I was doing led me to be the highest producer in every salon I ever worked: in England when I was 15-18 years old, in the Channel Islands just off France from 18-20 years old, and in San Francisco at the Mark Hopkins Hotel beauty salon from ages 20-23. From there my story takes off!



When I was 23, I was hired into San Francisco's first truly fashionable men's hairstyling salon. The salon was owned by a public relations expert, and Jay Sebring, Hollywood's best known stylist, became a partner.

At our salon opening, celebrities Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Warren Beatty, and Julie Christie were in attendance. Yes, I have touched Paul Newman!

Jay Sebring died in a tragic and highly publicized event; he was murdered by the Manson family along with actress Sharon Tate. After his death, I became San Francisco's most in-demand men's hairstylist. As a woman in a new industry, I was considered quite a novelty. Because the co-owner was in PR, I was on every local TV and radio show and was interviewed by all the local newspapers.

In my late 20's I started training other stylists for a hair product company. I was also asked to speak to promote the

business to local service clubs to which my clients belonged. I was the shining star of my Dale Carnegie course and of the Cablecar Toastmasters Club, and my speaking ability was something of a surprise to them. Several of them asked me to speak at the staff meetings of their companies, which included IBM, AT&T, Dean Witter, Levi Strauss, Dole, and Moore Business Forms. As a result, many of those executives continued to hire me and helped launch my career.

In 1975 I opened my own salon called Miss Fripp's. We catered mostly to men. However, a couple of our all female staff were also great with women's hair. I was solidly booked from day one because I had developed my client base while working at Sebring International. My staff were good stylists but were not natural promoters the way I was. After work they went home. I went to Harpoon Louies, the local popular watering hole for young stockbrokers and executives. I flirted and passed out business cards. These days we would call it networking.

Once I started speaking at the service clubs and my clients' staff meetings, it extended my reach to promote our business.

In 1977 I attended my first National Speakers Association convention and was struck by the vision that I could eventually become a professional speaker. At that point I was 32 years old and only 2 years into a 10-year lease on my salon. There is no way to describe how much I loved being a men's stylist in the financial district. I built relationships with and learned from some of the most brilliant minds in the city while I cut their hair. Those experiences and my involvement in NSA led into my next career, as a successful keynote speaker. In an appearance on 60 Minutes, Ed Bradley asked me, "There must be a big difference between being a hairstylist and a speaker?" I replied, "I used to work on the outside of heads; now I work on the inside. There is only a half inch difference." That quip and that half inch have been worth millions of dollars! Just not all in the same year!

Who influenced you?

The biggest influences in my life were my parents, my brother Robert, Jay Sebring, and many of my brilliant clients. One evening I sat next to a man named Ted at a self-hypnosis seminar. After chatting at length, he went home to his roommate and said, "I just met this really interesting girl. She asked me questions and then answered them herself." Ted was very ambitious and demonstrated for me how to strive for a goal. He was the one who said to me, "You must take the Dale Carnegie sales course." I enjoyed it so much that I took their public speaking course, and Ted said, "Now you join Toastmasters to keep practicing."

In professional speaking, my first influence was Chris Hegarty. In 1977 he was the opening speaker at a big sales rally. Ted told me that Chris was local, so I contacted him. He said, "You must go to the National Speakers Association convention." I have always been a great believer that if someone you admire and wish to emulate gives you advice, you don't ask how much it costs. You just do it. The rest is history.

What inspired you?

Learning and the feeling of competence. As a hairstylist, a speaker, and now a sales trainer and an executive speech coach, I get paid to learn while I work; having access to successful and smart people, asking them questions, and learning about their business strategies. I have always felt that I was not as smart as everyone else, especially not as smart as my brilliant and disciplined brother

whom many consider to be a genius. Don't get me wrong, though. I have developed saleable skills, and I function well in life and business because of my basic British common sense. Now when I put words in an executive's mouth, help sales teams win big contracts, and confidently give advice, I am not sure where it comes from, but it is definitely exhilarating. My brother often says, "Our father would not believe CEOs pay you to tell them what to say!"

Your life looks so glamorous. Do you feel like you have a glamorous life?

Yes. One of my good friends said when introducing me, "Patricia Fripp has created her own version of Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." You know as well or better than I do, Judi, that not every aspect is glamorous! Oprah Winfrey once interviewed Shirley MacLain about making *Steel Magnolias* with one of my

heroes, Dolly Parton. Shirley said, "We were sitting around between bitching about how darn hot it was. I looked at Dolly, who was smiling away, and asked, 'Why aren't you complaining? You have to be hot in that wig.'"

We all know Dolly came from the humblest of beginnings and has never forgotten where she came from. What she said next is the attitude I remind myself of when travel is tough, my room is noisy, and I spend 18-hour days in the office to catch up. She said, "When I was young and poor I wanted to grow up and be rich and famous. I promised myself that if I ever was, I would never complain about anything."

What was the biggest surprise you encountered?

That I have become an acknowledged expert in my field.





What is your proudest speaker moment?

Tough to pick one! So I have not!

Having my father impressed with one of my speeches!

Sharing the stage with my brilliant brother. That was speaking, not musical!

Realizing I just earned in half a day what I earned in my first year in America. (That was in 1966, and what I thought of as a lot then is not a lot now!)

Helping an executive who was not seen as a leader create a speech and knowing nobody else could have done as well as I had.

Having a sales team call and say, "We just won a \$20,000,000 contract, and we know we would not have done it without you."

Delivering an all-day speaking school in Taiwan, which included schmoozing with the audience in advance and mini-

coaching. Every part of what I said had to be interpreted into Chinese. It worked!

Your brother Robert Fripp is an internationally renowned rock guitarist. His group, King Crimson, reached mass acclaim in 1969. I know he is touring again. Do you have any musical talent?

None whatsoever! However, whenever I go to King Crimson concerts, I double the sales for them at the merchandising table. You have never seen anyone sell T-shirts and CDs the way I do.

You and your brother are often on stage together. Tell us about that.

Yes, we have what I call Spoken Word Concerts. Before I introduce Robert, I tell the audience to forget all expectations they may have of what a rock musician is like. Brother is quiet, modest, analytical, brilliant, incredibly well read in many subjects. For the most part we sit on high stools, I ask him questions, and he gives thoughtful and interesting comments. His natural British humor and wisdom often make people actually gasp.

What have been the biggest challenges you have faced as a speaker?

Time management. There is always more to do than we have time for.

What's the best advice you were given about speaking?

"Go to NSA" That led to this career.

What was the most important decision you ever made?

At age 20, to leave the safety of home and my family and move 6000 miles

away with no job or contacts and without knowing anyone. At 20 I was so naïve, it never occurred to me that anything would go wrong. Consequently, it didn't.

