A GUIDE TO ACHIEVING WHAT YOU REALLY WANT IN LIFE

BRAD YATES
The Key to Success

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Introduction

Thank you for picking up this book and making this investment of time in your future. Perhaps you have read other books on success already, but they have left you still searching. The purpose of this book is to shift you from searching mode into succeeding mode. In spite of what seems like limitless opportunities, lasting success seems an unreachable dream for most people. Some may even seem to have all the trappings of success, and yet it isn’t enough – or, it is too much – and they indulge in behavior that threatens their health and their relationships. I believe that success is possible for everyone. I also believe that one of the prime purposes of life is to enjoy life, and that joy is a necessary component of any level of achievement for it to be called true success. Too many of us settle for less, figuring that it’s good enough - what I call the Passing Grade Syndrome. We don’t feel compelled to go for an A, but are motivated enough to avoid an F, and so we never experience the success we are capable of achieving, nor the contribution we are capable of making. It is my intention to show you what stops us in our search for health, wealth and achievement, and provide you with practical techniques to overcome these obstacles. While no one can magically change your life for you, the contents of this book will provide you with the tools to move forward from wherever you may be to ever more fulfilling levels of success in all areas of your life.

Enjoy!

Brad Yates, C.Ht.
Many thanks to Gary Craig and Dr. Roger Callahan for their remarkable contributions to the field of energy psychology. Thanks also to Dr. Don Yates and Dr. Carol Look for their help in editing this book. And thanks to my family for their patience and support while I wrote this.

For our children...
The Key to Success

So … where do you want to succeed today…?

- Career
- Sports
- Academics
- Stress Management
- Overcoming Fears
- Weight Loss (and other health issues)
- Interpersonal Relationships…?

Would you like to eliminate stress, anxiety and other unwanted negative emotions that limit your success, health and happiness?

Are you looking to identify goals, find balance and enhance performance in all areas of your life (career, sports, school…)?

Do you want to be, do and have what you really want in life!

So…what is the key to achieving this success…?

It has been said many times throughout history, in a number of different ways, but basically it comes down to this:
We become what we think about.

Your thoughts are creating your reality. However, as I will explain, the vast majority of your thoughts are unconscious. At present, you are experiencing all the success your subconscious mind believes you should have. Your mind thinks that any more success would be bad for you.

So … the key to achieving greater success, then, is to change your mind about success – about what you can be, do and have.

You deserve to succeed.
“If This is the Land of Milk and Honey, Why am I Eating Dry Toast…?”

It’s been said that success is a journey, not a destination. If you are reading this book, it is likely that you either are not even on the road, or perhaps feel as though you are driving with the brakes on. Maybe you feel as if you’ve hit a roadblock, or are getting carsick, or are constantly asking, “Are we there yet?” There are a number of ways we could go with this metaphor, but they all boil down to the same thing – you aren’t completely satisfied with the results you are getting in life.

We live in an age of incredible opportunity – particularly here in the United States. We are told in many different ways that we can have anything we want. To a great extent this is true. If there is some result you desire, and someone else has achieved it, then the chances are excellent that you can achieve it as well. Do you want to make more money? There are plenty of stories of people who were probably once poorer than you and are now quite wealthy. Do you want to lose weight? No doubt many people have started out heavier than you and are now enjoying the benefits of a slimmer and healthier body. Certainly there are some real world limitations: an eighty year old is highly unlikely to be signed as starting quarterback for a pro football team, an eighteen year old is prohibited from being elected President of the US, and to the best of our understanding, human beings are incapable of flight without the assistance of some contraption to get us airborne. Outside of these obvious roadblocks, our possibilities are seemingly endless. So, if this is the case, why do you not feel as if you are succeeding…?
There are numerous self-help books, tapes and seminars available, all of them offering the reader the keys to being, doing and having what they truly want in life. Most of these programs are excellent, containing sound advice and effective strategies for achievement. Perhaps, like many people, you have read a number of these books, only to find your life unchanged – or maybe very much changed, but only for a fleeting moment. Perhaps you got stuck on the exercises and never even completed the book. You see what they tell you to do: Take action … Take Action! … TAKE ACTION!!! “Okay,” you may say – “I got it! I’ll take action!” And what action do you take? Very likely, you look for the next self-help book … the one that will really have the answer. The fact is, the answer in any one of these books might be the answer … if you could make use of it.

If you are not getting the results you believe you want, there is a simple explanation: You have chosen not to. At some level, you have made a decision to limit yourself from that particular goal. In fact, as you take a look at your life – all the conditions and circumstances, both good and not-so-good – you must recognize that you caused it to look this way. Whatever your current situation, you chose it.

Now you may be saying, “Absolutely!” Or you may be saying, “What?! When?! When did I choose this..?!?” The answer is, every single day. I’m not suggesting you ever sat down and made one big choice to have your life exactly as it is at present – though there are some great achievers who have done just that. Rather, your current situation is the
combination of all the choices you’ve made up until now. We make thousands of little choices everyday, and choices lead to actions, and actions lead to results. The results you have, right now.

You might wish to argue that you wouldn’t have made the choices that have led you to where you are. And you may be right – if you consciously realized you were making those choices, you might have made many of them differently. Here’s the key that may be new information for you: at least 80% – 90% of our choices are unconscious. Since our choices lead to our actions, 80% - 90% of our behavior is unconscious, as well. Most of the time, you are making choices and taking action without consciously thinking about it.

Here’s wherein the problem lies. If you are not achieving the success you consciously think you want, those desires may be at odds with the more powerful subconscious. So you find yourself making choices and taking actions which don’t lead you where you want to go. Or, you set your sights on a goal, decide to take some positive action, but then find yourself unable to do it. Your goals are incongruent with the thinking of your subconscious mind, which has chosen to stop you.
How the Mind Works

We have yet to learn exactly how the human mind works, and what is presented here is only one possible theory. However, it will be a useful way of looking at the thought process which controls behavior, and it will be followed by tools which have been proven effective in modifying thinking and behavior in order to achieve greater success.

If you operate a computer, you likely know about shortcuts. These are commands or keys that can be used quickly in order to have the computer carry out a preprogrammed task, oftentimes involving a complex series of activities. These are designed to speed things up and simplify our lives. Human beings operate the same way.

If I were to give you a simple command such as, “Write your name,” you could most likely carry it out very quickly and easily. It wouldn’t be necessary for me to tell you to pick up a pen, or teach you how to spell, or any of the other hundreds of tiny activities involved. Nor would it be necessary for you to give much, if any, thought to how to perform these actions: “Okay – if I stimulate this muscle in my arm, I can make the pen move upwards to form a ‘T’…” Over the years, you have learned how to do these things to the point that they are pretty much automatic. Like so many of our basic survival functions, they are regulated by the subconscious mind.
Here’s another simple demonstration: Looking at your watch, time yourself to see how quickly you can recite the alphabet. Good. Now, you ought to be able to do it in half the time if I were to ask you to only recite half the alphabet, right? So, timing yourself again, do just that – by reciting only every other letter… Took longer, most likely. You have learned the alphabet to the point of knowing it subconsciously, but you had to think about it consciously to pick letters out.

Life needs to be this way, of course. If we had to consciously control every little action we took, we would be rendered practically immobile. Try to remember how difficult it was as a baby to learn to walk – consciously making the decision to move one foot in front of the other. You learned what worked and eventually, through repetition, the process became habitual, to the point where you don’t need to think about it. Imagine if you had to consciously think out every step each time you wanted to move…! So it is with most of the activities we perform on a daily basis. And, so it is with our choice-making as well.

Imagine having to retune your radio each time you went for a drive. Imagine if each time you went to write a letter on your computer, you were asked to choose one of the many fonts before you could start. To save us from having to make the same choices over and over again, these electronic devices have default settings. The subconscious mind likewise programs default choices. Millions of these shortcuts are programmed and then are made so automatically that you never even realize they’ve been made. When you get
into a situation, your mind identifies the situation, searches your programming for any similar circumstances that may have been experienced, and then reacts in what it deems the most appropriate learned response. Unfortunately, that response may in fact not be appropriate at times, but in the interest of doing things as quickly and easily as possible, the subconscious is willing to make mistakes. The alternative – having to think through every little choice of behavior – would be inconceivable.