You have won or been awarded most designations by the National Speakers Association: Certified Speaking Professional (CSP), CPAE, Hall of Fame keynote speaker, and the Cavett Award (considered the Oscar of speaking). Please tell our reading audience why the Cavett is so special?

Because it is named after our founder, Cavett Robert. And if it were an Oscar, it would be the Humanitarian Award. Cavett gave his passion to speakers and the association. In an industry where we get applause and are often treated very nicely, it is rewarding to be acknowledged for giving as well as receiving.

You are in demand to teach executives and sales teams how to make their messages more powerful and persuasive. How would someone contact you?

Go to my website www.fripp.com, call me at (415) 753-6556, or email me at pfripp@fripp.com

Any last words?

All learning needs repetition and reinforcement. Education is not something you did; it is what you do.

Thank you, Patricia, for all that you share and for the incredible example you set for the rest of us.



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- Mack Jackson Jr.

THE SECRET OF CONFIDENCE

BY FIONA CARMICHAEL

Your self-image is either your greatest asset or your greatest liability. Your self-image is your picture of yourself. It is your opinion of yourself. It is your value judgment about yourself and the image of yourself that you carry with you out into the world; it helps shape the caliber of your experiences.

During every moment of our lives, we program or allow others to program our self-image to work for us or against us. Since it is only a process, having no judging function, it strives to meet the attitudes and beliefs we set for it, regardless of whether they are positive or negative, true or false, right or wrong, safe or dangerous. It's only function is to follow our previous instructions, implicitly, like a personal computer playing back what is stored – responding automatically.

You always behave consistently with the picture you hold of yourself on the inside. Because of this, you can improve your performance by deliberately changing the mental pictures that you hold about yourself in that area. This process of self-image modification is one of the fastest and most dependable ways to improve your performance. As you begin to see yourself and think about yourself as more competent and confident, your behavior becomes more focused and effective. When you deliberately change your self-image, you'll walk, talk, act, and feel better than you ever have before. You will change both your personality and your results by changing your mental images.

You can use your imagination to enhance your self-image and give you a new life. Imagination can be used as a tool for happiness and a constructor of a healthy self-image.

Successful people use their imagination to prepare themselves for successful experiences. When you use mental picturing to get what you want, maybe a pay raise, and you picture a positive outcome, you have used your imagination to image the self you'd like to be and see yourself in new roles. You can change your personality, become more whole than you've ever been, if you build a stronger self-image.

To get more out of life, you must learn to use your imagination by developing new ways of thinking and imaging so that you will build a strong, reality-oriented self-image, which will give nourishment to your success.

You formed your present self-image from mental pictures of yourself in the



past, growing out of judgments you placed on your experiences in life. If you are willing to change, remember this: change will not come without effort! You must work hard to realize inspiring results.

If you work tirelessly to change this conception of yourself, seeing yourself with ever increasing tolerance, believing in yourself with more and more conviction, you will find this state of relaxation that you seek is required to assist you in the full use of your imagination.

Accepting your weaknesses will fortify your self-image.

If you make peace with your weaknesses, you will fortify your self-image. In ceasing to criticize yourself, you will place emphasis on the “plus” factors in your personality. You will look for things to like in yourself, and you will find them.

In accepting your weaknesses, you accept yourself as a total human being with the assets and liabilities to which you are heir. Your strength lies in accepting your weaknesses and then trying to rise above failure to success. When I talk about accepting your weaknesses, I don’t mean that you resign yourself to permanent, self-induced inadequacies. These hints will help you:

Learn your limitations.

We all have our breaking points, physical and mental. They vary with the individual; some people can stand up under some forms of pressure but will buckle under other stresses. Stop criticizing yourself for being “weak” and instead get in the habit of recognizing your limitations.

Honor your limitations.

Once you are aware of your breaking points, use this knowledge to help yourself. Don’t push yourself beyond your limits just to prove to other people that you are courageous. It takes courage to make decisions for yourself, even if some people may sneer at you.

Always be true to yourself.

None of us likes the friend who smiles on us when we are rich and disappears when we have lost our money. It is the same way with you. If you admire your own strength and hate your weakness, you are not being true to yourself. Your self-image will never be steady; you’ll never be happy. Accept yourself when you hit rock bottom and you have a foundation for growth.

One word of caution here: Don’t resign yourself to weakness. With full awareness of your limitations, you plan your days optimistically accepting them, and yet, rising above them to your full potential strength. You should make peace with your failings, forget about them, and move onto your daily goals – all in the process of living.

Understand that a person with a strong self-image sees failure as part of life; he understands his failures are inevitable, but never regards himself as a failure.

A healthy self-image can make you likable to other people. People crave good company. They may mask this desire because they are afraid of rejection. But, they feel this need deeply. It is a basic need, almost as essential as the need to appease one’s hunger with food. If your self-image gives you strength to be a considerate person, you will never feel starved for company.

The wrong self-image has kept you from releasing your unlimited potential.

In learning to live with yourself, the final key must be the health of your self-image. If you see yourself realistically giving yourself the respect you deserve, picturing your successes and your loving feelings, keeping faith with yourself in spite of your faults, forgiving yourself for your mistakes, then you have found the secret of living with yourself without fear...the secret of confidence.

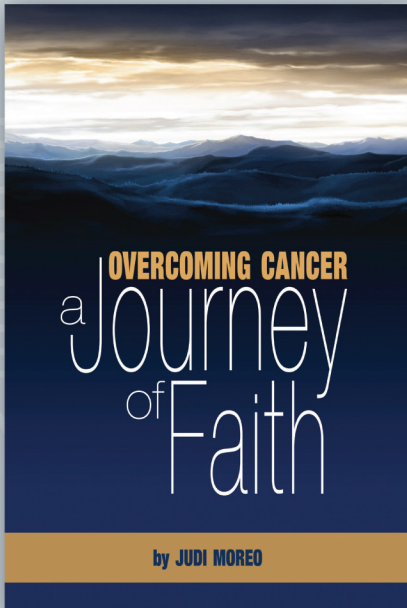


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fiona Carmichael is the co-author of “Conquer The Brain Drain”, “Ignite The Spark” and “Ordinary Women ... Extraordinary Success” as well as co-founder of Turning Point International. Fiona’s greatest desire is to empower people to live purposeful and meaningful lives and she has committed her life to helping and supporting others to realize that every person holds the roadmap to his or her own destiny.

Award-winning author Judi Moreo knows what it is to travel the journey of cancer and shares that experience in this book.

Overcoming Cancer: A Journey of Faith



Through her personal story, inspiring quotes and practical suggestions, Judi shows us that cancer and fear are messages to us to make lifestyle changes. This supportive book can help the newly diagnosed cancer patient ask better questions, understand there are alternative and integrated treatments that can work and, most of all, maintain hope.

Even though traveling the cancer road was a rocky and difficult journey, it was also rewarding. The path through cancer requires enormous discipline, work, and change; yet it is filled with excitement, experiences and discoveries that can bring us to a new and better place if we are open to possibilities and focus forward.

"This book may help save your life or that of a loved one. Judi Moreo "gets it." She understands that the question is not "what kind of treatment do I undergo?" but rather "how do I heal myself?" Her personal experience with cancer taught her to recognize that recovery from chronic illness is often a recovery from an unhealthy life in many respects. With humor, grace and courage, she addresses the physical as well as the mental, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs for recovery in an easily accessible, practical way. Whether you are looking for help to reclaim your health from cancer or any other illness, let Judi be your guide."

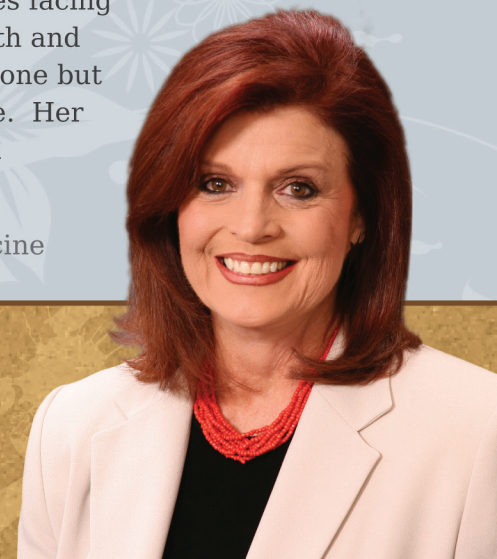
- James Sensnig, N.D., Founding President, American Association of Naturopathic Physicians; Former Dean, National College of Naturopathic Medicine; Founding Dean, College of Naturopathic Medicine, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut; cancer survivor

"This book is a must for those facing cancer and for those who have loved ones facing this fear-filled disease. Judi writes from the heart -- telling her story with truth and emotion. She highlights her course of action, not forcing her opinions on anyone but truly providing options to conventional cancer care that are sound and doable. Her recommendations for nutrition therapy and exercise are quite impressive and fact-based."

- Julie Freeman, MA, RD, LD, Licensed Nutritionist, Integrative Medicine

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HOW TO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

BY JIM CATHCART

In 1955, Disneyland opened in Anaheim, California amid the orange groves just outside of Los Angeles. I lived in Little Rock, Arkansas a couple of thousand miles away, yet my parents decided that we would drive the famous Route 66 all the way to California to visit relatives and see this exciting new resort. We went there in the summer of 1956 during the park's first official year of existence. My younger sister and I were beyond excited.

Our cousins; Bruce, Brian & Johnny who lived in San Diego had already visited the park 3 times so they were my tour guides on the appointed day. Mom & Dad, Uncle John & Aunt Saxon, my sister,

Kathy and I went to Disneyland together. Then at the front gate we split up. Kathy went with the grown ups because she was only 6 and I, the 9 year old, went with BB&J.

Our first stop was "Autopia" in Tomorrow Land where you got to drive motorized cars around a track. My cousins got into their cars and took off but I was just short of tall enough for the "Must be as tall as this sign" and so an attendant had to drive my car for me. Sigh! Well, at least I was getting to ride.

At the end of the ride I departed the exit only to discover that my cousins were nowhere to be seen. They went out a different exit and it hadn't occurred to them or me that we'd be separated. I

looked for them and yelled their names but to no avail. As time went on I got worried and then scared. Then I started to cry. Hey, I was only 9 years old! But something unexpected happened during my melt-down.

The thought occurred to me that I was blowing a huge opportunity. Here I was in "The Happiest Place on Earth" and I was crying. Wrong behavior! So I stopped my tears and decided to go see Disneyland...alone.

For the next 5 hours or so I explored Disneyland by myself...at age 9! I went to Frontier Land, Tom Sawyer Island, rode the "keel boats", got on stage at The Golden Horseshoe Saloon and sang "The Ballad of Davy Crockett" along with

dozens of other kids. I rode the Jungle Boats in Adventure Land and had the time of my life. Alone. When I reached Fantasy Land, I saw my mom, aunt and sister so I joined them for the rest of the day. We rejoined the others at Town Hall and found out that my cousins had given up frantically searching for me and were ready to admit they had “lost cousin Jimmy.” Their day was miserable and mine was wonderful.

So, where did my confidence come from? How did I, a not particularly brave or reckless guy, get beyond my fears and have such a great day? I believe it was because I saw an opportunity that was too great and too perishable for me to let it pass. Though I didn’t particularly believe in myself, I did believe in the wonder and excitement of Disneyland and I felt safe being on my own there.

Sometimes, we need to transcend our own self-doubt by putting our faith in

someone or something else. When you don’t believe in you...yet, then put some faith in others who believe in you, or in the importance of what you are doing, or the size of the opportunity you have. Find something to believe in even if it’s not yourself.

Confidence comes from the same place courage does; a deep conviction that there are universal laws that do not waver. If you know that gravity always works, then you boldly act accordingly. The same is true for courage. When you realize that each of us has more ability than any of us truly use, then you aren’t as likely to limit yourself to only previous behaviors. Faith is belief without tangible proof. So, the next time you’re lost or overwhelmed or afraid, reach out and ask for the information you need in order to “boldly go where (you) have never gone before.” That is how our world advances and that is how you will grow as a person.