For example: While you might experiment with alternate routes the first couple of times you drive to a new location, you eventually choose one which becomes programmed to the point where you don’t have to think about each turn – you just make it. It’s your default route. In fact, if you are not paying attention and allow yourself to go into autopilot, familiar landmarks might prompt the wrong programming. Have you ever found yourself taking the freeway exit to your home, even though that wasn’t your intended destination? Your mind has accidentally gone into default choice mode in an attempt to save you time.

The subconscious mind learns how to respond to a multitude of situations in this fashion. It learns what works – or appears to work – and then little by little seals that in to facilitate living. We learn how to respond emotionally in the same way. When you are caught in freeway congestion, do you feel angry? If so, do you consciously choose to become angry? No, it is automatic. Your mind identifies, associates and responds. However, there are plenty of people who remain very relaxed regardless of traffic.
conditions – they apparently have a less frustrating association to the situation - so we know that it is not a naturally programmed response. In fact, it is unnecessary, unhelpful and unhealthy, given the stress on our bodies caused by anger. It is automatic choices like this that block us from success in health and many other areas of life.

It is not my intention to say that anger has no place in human existence. In many situations it is an important motivating force to bring about positive change. But this is not always the case. Unchecked, anger can be very harmful both physically and emotionally. So it is with any of what we might call “negative” emotions. Feeling them is part of the human experience, but giving too much power to them or carrying them for too long seriously handicaps our ability to experience joy. It is important to remember that no event or person makes you feel anything. Emotions are made by choice.

However, it is usually a default choice based on our subconscious programming, made without our conscious awareness that a choice is being made.

The good news here is that positive emotions such as happiness can be chosen. However, if you attempt to consciously choose this feeling, you must remember that you are only using 10-20% of your mind’s power. If the more powerful subconscious is resisting happiness in favor of a less pleasant emotion – which it may feel compelled to do given your circumstances - you will find it difficult to experience any real joy.
It is important also to note that we feel emotions. We may have thoughts about them, including what name to give them, but the experience of them is physical. Joyful emotions are often very invigorating, giving us the energy to take action. The experience of the so-called negative emotions is not only unpleasant, but also immobilizing. Emotions such as sadness tend to weaken us. Fear causes tension that can freeze our muscles. Anger may provide energy, but can also cause tension and lead to rash and inappropriate action. With guilt we feel badly about a situation, but it rarely puts us in the best place to change things for the better, and thus is of little practical use. So, when the subconscious mind wishes to stop us from acting on a choice we’ve made consciously – it most often controls the body by means of our feelings.
The Motives of the Mind

Now that you see how the mind makes choices – or resists them – you may ask, “Doesn’t my mind want me to be successful? Doesn’t it want me to be happy?” Of course it does. That is why it is stopping you. Unfortunately, what you think of as success and what your subconscious thinks of as success may be very different. But one thing is true – your mind always has the best of intentions – as illogical as its choices may seem. By the standards of your subconscious mind’s programming, you are 100% successful all the time, and as happy as it deems appropriate. Whenever it stops you from doing something, it has a reason – what it believes is a good reason.

From the time you were born – and even before birth – you have been learning. Just as a computer is programmed, information has been put into your mind. Unlike a computer, which is programmed deliberately by an individual or an organized team for specific useful purposes, your programming has come from multiple sources with multiple motives. You may feel compelled to blame your parents for your programming, but you have been taking in information every moment of every day of your life – and it is all stored there in your subconscious. Even the most attentive parents couldn’t be responsible for all the data going into your memory banks. Granted, they may have provided a great deal of it, but even then they presented information that had been programmed into them. You can see, then, where you are a hodge podge of programming – making it a very complicated ordeal to carry out even basic functions.
For instance, how difficult should it be, really, to choose foods that are healthy for you and consume them in proper amounts? It isn’t physically challenging, like trying to lift a large boulder. There must be a reason why it is hard. Your body, at a very basic level, desires the correct balance of nutrients and knows instinctively when to stop eating. It also knows just how much sleep you really need. Left to its innate intelligence, your body naturally moves toward health. If you cut your finger, it will eventually heal on its own, won’t it? You have the potential to be likewise successful in any area of life. At the core of your being, beneath all the programming, you are inherently successful – that is why we humans continue to evolve. But, the programming gets in the way, distorts the self-image, and creates reasons for blocking healthy practices.

This programming happens predominantly during the first eight years of life. During this time, the mind is like a sponge, soaking up stimuli, experiences and information given by parents, teachers, peers and strangers. Perhaps a dog bit you at age two, and you filed the interpretation that dogs are dangerous. While you may not recall the incident, you find yourself forever nervous around dogs. A humiliating experience during an audition for the school play may cause you to shy away from any further public performances. Negative associations with school – either particular events or simply that it was hard and interfered with playtime – could make any further educational endeavors a challenge. On the flip side, the pleasant memories of cuddling with your parents may be triggered every time you feel flannel sheets like they had, or the smell of hot chocolate may likewise
remind you of a joyful childhood event. Millions of these associations are stored away for future reference.

Around nine or ten years old, the mind begins closing off. Information can still be taken in, but it is filtered through that which it has already learned. Since you cannot constantly be left in a state of uncertainty – taking in contradictory information and having to choose again and again – your mind begins to make a firm decision on which data is valid. New information that doesn’t agree with what you already know is generally rejected. You need to be confident in the fact that gravity will keep you grounded when you get out of bed in the morning, so someone suggesting that it might not happen tomorrow would be ignored, if not ridiculed. In order to function, you need that kind of certainty about most of life. In fact, history is full of examples of mankind’s unwillingness to have what we “know” tampered with, even if it’s wrong. Consider the overwhelming rejection for so long of Copernicus’ theory that the Earth revolved around the Sun… How many bits of false information might you be holding onto that control your life...?

At this point, let me insert an important new word in place of data and programming: beliefs. The data that you take in forms what you believe about a person, place, event or thing. Your experiences may prompt you to decide that broccoli is yucky and dogs are scary – that ice cream is good and flannel sheets are the best – and these become beliefs. Shakespeare wrote, “Nothing is good or bad but thinking makes it so.” Each of us, in our
own minds, determine what is right or wrong – there are few absolute truths – and rarely do two people share identical beliefs.

For the most part, the mind has simple criteria for what it believes is good or bad, right or wrong: it experiences either pain or pleasure. Which one is felt is determined by the ever-increasing store of beliefs in the mind. Oftentimes, what is considered painful is that which is unknown. “I don’t know what it would be like to be in school without Mommy,” you may have thought as a child. That unknown, and thus going to school, was painful. The prime objective of your subconscious mind is to protect you from pain and move you toward pleasure - motivated by a survival instinct. What you have decided about what is painful and what is pleasurable creates the parameters of your comfort zone. As stated before, everything your subconscious mind does has a good intention, based on what it believes. And what it believes above all else is that you should stay in your comfort zone.

Many of these beliefs and intentions may be unfortunate. What is considered pleasure often comes at a price, including a number of unhealthy behaviors. For many, what they would do with their hands if they didn’t have a cigarette to hold is a painful unknown, whereas the known feeling of taking a drag is pleasantly familiar. This belief defies logic, knowing the pain the body is subjected to by smoking, but logic often has little power in the face of subconscious programming. A smoker may also believe that the pain of being rejected by peers who smoke is more real than the potential pain of future health issues. And, as is the case with most addictions, cigarettes have become the drug-of-choice for
tranquilizing anxiety. Remaining a smoker is more comfortable. This is where beliefs can get us into trouble.

There may be many reasons why you have chosen not to reach a particular goal – or rather, why your subconscious mind has decided that it is in your best interest to not reach it. If you are struggling with weight issues, it believes you need to be overweight – perhaps because it perceives relationships as dangerous and believes the weight will protect you from getting involved (one possible reason) – and it will fight any dieting efforts on your part to change the situation. You have a comfort zone of weight – there’s a high weight at which you will stop gaining, but also a low weight at which point your subconscious will panic and stop you from losing any more. If you have money issues, your subconscious mind may well believe you shouldn’t have more money. Again, there is a comfort zone about how much money you can have. It may involve how much your parents had. You may have negative beliefs about rich people, and so your mind will strive to keep you from becoming wealthy. Very often, issues involve programming concerning what you believe you deserve. On a deeper level, you may not believe it is right for you to be healthier or more prosperous – and so your subconscious mind takes it upon itself to keep you away from those things that would be wrong.

There are some who manage to make more money than they believe is right, and so their mind keeps them from enjoying it, perhaps in an attempt to change the situation. It is not impossible to override the emotions the subconscious mind uses to resist action – but it
will almost certainly be a struggle and will not likely be joyful. The tabloids are full of celebrities who seem to have achieved great success, yet seem far from truly enjoying it. Wealth or fame beyond the subconscious comfort zone is perceived as painful and causes stress that can lead to self-destructive behavior. Wealth and fame may buy indulgences of one kind or another that seem to bring pleasure – or at least numb the pain – but true joy will be elusive if your so-called success is incongruent with your underlying beliefs about yourself. There are also numerous cases of people winning the lottery, only to have it be far from the joyful experience they expected. Many quickly lose the money, as their subconscious endeavors to return them to their comfort zone.

Perhaps the most frequent sign that we are approaching the boundaries of our comfort zone is a feeling of fear. Some fears make sense – we can consciously validate experiencing fear if we are confronted by a hungry tiger – while others seem less logical, as there is no apparent threat to our health. It may be a fear of success, or a fear of failure, or a fear of the unknown – it may be all of these and more. It may be experienced as only a mild anxiety, but it is still a warning from the subconscious that you are in danger. One of the most prevalent fears is the fear of looking foolish. Many if not most of us believe that it is important to look good all the time – to be right and behave appropriately. The great contradiction here is that while we as a society practically insist on conformity, we admire and reward those who take risks. Whether or not they make sense, you have beliefs that are keeping you from moving forward towards possible success and joy. These are limiting beliefs.
Given that your subconscious believes it is taking care of you, can you really question it? The mind is limiting you for a reason – shouldn’t you accept that? If those warning signs come up, does that then mean you must give up on that goal and settle for something less appealing, but also less fearful? No. You can, certainly – and that would be okay, if that is what you choose. However, a limiting belief is just a belief – it is not necessarily the truth. Some beliefs, in the light of conscious consideration, may even seem very wrong – particularly ones you may have developed about not deserving success and other issues of low self-worth. Consider the unfortunate child who overhears a parent making a disparaging comment about a piece of artwork and feels hurt. She may decide then and there that she has no talent and will never attempt anything creative again, because doing so would lead to further pain. Often, it is this type of beliefs that keep seemingly successful people from feeling happy – there may be pain associated with their achievements. It may seem sad and unfair that such a thing would be programmed into you. But remember this, it almost certainly came from someone who had been similarly programmed. Don’t get caught up in looking for someone to blame – yourself included. The important thing is that you have a choice to continue to be controlled by these limiting beliefs, or to move forward towards greater success, health and happiness. If you truly want success – and if you are reading this book I believe that you do – you must take responsibility for the results you achieve in your life.
Regardless of their origins, beliefs can be modified. It is, however, rarely possible to do this consciously. It is not enough to simply state, “I am successful now.” Affirmations, if they contradict limiting beliefs, will usually just stir up and reinforce whatever the subconscious really believes. A particularly motivational book or seminar may also push you past your resistance, but sooner or later (and usually sooner) your subconscious will seek to return you to your comfort zone. Given the fact that the subconscious mind is running the show, you can see where this would render even the best self-help advice ineffective. One of the founding fathers of personal achievement, Napoleon Hill, tells us that, “What the mind of man can conceive and believe, he can achieve.” Very inspiring – and all too true. We can conceive of great accomplishments, but we may not really believe we can do it, and the belief that we can actually do a thing is a necessary component of motivation. There are certainly many who do find lasting success from these self-help programs. The level to which you will succeed is proportional to the level of contradiction in your subconscious beliefs. You may be inspired by a good idea, but a good idea is not as powerful as a belief. There may be room in your comfort zone to enjoy the inspiring thought, but not to actually act on it.

Motivation can only occur when the perceived benefit of achieving a goal outweighs the perceived cost of trying to achieve it. Thus, if one is encouraged to really enhance the benefits in their mind, it becomes more likely that action can be taken. But unless the internally perceived costs are dealt with, it will likely be necessary for there to be continued outside encouragement. This is why coaching can be so effective – someone
outside of you takes responsibility for pushing you past your resistance. Pushing ourselves requires willpower – the effort necessary for us to consciously overcome our subconscious objections. This is difficult, if not impossible, to sustain – remember that over 80% of our behavior is unconscious. It should also be noted that no one has more willpower than anyone else – the difference between any two people is in the intensity of their internal conflict – some have less resistance depending on the issue. However, it is also true that the comfort zone expands. This is also a necessary part of human programming. Our subconscious is designed to outgrow some beliefs as we mature. For instance, you were probably taught to believe at a young age that you must always have an adult accompany you when crossing the street, but by a certain age you no longer felt this was necessary. Continuing to hang on to this belief would make life quite challenging. So it is with other beliefs that are no longer needed for your protection. As the fallacy of the reasoning behind limiting beliefs is exposed, the subconscious mind adapts. The ideal outcome from coaching is that once success is tasted, the subconscious has a greater capacity for perceiving benefit in the face of possible costs.

We are also motivated when the perceived cost of not taking action outweighs the perceived benefits of staying stuck. This is the motivation of the Passing Grade Syndrome – we see getting an F as worse than having to give up a night of television in favor of studying. Again, the comfort zone has borders on both the high and low side. While this kind of motivation may be useful for basic survival, it rarely leads to real success, health and happiness. Showing a smoker a photo of a blackened lung may
disturb him, but it doesn’t necessarily inspire him to achieve greater health. He may simply cut down on cigarettes, or switch to a new habit.

The most effective strategy for allowing ourselves continued success, and the ability to enjoy it, is to work with the subconscious mind’s need to move towards pleasure and away from pain. We want the mind to perceive the accomplishment of our desired objectives as pleasurable. But the goal here is not only to increase the perceived benefit enough that we can withstand the possible pain, but also to reduce and eliminate any unnecessary pain. While it is possible to overcome the resistance to giving a presentation, the ideal would be to feel completely at ease while speaking publicly, even to enjoy the experience, without the painful fear and embarrassment experienced by so many. If the subconscious mind is sending us negative feelings as a way to stop us from taking action – including the action of trying to modify our limiting beliefs – what we need is a way to diffuse these warning signals. We need a tool for letting go of pain.
Fortunately, there are a number of ways to diffuse these feelings that, well intentioned as they may be, sabotage our success. Gary Craig’s Emotional Freedom Techniques™ (EFT) is one of the easiest and most effective. If you have never heard of this cutting edge process, I am very pleased to introduce it to you. This new technique is being used effectively by a growing number of people to enhance all areas of their lives, including athletic performance. EFT is a wonderful tool for removing the negative emotions that limit our success. Using this technique, you can gain the emotional freedom to truly pursue being, doing and having what you really want in life.

Let me preface the teaching of this technique with the remarkable discovery that led to its formulation. In 1980, a clinical psychologist named Dr. Roger Callahan was working with a patient, Mary, for an intense water phobia. She suffered from frequent headaches and terrifying nightmares, both of which were related to her fear of water. To seek help, she had been going from therapist to therapist for years ... with no material improvement. Dr. Callahan tried to help her by conventional means for a year and a half. He didn’t make much headway either.

Then one day he stepped outside the normal “boundaries” of psychotherapy. Out of curiosity, he had been studying acupressure, a Chinese medical practice that has existed for thousands of years. It, like acupuncture, is based on the idea of a subtle flow of energy
traveling through the body along pathways called meridians. Along these meridians are a series of significant points. Stimulating these acupoints balances the flow of energy and promotes healing. Having some knowledge of this energy system, Dr. Callahan decided to tap with his fingertips under Mary’s eyes, an end point of the stomach meridian. This was prompted by her complaint of some stomach discomfort. To his astonishment, she announced immediately that her phobia was gone and she raced down to a nearby swimming pool and began throwing water in her face. No fear. No headaches. It all went away ... including the nightmares. And it has never returned. She is totally free of her water phobia. This incident lead to what is called the Discovery Statement:

“The cause of all negative emotions is a disruption in the body’s energy system.”