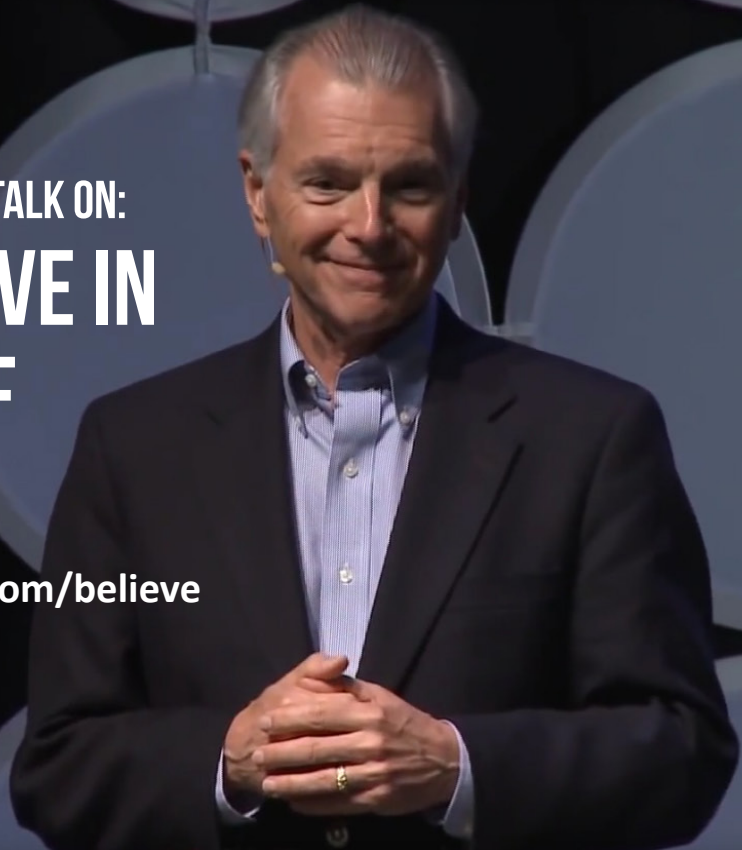


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Cathcart is the author of 16 books, a Hall of Fame professional speaker and the creator of over 100 brief video lessons on Thrive15.com/acorn. His brief TEDx talk on How To Believe in Yourself now has over 460,000 views. View it for free at: www.choicesonlinemedia.com/believe

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THE GIFT OF BELIEVING

BY SHANA KAI



Sometimes throughout life, we are called to simply BELIEVE... in things we don't always see or even understand; believe that our life's circumstances could actually change from messy to marvelous. Believing is a choice. It sounds so simple right? In reality, it really is.

Let me ask you a question? If you had the chance to build your dream house, wouldn't you first make sure the foundation was solid before starting construction? Of course, you would. Otherwise, you run the risk of eventually having to do a ton of repairs due to the ground shifting, or worse yet, sinking. Having spent many years in a family of contractors, I often witnessed the different phases of construction. Careful attention was given to the excavation of the foundation on which the building would stand. Debris was

carefully removed and done away with. The ground was packed down and then smoothed out and made ready for the concrete to be poured. When the concrete was dry, the framing could begin along with the electrical, drywall, plumbing, etc. in order to complete the structure. Each part of the construction was dependent on the other for completion. If one step was left out, you could end up with a building without electricity or plumbing. Every phase of building has great value placed upon it.

So, why do we often start our day without first laying the proper foundation on which to build? Did you know that it is possible to set into motion an amazing day before your feet ever hit the floor? Well, I'm happy to say it is! For years now, in the morning before I get out of bed and step onto the floor, I take a moment and thank the good Lord for allowing me to wake up and participate in another day. Then, I visualize going through my day, believing that no matter what comes my way, everything is working together for my good. That includes the not so wonderful things, too. There are things in life that we have no control over. You do, however, have control over how you choose to react and what you BELIEVE.

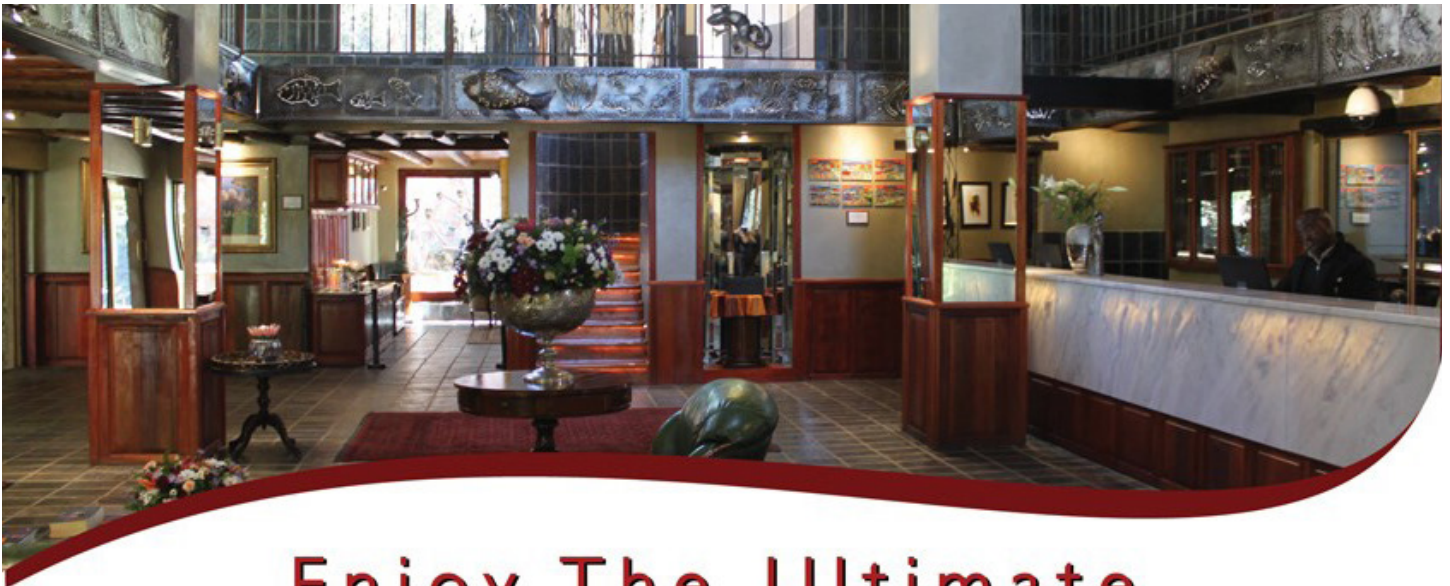
We all have debris in our life that needs removing. Start today by removing one thing from your life that keeps you from achieving a solid foundation. BELIEVE that you have the ability to build your life using the finest materials around. Why build with plywood and laminate when you can have mahogany and solid oak? BELIEVE in the person staring

back at you in the mirror. You have such great value and the world needs what you have to offer. BELIEVE in your ability to rebuild parts of your life that are needing to be remodeled. You're an amazing contractor and you are already equipped with the blueprint to build an amazing life. You're asked to simply BELIEVE. Even when everything around you is screaming something different, you still have a choice to silence the negative chatter and choose to BELIEVE. Just like there are phases of building your dream house, there are stages of building your dream life. Every day that you choose to look at the blue prints of your life and keep pushing through the phases of construction, you are bringing yourself one step closer to achieving the life of your dreams. May today be the beginning of a brand new phase in your life...BELIEVING.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shana Kai has been in the beauty industry for 32 years. She is a Licensed Master Esthetician, Licensed Instructor, Certified Professional Makeup Artist, Certified Eyelash Extension Instructor, Owner of an accredited cosmetology academy, Melange Boutique and Studio, and Inspired Beauty Salon.