Dr. Callahan has since refined and expanded his findings to a series of related routines, noting that different acupoints, or perhaps series of points, were more effective in relieving different issues. These series of points, or algorithms, encompass nearly every area of emotional improvement imaginable ... from phobias to panic disorders to sports performance. In addition, along the way, Dr. Callahan has also applied these techniques to physical problems and addictive cravings with notable success. Because emotional factors, including stress, often exacerbate physical discomfort, balancing the energy system with tapping often brings rapid relief from chronic pain, headaches and the like. Simply put, when you attempt to take an action or find yourself in a situation that your subconscious mind believes is a threat to your well-being, it sends a warning signal,
generally with the intent to stop you. This occurs as an imbalance in the energy flowing through the meridians - a discomfort that you experience as a negative emotion. By tapping on particular meridian points, you can rebalance your energy, thus being free from pain that has stopped you in the past. In effect, you are cutting the wires to the electric fence around your comfort zone. Somehow, Mary’s subconscious had been programmed to believe that water posed a threat. There was a reason she was afraid. However, once her energy was rebalanced, this limiting belief was overcome. This doesn’t mean that she no longer has a memory of what created the issue – but that it no longer causes excessive fear. Note that I use the word excessive, as this is an important distinction. Having had this issue her whole life, Mary had never learned to swim. She didn’t forget this after the tapping, so she knew instinctively that jumping into the pool would still pose a threat. Likewise, tapping away a fear of heights would not prompt one to jump off a cliff. On a level deeper than our learned programming, we instinctively know what is truly necessary for survival.

The Emotional Freedom Techniques is based on the discoveries made by Dr. Callahan. Gary Craig, a Stanford-trained engineer, reduced years of diligent research and endless trial and error to one simple and practical procedure that quickly covers all the major meridians. This simplicity makes it possible for anyone to easily learn and use this technique for what is often rapid, effective and natural relief of issues that negatively affect us. It is, with permission, described here in brief.
Important note: While EFT has produced remarkable clinical results, it must still be considered to be in the experimental stage. The treatment procedures in this book are not intended to replace medical or psychiatric treatment. Readers with medical or psychiatric conditions should consult with their appropriate health practitioner and start their EFT treatment under the supervision and guidance of a certified practitioner of Meridian Therapies. You must take complete responsibility for your physical and emotional well-being, and you must agree to hold harmless anyone involved with EFT from any claims made by anyone whom you seek to help with EFT. However, it should be noted that, to date, the only recorded negative side effects from the use of EFT include slight bruising from people tapping too hard and a few incidents of extreme drowsiness after using these relaxing techniques, which can be hazardous if you need to operate an automobile.

It should also be noted that while we see many “one minute wonders” as in the case of Mary, it doesn’t always happen this way. More often, some persistence is required to fully obtain the desired outcome. Also, sometimes the effects are permanent and sometimes the relief lasts only for a short period, only to be retriggered by another aspect of the issue. It only takes a few moments to tap again with a refresher round. The technique has been shown over and over to work, but it might take some time. That being said, let’s learn EFT.
To begin with, identify the troubling emotion, and create what is called a *Reminder Phrase* – that wording which describes and/or will bring up the emotion. For instance, your Reminder Phrase might be: “This fear of rejection.” We want a phrase that will remind you what the issue is, so that the disturbance in the energy system remains present until it is balanced. Otherwise, it is possible to become distracted from the issue while thinking of which points to tap, and the anxiety may seem to dissipate. As you make the statement, note how uncomfortable you are about this issue on a scale of zero (not at all) to ten (as upset as possible). This is called a SUDs scale – Subjective Units of Discomfort. It is sometimes difficult to evaluate this, but try to do so, as it will be effective in recognizing that relief is being gained.

We start the technique with the *Setup*. There is likely to be some reluctance to let go of this issue – remember, there is a reason you have this feeling or belief. This desire on the part of the subconscious mind to hold onto this issue is called *psychological reversal* – you are reversed about your desire to make this change, and there is actually a reversal in the polarity of your energy flow. The Setup clears the way for the tapping to work. It is a statement of self-acceptance in spite of the negative emotion or experience you are seeking to remove. Using your Reminder Phrase, it is stated like this: “*Even though I have this fear of rejection, I deeply and completely accept myself.*” You will repeat this three times, and you can also interchange the words *accept, forgive and love* as you feel appropriate. It also helps, if you are willing, to state forgiveness and acceptance at the end of the third repetition for “*anyone else who may have contributed to this issue.*”
While repeating the Setup, you will tap with two fingers on the karate chop point on the edge of your hand. The meridians run along both sides of the body, so you can tap with either hand on either side of the body. You will then proceed to tap on the following points while repeating the Reminder Phrase:

Put it together, and you have what we call:
THE BASIC RECIPE

1. **The Setup**: Repeat 3 times this affirmation: "*Even though I have this ____ (fear, pain, issue with so-and-so, etc.), I deeply and completely accept (love, forgive) myself.*" while continuously tapping the Karate Chop point.

2. **The Sequence**: Using two fingers, tap between 5 and 10 times on each of the following energy points while repeating the Reminder Phrase at each point.

   (1) Crown (Cr)
   (2) Eyebrow (EB)
   (3) Side of Eye (SE)
   (4) Under Eye (UE)
   (5) Under Nose (UN)
   (6) Chin (Ch)
   (7) Collar Bone (CB)
   (8) Under Arm (UA)
   (9) Thumb (Th)
   (10) Index Finger (IF)
   (11) Middle Finger (MF)
   (12) Little Finger (LF)
   (13) Karate Chop (KC)
3. **The 9 Gamut Procedure**: The purpose of the 9 Gamut is to involve the right and left hemispheres of the brain. While continuously tapping on the Gamut point, which is on the back of the hand an inch up from between the knuckles of the ring finger and little finger, you will perform each of these 9 actions:

(1) Close eyes  
(2) Open eyes  
(3) Look, just with your eyes, hard down and to the right  
(4) Look hard down and to the left  
(5) Roll eyes in circle  
(6) Roll eyes in other direction  
(7) Hum two seconds of a song (“Happy Birthday” will suffice)  
(8) Count out loud to five  
(9) Hum two seconds of a song again.

4. **The Sequence (again)**: Tap between 5 and 10 times on each of the following energy points while repeating the Reminder Phrase at each point.

Cr, EB, SE, UE, UN, Ch, CB, UA, Th, IF, MF, BF, KC
Finish the round by taking a deep breath, then checking in with yourself to see where the level of discomfort is. Remember to rate your discomfort on a scale of 0-10 each time so that you can monitor your progress with each issue. You will most likely feel more relaxed – and it is possible that the negative emotion will be gone.

If you are not experiencing the desired relief, it isn’t that the technique didn’t work, but rather that the issue may be more stubborn and/or complicated. Many issues are made up of little issues, and specificity can go a long way towards speeding up your relief. While “I’m afraid of rejection” may work fine, targeting that incident in the third grade where you lost out on the big role in the school play might more effectively stir up those electrical impulses that we are seeking to short circuit. Should you have trouble identifying specific incidents, don’t be surprised when they make themselves known as you tap on issues that are more general. Notice if the wording of what bothers you changes – it may now be “The teacher’s tone of voice really upset me” or “Susie Perkins laughed at me.” Then, go through the procedure again with the new more appropriate Reminder Phrase. Note: If you keep the wording the same in subsequent rounds, The Setup affirmation and the Reminder Phrase are adjusted to reflect that you are addressing the remaining problem. (“Even though I still have this fear of rejection, I deeply and completely accept myself...,” and repeating “This remaining fear of rejection” as you tap the Sequence.) I urge you to keep tapping until you’ve reduced the negative emotion down to a zero – and it helps to tap with a friend who will encourage you to do so. Go for complete relief – you deserve it!
Basically, that is EFT. Memorize the Basic Recipe, and then aim it at any emotional or physical problem by customizing it with an appropriate Setup affirmation and Reminder Phrase. Where necessary, be persistent until all aspects of the problem have vanished. Try it on everything!!!

Very often, relief is experienced by simply doing what is called the shortcut, which is one round of just the first eight points. You will probably find yourself using this more often, turning to the full procedure for more stubborn issues. Here’s an example of the shortcut with possible wording to use as a template:

Think of the problem, choose a Reminder Phrase (we’ll use “Fear of rejection”) and notice how bothered you are on a scale of one to ten. Then begin tapping the Karate Chop point and say (emphatically):

“Even though I have this fear of rejection, I deeply and completely accept myself...
Even though I have this fear of rejection, I deeply and completely forgive myself...
Even though I have this fear of rejection, I deeply and completely accept, forgive and love myself!”

Now tap on the Crown Point and say your Reminder Phrase: “This fear of rejection.”

Tap on the Eyebrow Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”

Tap on the Side of Eye Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”
Tap on the Under Eye Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”

Tap on the Under Nose Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”

Tap on the Chin Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”

Tap on the Collar Bone Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”

Tap on the Under Arm Point and say: “This fear of rejection.”

Now, take a deep breath, and then notice if the feeling has changed, rating it again on a scale of one to ten. Repeat as necessary. Or, go back and try this again substituting any appropriate wording in place of “this fear of rejection,” such as “this anger at Bob” or “this headache.”

Don’t let the simplicity, or that the procedure may seem strange, dissuade you from using this powerful technique. The key is to find what is stopping you – what you are subconsciously afraid of. One of the most effective ways to do this is to finish the following statement:

“If I took this action towards success, the negative consequence would be...”

What will usually come up is a limiting belief. Tap on it. Here are some frequent stoppers that might help you get started tapping:

Even though I have this anxiety...
Even though I have this fear of success…

Even though I have this fear of failure…

Even though I have this craving for…

Even though I have this pain in my…

Even though I’m upset at my boss…

Even though I made this mistake…

Even though it’s not safe for me to do pursue this goal…

Even though I don’t deserve this…

Even though this goal seems too hard…

Even though it’s not okay for me to take this action…

Even though my family thinks I shouldn’t do this…

Even though I don’t believe I can achieve this…

Don’t wait until you know what the right wording is. While it is best to tap on the specific troubling issue, it is better to tap generally on any discomfort you may be feeling than not to tap at all. Too often, what stops us at the beginning is the reluctance to take any action until we are sure it is the right action. Perfectionism leads to procrastination, which leads to paralysis. Consider this: it is better to be an imperfect success than a perfect failure. Start now. If you’re not starting now, look at what is stopping you, and tap on it.

Even though I don’t know what to tap on…
I recommend tapping daily, particularly on issues that continue to be sticky. They will wear away with persistence. It’s best if you schedule times to tap – like after meals, or on bathroom breaks. Make time, because when you wait until you “find the time” it rarely gets found. Decide now that you are worth the effort, because you are.

Perhaps you can see why it is aptly named “Emotional Freedom Techniques.” Using EFT, you are free to choose your emotions, rather than settling for those that show up by default. This means you are free to choose happiness. Don’t get caught up in conditional happiness, such as “I’ll be happy when I have more money...” or “I’ll be happy when I meet the right person...” You can choose to be happy now.

Funny thing about EFT – it works wonders – but only if you use it. Just like dental floss, which will clear the gunk out from between your teeth – but not if it just sits untouched in your medicine cabinet. EFT, when used, will clear out the emotional and mental gunk. You might think of it as *mental floss*...
Breathe In the Goodness

During workshops, one of the ways we demonstrate the effectiveness of EFT while teaching it is by enhancing people’s breathing. On the whole, folks don’t breathe nearly as fully as they might. All this oxygen around, and we only allow ourselves to take little breaths. It’s something of a metaphor for how much of the surrounding abundance we allow ourselves to draw in. So, here is a great way to test drive EFT:

1. Take a cleansing breath, just to clear your lungs.
2. Now, take as full a breath as you can.
3. Rate that breath on a scale of 0 (tiny constricted breath) to 10 (as full a breath as you can imagine yourself ever taking.)
4. Do the Setup, using the statement “Even though I have this constricted breathing, I deeply and completely accept myself…”
5. Tap either a full or shortcut round, repeating, “This constricted breathing…”
6. Take a breath.
7. Again, try taking as full a breath as you can.

In most cases, participants report a noticeable if not significant increase in the fullness of breath after tapping. Stress about various issues, subtle as they may be, can constrict our breathing, which is our most natural relaxation tool. By tapping on the physical symptom, we clear whatever is causing the problem, creating greater freedom to breathe.
EFT and Affirmations

A very popular technique in the world of self-help is affirmations. Unfortunately, they don’t work for many people. As explained earlier on, if you try to affirm something about which your subconscious mind has a contradictory belief, you will be affirming the contradiction. If you repeat, “I am slim,” and your subconscious replies, “No you’re not,” it is the latter part that is being affirmed. In fact, negative self-talk happens throughout the day, so even if you regularly use affirmations, your mind may be repeating negative statements far more often. However, the power of these negative statements is in their negative charge. That negative charge, of course, can be knocked out with EFT. So, not only can you use EFT on limiting beliefs and negative emotions you are experiencing, but you can tap to balance your energy system as you repeat wonderful affirmations about yourself, thus enhancing their effectiveness. The mind/body feels good as you state your affirmations and accepts them more readily. In fact, this is also an effective way to identify – and eliminate – those issues which have been stopping you. Try making a positive statement about yourself, such as “I am a wonderful human being!” and rate yourself on a scale of 0-10 as to how much you believe it. Then tap using this statement as your Reminder Phrase (“I am a wonderful human being, and I deeply and completely accept myself!…”) and watch as it feels more comfortable to say. After all, it’s the truth. This is a great way to create more positive beliefs about your self-worth and enhance your confidence – the value of which cannot be overstated.
Variations on a Theme

As we experiment with EFT, we find variations that are also very effective. Because variety is the spice of life, I’ll offer a few alternatives here.

The Choice Method - Innovation by Patricia Carrington, Ph.D.

Rather than simply making statements of self-acceptance in the Setup, you can also state a choice for a new behavior or belief. “Even though I’m nervous about this test tomorrow, I choose to relax and think clearly...” A very effective way to use this method is to tap three rounds:

Round One – tap on the negative Reminder Phrase (“I’m nervous about this test tomorrow”)

Round Two (which can be done down the opposite side of the body) – tap on the positive choice (“I choose to relax and think clearly”); and

Round Three – alternate between the negative and the positive from point to point. You’ll want to tap lastly on the positive.
Touch and Breathe - Innovation by John Diepold, Ph.D.

There may be times, as difficult as it may be to imagine, where tapping may not seem appropriate. In many cases, you can gain effective relief simply by holding your finger on one or more points and taking a full breath in and out while thinking of the issue. For instance, place a fingertip or two on the point under your eye, and think to yourself, “This knot in my stomach…”

The Movie (or Mini-Movie)

One more way to effectively use EFT is to tap on the points while you talk about the problem as though telling the plot of a film. Any anxiety about the event that you are relating will be brought up so that the disruptions can be tapped away. For example: “I remember walking into the room (tapping on the crown point) and I heard someone talking about me (tapping the eyebrow point). She said something really mean (tapping the side of eye point), and then they turned and noticed me (tapping under the eye) and started laughing (tapping under the nose)…”

These are only a few ways to use this powerful technique. As you become familiar with it, and acknowledge the basic principle of stimulating the meridian points in order to balance your energy system, you might well find variations of your own that effectively remove the unpleasant feelings that limit your joy and success.
A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

I mentioned that motivation occurs when the perceived benefit of taking action outweighs the perceived cost. Using EFT, you can effectively reduce or eliminate the perceived cost of whatever action you are seeking to take. What will move you even more powerfully toward your goal is to build up the perceived benefits. One of the best ways to do this is visualization. The mind has a powerful way of finding and/or creating things that it can picture. The clearer the picture, the more effectively the mind can work on it. So, what does your success look like? How do you look having achieved your goal? It has been learned that the mind cannot tell the difference between a real event and a vividly imagined one. Mentally rehearsing the success you will achieve can create real world results. This has even been shown with athletic success. A study was done at Ohio State University with basketball players in which one group actually practiced free throws, while a second group only imagined doing so. Both groups improved at virtually the same rate. There’s also the story of a prisoner of war in Vietnam mentally playing golf at his favorite course as a means of maintaining his sanity. After his release, he played that course – and had taken several strokes off his best previous score, despite not having held a club for several years. If practice makes perfect, imagine being able to continue practicing for success while the body is relaxing. You have probably heard it said, in many different ways, that what you think about, you become. So, it stands to reason that we want to think successful thoughts. Using visualization, you can intensify these thoughts, and become more successful. You can train yourself to do this throughout the
day, and also leave reminders for yourself to stop, close your eyes, and picture your success. Perhaps you can put up photos or drawings that depict your goal – or even create a collage. Car salesmen let you test-drive an automobile because being able to feel yourself behind the wheel whets your appetite, and makes positive action (the sale) more likely. *Test-drive your success!* Make the long-term goal well worth any short-term effort. You will also be enhancing your self-image, creating beliefs about yourself as someone who *can* accomplish this and other goals. Your confidence will go up and your comfort zone will expand.