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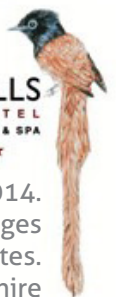
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The year was 1982 in the city of Lincroft, NJ. I was a student at Brookdale College and needed one more class to receive a degree in Computer Science. There was just one major obstacle I needed to overcome and that was the last class, Public Speaking.

We all have boundaries in life as to how far we are willing to push ourselves before retreating back into the safety of our comfort zone. Many times it's due to the fear we create in our own minds. By taking that class I was forced to face a fear that I had been avoiding for many years: the fear of being laughed at due to a speech impairment... I stuttered.

Throughout my childhood I endured embarrassment, teasing, and frustration all due to my stuttering...the kids mocking me at school each day, family finishing my sentences because I was

STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE & FACE THE FEAR

BY ROCCO DE LORENZO

unable to do so, and being too afraid and ashamed to speak up so I could be heard. The idea of taking a public speaking class just wasn't possible.

I spoke with my guidance counselor about taking a different class. He said, "Rocco, you have to take the class." I saw no other alternative but to quit college and walk away from my education. What I didn't realize is that when you make a decision based on fear, you don't always take into consideration the repercussions it could have later in life.

In 1992, our family business began facing a financial hardship and I found myself looking for a new job. I quickly learned that in order to find a good paying career, I needed a college degree. Falling deeper into debt, my wife, Susan, and I sold our home and on April 7, 1994, said good-bye to family and friends and drove to Las Vegas with the hope of finding a new life.

Once settled, I found work in the casino industry. Years later, I heard about a Dale Carnegie training program and enrolled



in their upcoming class. Everything was great until I learned that I had to stand in front of the class each week and give a talk. I stood there in silence and all those emotions from 1982 began to consume me. I found myself in a very familiar situation, do I take the class, or do I once again quit. I took the class. That following week when my name was called to speak I stood up, took a deep breath, and faced my fear. When I finished there was a feeling of victory and a sense of freedom.

My confidence grew as I gave my talks because my focus was no longer on people laughing at me, but on the message I wanted to share with them. Sometimes, we're so blinded by our fears we are unable to see the wonderful opportunities that

lie just beyond. When the course ended, I felt the need to continue speaking so I joined Toastmasters. My biggest accomplishment came when I reached the 5th of 6 levels of their World Champion of Public Speaking competition. There was still some unfinished business, so I went back to college, and in 2003 I earned my Bachelor's degree in Business Management.

Do I still stutter? Yes I do, but it's no longer the reason to stay within my comfort zone. Instead, I see it as the reason to constantly push my comfort zone boundaries. When you allow fear to control your life, there's a part of you that stays locked up never knowing what great opportunities are passing you by.




ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rocco De Lorenzo is a professional speaker and trainer with over twenty years in the Hospitality Industry. His experience in customer service stems from working as a Casino Supervisor at two major Las Vegas Strip Casinos. With his program, *"It's All About the Experience!"* Rocco inspires employees to go above and beyond the status quo of providing ordinary service by creating amazing customer experiences.

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**“If you hear a voice within
that says ‘you cannot paint,’
then by all means paint, and
that voice will be silenced.”**

Vincent Van Gogh

Everyone talks about happiness. Happiness is the utopia where we would all like to be. You can spend literally thousands of dollars on seminars, self-help and coaching to find the magic elixir to that inner space of bliss. While no one would choose pain intentionally, some still find happiness an elusive concept in a never-ending search to find its source.

I felt like that. I was what some would term a seminar junkie. I had this feeling if I could just understand what happiness was, it would magically flow over me coating me in its potent mix. I wish. What I've found with all my searching is happiness is not as elusive or exclusive as I thought. It really is just a matter of perspective. The problem is we make it complicated.

If happiness is hard to obtain then we figure it wouldn't be our fault that we weren't 'there' yet. We could blame the world or circumstances on the lack of joy in our life. It is much easier to make the big bad wolf the fall guy than to admit we missed the simple task of happiness. It is this belief that happiness is difficult to have and hold that is the main reason we are missing it.

Happiness, at its core, is very simple. It needs nothing nor does it demand anything; it is a state of being and not a destination. We can't command happiness; we have to submit. It is in the letting go that it comes, not in the battle. It was in a seminar process that I finally started to see this. They challenged us to do a gratitude month posting our gratitude thought for the day for thirty days. I took it on and because I am a Type A personality, I decided to do mine on my Facebook page. At first, it was chunky and felt forced. I felt awkward and unsure but I kept at it. As the

THE QUICKEST WAY TO HAPPINESS, SUBMIT TO IT!

BY GINA GELDBACH-HALL





month progressed, I started to notice something... I became softer. As I ended my days in gratitude, I noticed a peace started to fall over me and life started to work better. After thirty days, I was hooked and decided to extend my goal to one year. I just finished this year.

Gratefulness and happiness came into my life not by force but by allowing. It took the process of acknowledgment to shift my thoughts. As I searched daily for gratefulness, my happiness began to immerge. Find a way to allow it into your life each day. It can be as simple as saying something nice to someone, or a Facebook post each night... it doesn't matter. It is the practice of allowing gratitude into your daily experience that starts the shift of your happiness.

As you practice this, you will start to change, your confidence will improve, your attitude gets better, and you feel more grounded. Don't fight happiness, allow it! You'll be glad you did.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gina Geldbach-Hall is an inspirational speaker, author, life coach, and facilitator with 25 years of emergency services experience from EMT and firefighter to battalion chief. Her book, *Firegal... Rising from the Ashes*, is available on Amazon.

She continues to inspire leadership and service helping others to ignite the flame of empowerment within their lives and work. She is available for coaching and speaking engagements. Visit her website at FiregalWisdom.com for more information.