Here is an exercise that will make the most of visualization. Practice it at least once a day (remember what I wrote about finding time vs. making time…put it on your schedule):

Find a comfortable place – preferably sitting (lying down is fine, but you want to avoid falling asleep). Close your eyes, and begin to allow yourself to relax. Take a deep breath – hold it for a moment – then let it go, thinking, “Relax…” Do this three times, and then just pay attention to your normal breathing. Imagine that with each inhalation, you are breathing in relaxation and positive energy. As you exhale, let go of any tension, anxiety or negativity. Feel relaxation flowing through every muscle, nerve, tissue, fiber, cell and atom of your body. Notice that this positive energy flowing through you also helps to heal any part of you that needs a little extra care - you may even imagine it as a healing light that you breathe in and through your body. Then, count backwards from five to zero, allowing yourself to relax even more with each number.
Now, picture yourself somewhere that gives you a feeling of well-being and comfort. This may be a beautiful place in nature, or a room in your home, or a place completely from your imagination. If you have difficulty seeing pictures in your mind, then simply imagine this place however you can. See or imagine yourself in this place, having successfully achieved your goal. What do you see? What do you hear? Smell, taste, feel…? Make the experience as full and real as possible. Notice how good it feels. (Note: if something doesn’t feel good, you may have another issue to tap on…) With each breath you take, allow yourself to enjoy the feeling of success more and more. Perhaps create a little movie, acting out some aspect of your success. Notice how your body looks and feels, and see yourself in clothing that fits your success (i.e. an attractive new dress, a sports uniform, a tuxedo…) Fill in as many details as you can – even ones that are seemingly unimportant. And continue to enjoy it. Really feel it. Allow your body to be bathed in all of the pleasant feelings associated with this success. Tell yourself that you can have this success, and that you deserve it. Heighten it – enjoy it – and then relax again. Then, little by little, bring yourself back to consciousness, counting yourself back up from zero to five, allowing yourself at the number five to be wide awake, alert and focused.

How long you do this exercise is up to you. Five minutes is great – twenty minutes is great. Two hours… and you are perhaps taking too much time to dream, and too little time to take real action. A very effective technique is to write down what you want to visualize, and then make a tape recording to listen to while you relax. If you have any
resistance to doing this technique (i.e. fear of getting it wrong), tap on it. What’s most important is creating an image that excites you. If you have difficulty seeing pictures in your mind, that’s okay. Rather than picturing the scene, simply imagine it – whatever it takes to create the feelings. The better it feels, the more motivated you become to make it happen. Also, the better it feels, the more powerfully you draw success to you. This is known as the Law of Attraction. Things of like nature are drawn to each other. When we are feeling good, we vibrate at a higher energy level, and attract things and events of a similar vibration. This is an actual physical phenomenon, which can partially be demonstrated by tapping a tuning fork - another tuning fork of the same pitch will begin to vibrate as well. So, by enhancing the positive feelings you experience when thinking about your success, you not only become more motivated to move towards your goals, but you begin drawing good things to you as well.
Success Made Simple

Using these two tools, it now becomes simple to begin enjoying the success you deserve.

The basic steps are as follows:

(1) Choose what you want to be, do or have.
(2) Take action to get it.
(3) If you get blocked, eliminate the block with EFT.
(4) Enhance your motivation and self-image through visualization.
(5) Enjoy your success!
(6) Choose again…

So, given that you can have anything you want, what are you waiting for? You will need to take action, as it is action that leads to results. However, do not be attached to the actions you take being the means to your end. Your desired outcome may show up in an entirely different way – that’s sometimes how the Universe does things. If you are too attached to it being done your way, you may not even notice you already have what you are after. But you also can’t just sit around waiting for the Universe to give it to you. Since the action you take might not be the one that brings what you want, you don’t need to worry about it being the “right” action. Take the best action you can think of in this moment. Choose what you want (result), then commit yourself to doing whatever it takes to get it (action). There are specific actions one must be willing to take to get specific
results – like telling the waiter you won’t be having dessert (because your goal is to lose weight, or save money, or…). Fortunately, commitment to your goal often brings about desired results without having to take many of the actions you might have thought necessary – but the willingness must be there. If it is not, you probably have a tappable issue. You also need to be consistent. Don’t kid yourself that working out once a week will get you in shape, or that “just one more bite” (a couple times a day) won’t make a difference. Success in any endeavor requires you to take more positive actions – ones that move you toward your goal - than ones that keep you stuck … or lead you astray.

If you would like more of a plan, there are many good books on goal setting. If you have not read one previously, the following process will get you started:

1. State your goal.

Here it is – the big question: *What do you want?* (That question alone may have you feeling uneasy…tap, and answer it anyway.) And I would encourage you to look beyond the first thing that comes to mind and ask yourself: What do you really want? One way to discover the goals you really want is to answer the question: *What would you do if you weren’t afraid?* I also recommend that you come up with more than one goal – perhaps a couple of long-term goals, and some short-term goals. (The short-term goals will ideally move you in the direction of your longer-term goals.) Be as clear as possible. State your goal in a way that is specific and measurable, so that you will know when you have reached it. And be sure it really is *your* goal, as opposed to someone else’s goal for you.
Choose something that fits your values – choose wisely – and dare to choose big. And, very importantly: write it down.

2. Set a date for its achievement.

This is designed to get you into action. If you say you are going to complete a task by three o’clock this afternoon, you are far more likely to do it than if you say, “I’ll do it later.” Guess what – “later” rarely comes. You may have noticed that already. Give yourself a reason to get into action ASAP. Again, tap if this step causes you anxiety.

3. State any perceived obstacles.

There will likely be roadblocks – or at least speed bumps - to the successful achievement of your goal. Better to plan ahead, when possible, to make the ride smoother. Know what you are up against – but don’t let that stop you. Perhaps fear of the risks involved could stop you. Look closely at those perceived risks, at how real the threat may be, and see if you can’t tap away any unnecessary fear. Notice also if the goal fits with your perception of yourself. One obstacle may be a belief that you aren’t the kind of person who can reach this goal – and this belief may be unconscious. It will be difficult to become and remain a millionaire if you don’t think of yourself as one. Use tapping and visualization to let go of limiting beliefs and become the sort of person you need to become in order to do what you wish to do.
4. Create a plan of action.

Perhaps you’ve heard the old joke about how you eat an elephant… one bite at a time. One of the first things to stop us in our tracks when we set a worthwhile goal is the enormity of the project. Simply break the goal down into little pieces until the steps feel manageable and you aren’t too intimidated to take action. You may not be able to write a novel today, but you could write a page – or at least a paragraph. Make a plan – and a commitment - to do that each day and you are on your way! Include in the plan the items you might need along the way: skills, knowledge – and perhaps associations with others. Remember that “Two heads are better than one” and ”Many hands make light work.” Some goals require the assistance and cooperation of others. And, support is always important when going about achieving something great, particularly when the road gets bumpy. Know with whom you want or need to work in order to succeed, and make connecting with them part of your plan.

Remember that your plan may not, in the end, be directly responsible for the achievement of your goal. Follow the plan, but do so unattached. Take action for the sake, and joy, of taking action.