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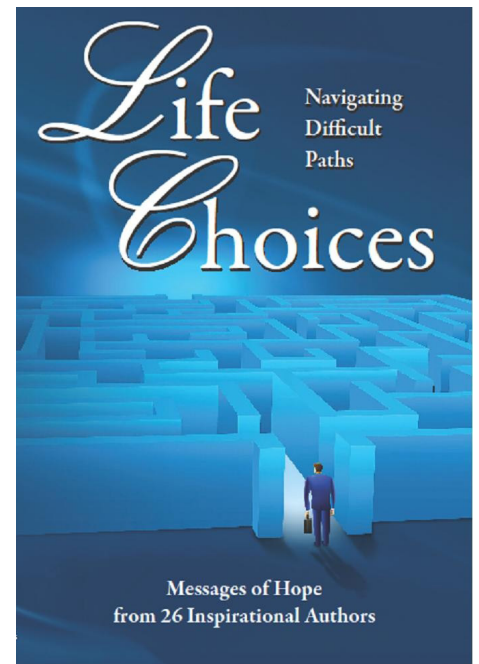
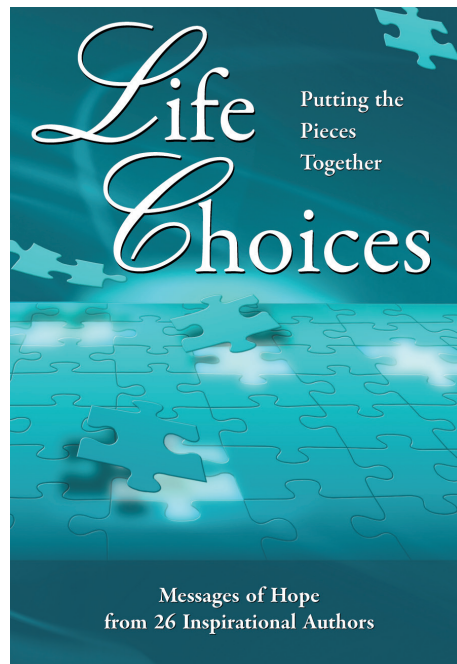
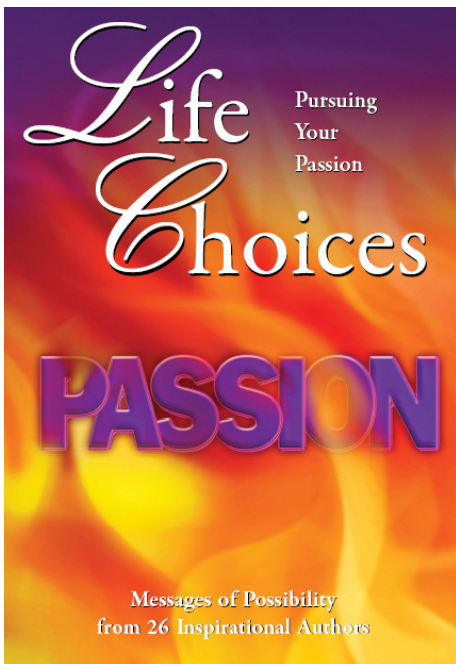
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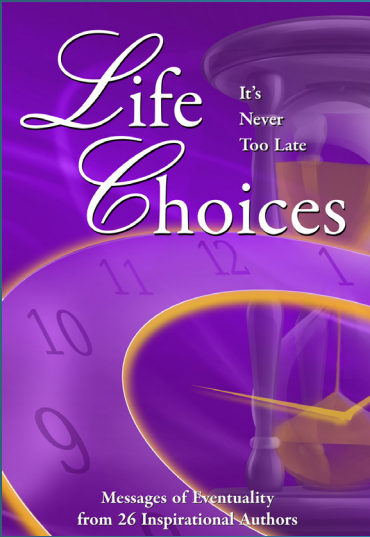
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THE LIFE-LONG FEAR OF MAKING MISTAKES

BY DEBRA WHITTAM

Sometime around third or fourth grade my innocent, vulnerable confidence of a child turned into waking up dreading going to school. Self-confidence had turned into self-consciousness. I had gone from being able to get up in front of my class and be “Chicken Little” in my first grade play to crying on stage in fourth grade because I wanted to be the lead in the play “H.M.S. Pinafore,” but I couldn’t be there without crying through the whole rehearsal.

I think back on that time now imagining that the word vulnerable had shifted overnight from cute to annoying.

The eyes of others upon me, back then and even now, felt and can feel like daggers of hate rather than supportive, encouraging, caring eyes. The change had happened within me not so much from the others kids, but because my home life had changed dramatically and it was showing. The stress level at home had risen to the point where any mistake I made was pointed out and, often times, punished. Mistakes were to be avoided at all cost. This began a life of increased anxiety along with a growing propensity for lying.

Later on in life, I realized the difference between self-consciousness and self-confidence was an inside job. Having the right man, more money, being in

another city, none of that was able to bring me back to the “me” that I remembered loving to be.

It came to the point where I had no confidence or self-love left at all. Being alive came into question. Through my faith and my courage to be vulnerable again by going into therapy, I was able to leave blaming family members and old friends behind me. My self-confidence came back slowly. Instead of relying on the reassuring words of others to be okay, I began a journey of becoming the woman I had always wanted to be. I went through my anxieties and told people how I was feeling. I choose those people wisely.

As I relearned to trust my instincts of what was right for me to say and be involved with, there was an inner peace that I found necessary for any return to self-confidence. I had to learn to trust my ability to reassure myself that nothing was going to happen that I couldn't handle if I traveled alone, got up in front of people and shared my experiences, wrote a book, or any longings I had from long ago.

Ridicule, shame and guilt of harming others by acting on what I thought were good ideas were replaced with kind and loving reassurances from others and from within. This took some time, for sure! But I began the journey to being the woman I had always wanted to be.

Of course, there are times I require a reality check to see if my pride and ego are running the show. I can't pretend to be totally altruistic. God's plan for me includes using my self-confidence for doing the next right thing. I can find glory in (perceived) adulation. There is a system of checks and balances I am

required to remember as I go about my day attempting to care for others. The most important of all is checking in with myself. Am I hungry, angry, lonely or tired? Have I left my own emotional welfare to the wayside as I become emotionally and physically overwhelmed?

My balance of self-care vs self-will is sometimes a daily meditation! I tend to run to the rescue of others in hope that it will prove I have worth and value... only then will I have the self-confidence I longed for and worked so hard to obtain.

I have heard it said that "Faith without works is dead." The work of my faith is to remain true to myself with love and care along with my confidence to do for others. Humbly, I ask God daily for his care and guidance. In that way, I can be assured my worth, value, and self-confidence will be for the good of all.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debra Whittam is a licensed therapist in Pittsburgh, PA who is also in Recovery. She specializes in untreated mental illness, untreated addiction and unacknowledged grief. Running groups as well as doing individual work with her clients, Debra encourages others with her humor as well as her vulnerabilities. While Debra lives in Pittsburgh, she also has a cottage in the Adirondacks and spends time in Paris.