5. Answer this question: Why do I want this?

The clearer you are about why you want to achieve this goal, the more benefits you can perceive, the more passion you can muster, the more likely it is that you will stay the
course. What’s really in it for you to be, do or have this? If you don’t really care about the goal – if it doesn’t present that much value – it will be too easy to abandon at the first sign of difficulty. List why this goal is worthwhile – give yourself reasons to succeed, and write them down. The more exciting the reasons, the better. You may want to look at this list from time to time to remind yourself why you are doing it, and that will make it easier to make better choices. It’s easier to resist that big piece of cake if you can readily remind yourself of all the great benefits of reaching your goal weight. Again, motivation is the result of the perceived benefits of taking action outweighing the perceived cost of doing so. Build up your outcome so it truly feels worthwhile – then visualize it! Note: It helps to be flexible in your goals. Along the path, you may find your desired outcome changes. Don’t be too rigid, but rather allow your goals to evolve as you do. Pursuing a particular dream may not lead directly to that dream, but may open a pathway to one that might be even more desirable. And if you find yourself resistant to doing these steps – *tap!*
Is It Really That Simple?

As stated, success is a journey, not a destination. Things rarely turn out exactly as we’d like them to be, and life often seems very complex. I’d like to offer a simple metaphor in order to make a few points on this subject:

Take a look at the maze above. There are a few interesting similarities between this maze and life that I’d like you to consider…

To successfully complete this maze, it helps to know where the starting point is, and where the finish is. A lot of people don’t know where they are, where they came from or where they are going. It should be fairly obvious how this is not a recipe for success. Imagine for a moment that rather than going through the maze, you chose to fly over it. You call to book the flight, and when the reservations clerk asks what your intended
destination is, you tell her you don’t know. She could send you anywhere – including some places you’d rather not go. She will also need to know where you are departing from. In order to chart a course you can successfully follow, you need a starting point. You need to take an honest look at where you are right now – and how far you are from your desired destination. It is important to realize that you need to chart the course from where you are starting from at this moment, not from where you wish you were. Don’t get caught up in wishing the past were different or beating up on yourself for past choices – that is not a productive use of time. Don’t bemoan your mistakes – learn from them. Beyond that, the past is history – move forward. Tap on: Even though I’ve made mistakes...

Also, like life, there isn’t a straight path in following this maze. When a corridor comes to an end, it is rarely a stop – more often than not, it is just a detour. There will be twists and turns, and it’s possible that it may sometimes feel as if you are headed in the wrong direction. As long as you know where you are headed, and continue to make more good choices than not-so-good ones, you will succeed. If you find that you are headed down the wrong path, you can change direction. In attempting this maze, if you found you came to a dead end, would you abandon the maze all together, or go back and look for where you got off course? It’s estimated that an airplane is off course 90% of the time – but it can always redirect because it knows its intended destination. Imagine a plane turning around and heading home the moment it was off course... It is never too late to get back on track, and I hope you will never give up.
Every choice you make doesn’t have to be perfect. I certainly don’t want to encourage you to be obsessive with a one-track mind. But be careful – choices add up, particularly absent-minded ones. And, choosing one thing means you are not choosing many others. If your goal is to lose weight, it’s easy to say, “It’s just one little bowl of ice cream – it won’t matter.” Enjoy yourself, but don’t kid yourself. Too many of those and you never get where you say you want to go. If you absolutely need to stray, stray knowingly – allow yourself what I call strategic self-indulgences. Choosing too often not to deprive yourself of treats (be it unhealthy food, TV, unproductive activities, etc.) may mean that you are choosing to deprive yourself of better health and success. Notice the choices you make throughout your day, because how you spend your day is how you spend your life.

You don’t complete the maze with one huge jump to the finish. Rather, it is a series of small choices – at each turn, you need to choose which direction to go. You don’t need to be in a hurry, but you want to be in action. Choose, act, repeat. That’s life – and your level of success is dependent upon the quality of your choices.

Last, but far from least, consider this: Why do people do mazes? Because they are fun! Remember that one of the purposes of life is to enjoy life, and it helps to look at life as a game that you have willingly chosen to play. Most forms of recreation have some kind of challenge involved – that’s half the fun. No one wants to play or even watch a sports match in which one side wins every point easily. Allow yourself to take pleasure in all
the spectrums of life. And, no matter how complicated things seem to get, consider this possibility a friend once suggested: *Life is simple, people are extraordinary.*
A Guiding Light

There is one more tool I’d like to suggest: a purpose statement. Some people are put off by this idea, feeling that it is a little too grandiose to assume that they have a purpose in life – that there is a reason they are here. If you feel that way, tap on it. Acknowledging that you have a purpose will both motivate you and simplify your journey of success. Unlike a goal that can be reached, a purpose is something that can be followed throughout your life, directing your choices and shaping your course. It can also add to a more profound sense of joy in whatever you may be doing. Again, there are many books on creating a purpose statement, but go ahead and get started now. The statement will most likely be about what you enjoy doing most, as well as what you most want for the world. Try not to be too wordy, though, as a simple statement will be much easier to remember. An excellent example is that of comedian George Burns, who stated that his purpose was “to provide a laugh for anyone who needed it.” Beautiful.

There is no right or wrong way to create a purpose statement, so don’t get stuck on the wording. Just come up with something – anything – even if it doesn’t feel perfect. And even if it does, don’t be surprised if it changes – perhaps daily. This is just for you – share it only if you choose to do so. Also, let it be positive – be for something, as opposed to against something. (i.e. Rather than being against pollution, be for cleaner air.) Remember, positive emotions are more powerful and energizing than negative ones.
I once heard a beautiful metaphor for a purpose statement: Years ago, early explorers in the Arctic Circle watched in confusion as strong winds blew through the region, but apparently had no effect on the large icebergs which floated in a different direction. At that time, they did not know about the immense base, which is guided by the current. Think of your purpose as this base – this foundation – that will keep you on course in spite of ill winds.
Keep On Keeping On

Perhaps you’ve heard the ancient Chinese proverb, “The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” I’ve given you enough in this book to get you to take that first step – or at least the tools to free yourself to do so. But what about the next one, and the one after that…? You may ask, “What will keep this from being yet another “self-help” program that I abandon…?” As mentioned, any of those programs could have worked, but you chose not to continue with them. You now know what has stopped you in the past, and have tools to overcome those stoppers. But it is possible that those stoppers will try to keep you from tapping them away – that you (your subconscious mind) will again choose to stay stuck. Don’t let resistance discourage you – it’s a good thing, as it means that you are pushing the boundaries of your comfort zone. If you start now, you will find that resistance will lessen. This is not a program about using willpower to overcome resistance – it’s about breaking down and eliminating the resistance so that positive change becomes effortless.

Make the choice to tap and visualize on a daily basis. If you still find you are not making progress, consider this: When someone chooses to get in better shape, there are three things that might happen:

1. They are motivated enough to do it on their own.
2. They are motivationally challenged, and give up.
3. They are motivationally challenged, recognize this, and hire a personal trainer.

Most of us need encouragement along the way – someone to push us past our excuses. Otherwise, it is too easy in our society to stay stuck. Please don’t let this happen to you. Even the finest athletes have coaches to keep them achieving peak performance. There are numerous skilled coaches out there - find one who you feel good about, and reap the benefits. Consider hiring a coach not as an expense, but rather as an investment – in you. You are ultimately responsible for the results you achieve in life – only you can choose between settling for a passing grade or going for an A. But no one gets to the top without help, so be willing to ask for it and accept it. Please don’t allow a belief that you need to “go it alone” – or any other beliefs, for that matter – keep you from being, doing and having all that you can.
With the desire to further encourage and inspire you to follow your dreams, I offer this final thought…

Imagine walking into someone's home, and finding the living room dominated by a beautiful grand piano. You ask your hosts for a recital, to which they reply that they don't play. As you run your hand over the sleek exterior of this magnificent instrument, you think to yourself, "What a shame…"

I think human beings are like grand pianos - incredible creations capable of producing wonderful music. But too often that potential goes untapped. We think that greatness is meant for someone else, that we don't have the talent (the looks, the money, the time, the breaks…) And so we live lives "of quiet desperation," occasionally entertaining thoughts of "what if…?"

What if Mozart had hidden his talent? (Or Bowie, or, moving from music, Edison or Gandhi or anyone else who has made a positive difference.) I'm not saying that everyone should feel compelled to live that big, but if one has that inkling... It seems a shame that, as Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "The average person goes to their grave with their music still in them."
Imagine a world where people felt free to share their grandest music and make a huge positive difference. Or, at the least, were free from the negativity that causes them to hurt themselves and others. Consider what would be possible. So, thank you for looking for ways to enhance your music-making capabilities – I encourage you to continue to make powerful choices as you reach ever-greater levels of success. I believe the purpose of life is to enjoy life, and I hope you enjoy it magnificently!
Here are further articles on the subject of success, written since the completion of the first edition of *The Joy of Success*, the original title of this manuscript. Some are expansions on subjects that were touched on more briefly in the original manuscript. However, if some of them ideas seem similar, remember that repetition is the mother of learning. Enjoy!