ALWAYS
believe
 IN YOURSELF

DEVELOPING YOU: DREAM BIG

BY DELORES RAMSEY MCLAUGHLIN



ur experiences in life can be major influencers in what we choose to do with our lives. A good or bad past can promote certain reactions that either inspire us or deplete the desire to try new things. For example, do you choose to play it safe in life or do you take a risk for new and challenging experiences? Think about what has happened in your past that has kept you confined in your belief that you are marked for a life of mediocrity. Was it your childhood, high school bullying experience, or did someone close to you tell you that you would never be successful? How did this affect you? Can you move past the stigma that was spoken into your life many years ago?

We face challenges daily but we must consider stepping outside the thought process that creates a complacency attitude. Your thoughts are a duplicate of what you feel within yourself. Therefore, it is important that your development of self begins within you first. Knowing who you are will encourage you to have confidence regardless of your past experiences.

After high school I had a dream to be a contestant in a beauty pageant and, at that time, it wasn't all about winning but having the guts to do it. I received lots of negative comments from some family members and friends who thought I was wasting my time on a dream that would never surface or amount to anything. I decided to audition for the pageant

anyway, regardless of the negative comments. I was surprised when I received the notice that I was accepted to participate in the pageant. My family and friends reactions to my decision to try out for the beauty pageant could have influenced how I thought my dream would never come true. But, I was able to let my past be the motivation for me to excel in pursuing my dream regardless of what others thought. Sometimes, we allow the thoughts and words of others

to destroy our self-confidence. You are responsible for how your life turns out, not others. In other words, when your future is marked by negative experiences that have happened in your life or what others perceive you to be, then your self-confidence, dream and purpose is not yours but someone else's.

I decided not to let other's negative thinking influence me and went on to be a part of not only one beauty pageant, but four beauty pageants and was one of the five finalists in two of the pageants. I could have stayed where I was not ever experiencing an opportunity of accomplishment but I chose to pursue my dream which was a major boost for my self-confidence.



The negative past can also be the reason for not becoming the person you were meant to be. Look back at the things that went right in your life and build on those. This article is meant to encourage you to trust where you are in the present realizing your past has prepared you for now and the future. Remember, your development has a huge impact on your purpose. A not so pleasant past is worthwhile when we use it learn to do things differently and to bring good to

ourselves and others. Through sharing our stories, we can encourage others to look for opportunities worth living and fighting for. Why not make your dream come true even against the odds in life?

The strategies to build self-confidence can be as simple as first, getting to know you by understanding your strengths and weaknesses. Second, taking risk to understand how small steps can encourage major leaps in life. Third,

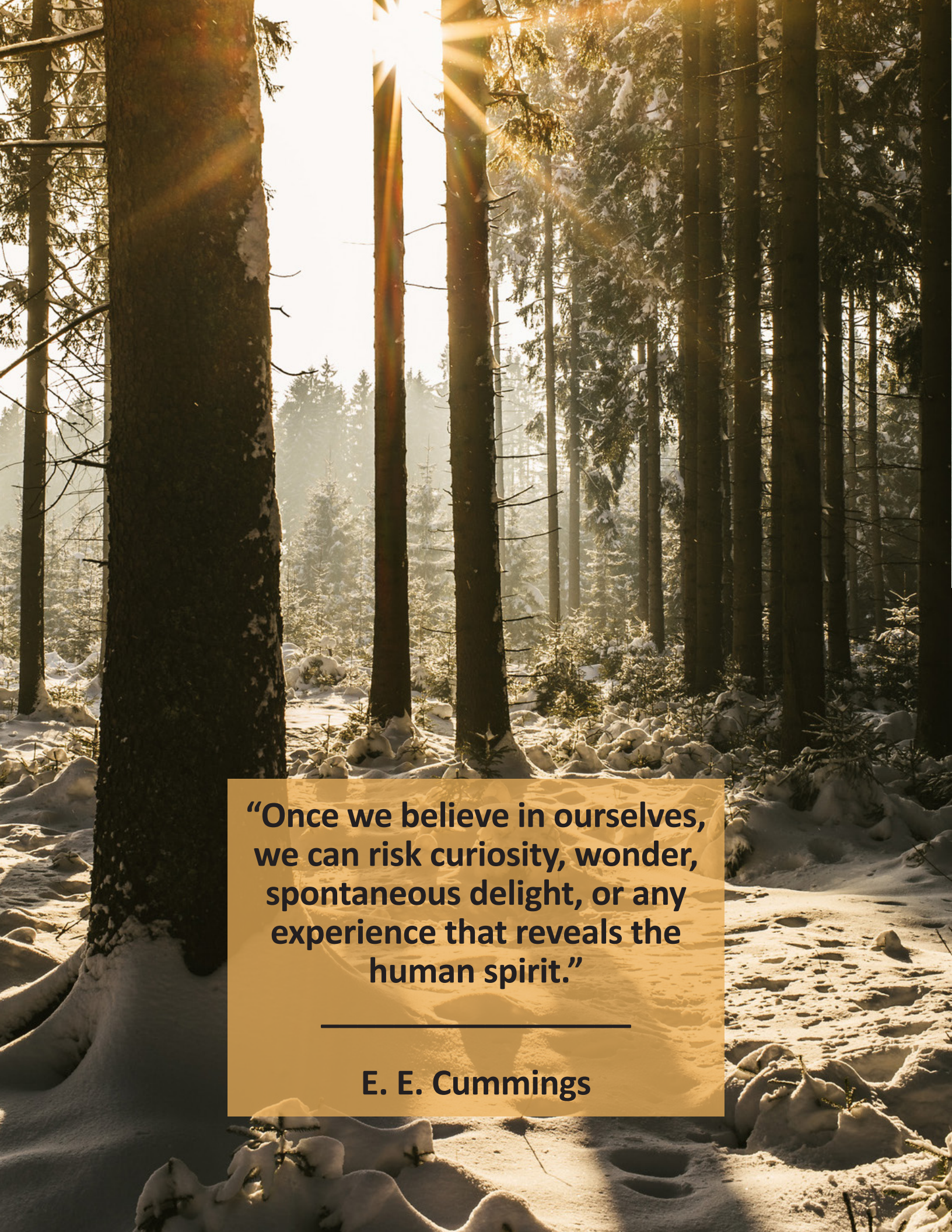
believing in “you” regardless of what anyone else says. Fourth, learning from your past and building a powerful testimony to share with others. Lastly, you are more confident than you realize and “developing you and dreaming big” is a choice and a beautiful process.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Delores Ramsey McLaughlin is a motivational speaker who inspires audiences from corporate to faith based. She has a gift of making the most serious topics become less intimidating and more accepting. The founder & executive director of “All Out Communication” and “Freedom-N-Christ Ministries,” she teaches effective leadership skills, conflict management, strategies to successfully pursue your dreams and how to bridge gaps between cultural and religious differences.

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A photograph of a winter forest. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, with some small evergreen saplings growing through it. Tall, dark evergreen trees stand in the background, their branches also covered in snow. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a warm, golden glow and long shadows on the snow. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

**“Once we believe in ourselves,
we can risk curiosity, wonder,
spontaneous delight, or any
experience that reveals the
human spirit.”**

E. E. Cummings



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Marlene Livingston Curry is available for lectures and workshops based on her book *Resilient Survivor*.

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TIME INVESTMENT STRATEGIES: A THREE-INGREDIENT RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

BY AMBER DE LA GARZA

Time is definitely our most valuable resource. We cannot buy more, trade for more, or wish more into existence but we feel like we need more. You invest your time into yourself, family, work, friends, charity, and so much more. How you invest your time is a series of choices and often we don't make those choices wisely! How do you invest your most valuable resource, time?

I teach my clients that productivity is investing your best time into your best

activities. Simple, right? Well, simple does not mean easy. Every day we wake up and start our day with the intention to be productive and yet many of us get sidetracked and fail to accomplish what we had set out to do. Aim to maximize your most precious resource so you can maximize your success! Use these three strategies to maximize time and aid your success:

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Distractions include anything that breaks your focus from the task or

activity you are working on. Internal distractions occur when you shift your focus from one task to another, such as giving in to the temptation to check your social media account during work hours. External distractions are disruptions you are aware of but don't directly involve you, such as people talking in the distance, co-workers walking by your desk, the phone ringing, and audible notifications.

Internal Distractions

Tip: Focusing strictly on one task for a long period of time can be difficult for many so try working on one task for a predetermined, manageable amount of time instead. Start with 15 minutes devoted to no internal distractions then increase to 20 minutes. Take a short break at the end of each time block. Continue increasing the length of your time blocks until you find your optimal block of time.

External Distractions

Tip: Turn off all unnecessary notifications that tend to disrupt concentration. If you're unaware your phone just received a text, you won't be zapped out of your focus zone or feel the need to respond it.

Succumbing to small distractions adds up to giant gaps in productivity.

MANAGE INTERRUPTIONS

Interruptions occur when a person purposefully draws your attention away from your current task or activity. The average office worker is interrupted 73 times a day while the average manager, every eight minutes! (CubeSmart Inc. "Social Interruption and the Loss of

Productivity.” 2002.) While controlling colleagues, employees, and vendors is not really possible, managing interruptions is because you can control how you make yourself available to them.

Colleague Interruptions

Tip: Post open office hours. Express that these are the hours you’re available for questions, concerns, or mindless chit-chat.

Employee Interruptions

Tip: Schedule regular daily or weekly meetings to address their questions, concerns, and challenges. Do whatever works for your business and remember to give yourself an appropriate amount of time to tackle all of their needs.

Vendor Interruptions

Tip: Implement a new policy that vendors need to schedule an appointment to meet with you. Express your request in advance and have your assistant act as your gate keeper. If you do not have staff to enforce the policy, place a sign outside your door saying “Private Work Time. Please Schedule An Appointment.”

ELIMINATE ACTIVITIES

According to Peter Drucker, “There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.” Stop overcommitting yourself to activities that don’t bring you closer to achieving your goals and instead, eliminate them.

Delete

Tip: Audit your calendar for recurring activities that do not support your goals. Identify which activities are

unnecessary and delete them.

Delegate

Tip: Eliminate items from your own task list that can easily be completed by someone else. Delegating is essential to freeing up time to spend on your most important activities.

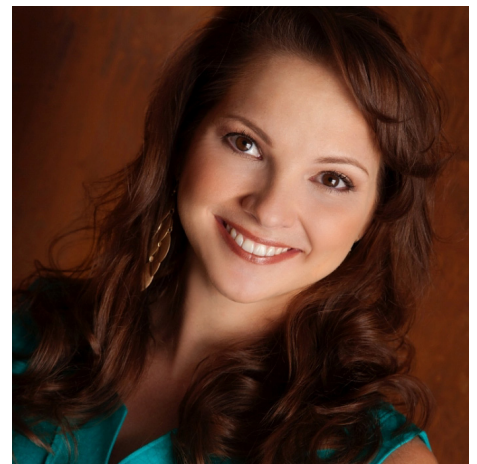
If you can minimize or eliminate the activities you do as part of your daily work routine by just 15 minutes, you can reallocate a total of 65 hours per year to activities that lead you toward achieving your goals and vision of success. Now that’s a perfect reason to stop wasting time on pointless activities!

Eliminating wasteful uses of time is essential to free yourself up to invest your best time into your best activities.

How you invest your time is a series of choices you make every day. To reach new levels of success, you must maximize your time and increase your productivity. By minimizing distractions, managing interruptions, and eliminating

wasteful activities, you will be able to reallocate time to the activities that bring you closer to your goals. Actively support your ambitions by strategizing to invest your most valuable resource wisely.

To receive more free Time Maximizer strategies, visit TimeMaximizers.com



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amber De La Garza works with business owners who are eager to maximize their personal productivity to be more effective in life and business, meet their maximum potential, and accomplish their goals. For more information or to reach Amber: 702-527-2307 or Amber@TheProductivitySpecialist.com

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CHOICES MAGAZINE
WINTER ISSUE 2016

A FINAL NOTE FROM JUDI MOREO

Roman philosopher, Marcus Aurelius, once said, "If the mind of man can conceive an idea and believe it, the man can achieve it." If we can create the image in our minds, we can produce the physical manifestation in our lives, even if such an image has never existed before. When you visualize something, you are establishing new patterns in your brain, the same as if you were actually doing what you are visualizing. You are directing your brain to give you the result you want to achieve. When you plan your year, it works the same way. You are visualizing your success.

Don't leave your success to chance. There is a world of possibilities and yet many of us never see them because we don't have the confidence to think they

are possible for us. We think things would be nice to have or do, but then we think negatively; those things aren't for people like us.

The technique of imagining actually imprints new data into your brain and central nervous system, creating a new self-confidence. If you will practice "imagining the new you" for a while, you will find you don't need to take any conscious actions because your subconscious will direct you to act automatically in ways that are consistent with your imagination. This may sound too easy to you...almost magical and unbelievable, but I assure you, there is nothing illogical about it. You don't make a wish and "poof" it just happens. It takes conscious effort.

You produce your products daily: your attitude, your relationships, your financial situation, and your success in life. If you want to keep yourself functioning at peak performance, you must program your conscious mind to give the right instructions to the subconscious. When you input thoughts of health, happiness, joy, abundance, and harmony, your imagination will work with you to be the confident person you want to be and get you the life you dream of living. You can do this! You are more than enough!

Judi