**The Myth of Willpower**

It’s likely you’ve heard it before … or perhaps have uttered it yourself. It is said with varying degrees of contempt, and sometimes even said in a way that is supposed to be mildly humorous, as though the person passing judgment is only kidding you. But it is always a criticism suggesting that you are a lesser individual: “You’ve got no willpower.” It smacks of a certain air of superiority, as if the person offering this opinion was somehow made of stronger stuff. My opinion is that it just ain’t so.

Willpower could be defined as the conscious effort necessary to overcome unconscious resistance to taking a particular action. For instance, you are on a diet and your unconscious mind is compelling you to eat a hot fudge sundae, and you fight that urge with your willpower. Given that eighty to ninety percent of human behavior is unconscious, your odds are at best two in ten of succeeding on your diet. The variable from person to person in this scenario is how strong the urge is to eat the ice cream. The
desire to eat such treats tends to have more to do with emotions than any real need to satisfy one’s physical hunger – which leads to the question: If you are no longer feeding the body, what are you feeding…? How profound that psychological hunger is depends on the person’s background and beliefs, as well as their current circumstances. So if two people on diets are confronted with a tempting dessert, and one resists, does that mean they have greater willpower? No – they simply are fighting a less intense urge.

Despite being technically overweight as a child, Bob’s mother constantly told him, “Eat – look at you – you’re too skinny!” His father told him, “Clean your plate - don’t waste food – there’s kids starving in China.” Years later, he starts yet another diet at his doctor’s insistence. As he starts to lose weight after much concerted effort, his mother’s words echo in the back of his mind, letting him know that he is in danger of getting too skinny. Bob blows yet another diet. Is he just lacking in willpower, or is he fighting a losing battle? No one can know the power of his parents’ influence, so no one can determine if he has less willpower than another does. It isn’t that Bob doesn’t have enough willpower to stay on the diet, but rather that he has too strong a reason to stay overweight. That’s the key – if you are overweight, you have a reason for it – at the level of the unconscious, which is far more powerful than the conscious mind. I’m not saying that the reason is logical, but the subconscious doesn’t care about logic, it cares about keeping you in your comfort zone.

The object of unconscious resistance also varies from person to person. Driving home
from a restaurant, the husband criticizes his wife for her lack of willpower when she is unable to stay on her diet, but finds himself unable to stop and ask for directions when they realize they are lost. Why should a quick stop at a gas station to ask for help be anymore difficult than saying “no” to a tantalizing dessert? “Because I’m a man, and we don’t ask for directions,” comes the response, as if that made any real sense. He is succumbing to an unconscious belief, and apparently doesn’t “have enough willpower” to override it. Better to stay in his comfort zone regarding his rules of being a man than to get them home sooner.

So, in taking positive action, what we want is not more willpower to help us fight the good fight, but rather to take the fight out of the equation. Imagine that rather than being able to successfully struggle through the day resisting temptation after temptation – maybe feeling proud, and maybe a little thinner, but also perhaps bitter and stressed – you simply felt it easy and natural to choose appropriate foods in appropriate amounts. Or think how nice it would be to be able to freely ask for directions to get you where you are going as quickly and conveniently as possible. Basically, in terms of eating or any other aspect of life, imagine truly having the freedom of choice. It is possible. Unconscious beliefs control your choices, and thus your actions, but these beliefs can be modified.

The point of all this is not to suggest that you use the absence of willpower as an excuse for staying stuck, but rather to show you how you can change circumstances. Various
forms of therapy can be beneficial in helping you achieve emotional freedom, the most
effective of which are the emerging energy psychology techniques (particularly EFT).
These techniques can relieve the stress that occurs in the moment when we are confronted
with a choice. More significantly, they can also reduce the intensity of the control our
unconscious beliefs have over us, so that future choices are less stressful.

So, does it matter whether one person actually has more willpower than another does?
Without that unconscious resistance, who needs it?
Your Mental Work Crew

Some time ago, there was a foreman with a crew of one hundred master builders. These guys were good – really good. They could take any blueprint and turn it into a masterpiece. At least, that’s what they were capable of…

You see, the foreman could only really get about five of them to do what he wanted them to do at any given time. The rest might get involved, but often they would get caught up in any number of distractions. One might be busy thinking about a card he had been meaning to send to a friend in the hospital. Another would be concerned about a conversation he knew he needed to have with his wife, while a third kept thinking about a sock left on the floor of his home that should be picked up. Some would be immobilized by various negative emotions as a result of unresolved issues, and others still just kept being pulled away by an urge to eat, or play, or any number of other cravings for instant gratification (or, sometimes, addictions). Any of these distractions could have been dealt with, leaving the craftsmen free to achieve greatness. But rather than taking action, they simply tolerated these conditions. This, of course, limited their effectiveness – and that of the crew as a whole.

People knew what these builders were capable of, but very often their work fell short of their promise. Eventually, the company’s business dwindled dramatically, as the crew was performing just enough to keep them from going under completely. Shame, really.
They really sold themselves short, as well as all those who could have benefited from their potential achievements. Just think what they could have done with a larger percentage of the crew on the job more often…

As you may have guessed, you are the foreman, with this amazing crew potentially at your service. The five or so workers at your command represent the 5% of your mind that is under your conscious control. The rest is what we call the subconscious. It is (and you are) extremely powerful – far more than you can know - but it can be handicapped by tolerations. For example, is there a dirty sock on your floor that every time you pass by it you think, “Hmm…I should pick that up?” You’ve just left part of your crew there with that sock – part of your mind will continue to perseverate about it. If it isn’t something you can take care of at the moment, make a note of it, so that another part of your mind isn’t then delegated to trying to remember to do this task (imagine a number of the builders all limited in their ability to work because they are busy reminding each other to remind each other to do something…). Are you allowing harmful reactions to stress (and other bad habits) eat away at your health? How many of your crew are out on worker’s comp with stress-related illnesses? How many are fatigued by a lack of a proper diet and exercise? How many are not working due to factors that are within your control to change…?

Think for a moment of what you really want to be, do and have. Then acknowledge the possibility that you have within you the capacity to achieve all that … and more! What
could you accomplish without all those tolerations? What successes are you denying
yourself … and the world at large? Stop tolerating those factors that hamper your
potential – that distract your work crew - and give yourself the freedom to succeed!

Note: One of the worst tolerations – one of the worst prisons that can keep a person from
truly enjoying success – is an addiction. Now, you may not have a problem with alcohol
or drugs, but there are many other forms of addiction. People can be addicted to food,
television, sex, rage, solitaire – all kinds of stimulation in which they can’t seem to stop
themselves from indulging. Ask yourself: “Is there something I don’t seem to be able to
stop myself from doing, which is blocking me from success?” I think that, if you answer
honestly, you will probably find something. I want to suggest you look up the 12 Steps
of Alcoholics Anonymous – they aren’t just for “addicts” anymore. I teach weekly
workshop for parolees at Drug Court on how to use EFT in their recovery, and I have
presented this work at the International Energy Psychology Conference. I have a web
site set up discussing the integration of the 12 Steps with energy therapy: www.tappingintoGod.org. It also includes links to a variety of 12 Step Programs –
support groups can be invaluable. Please check it out - chances are you know someone
who could benefit from the information.
Manifesting Red Pick-Ups

I manifest red pick-up trucks. No, really…I do. Kind of a hobby, really. Not much real-world practicality to it, but it is kind of fun.

Well, there’s not much practicality in terms of the trucks, as I don’t manifest them with a pink slip with my name on it. Not yet, anyway. But the manifesting … now that can be useful…

First, let me tell you how it started. Some years ago, when I was just starting out as a hypnotherapist, I studied with a teacher named Don Mottin. Very enthusiastic guy, and a great trainer. Anyhow, Don likes to add a little post-hypnotic suggestion to clients that tells them they will feel a boost of confidence whenever they see the color red. I thought this was pretty cool, and starting using this with my own clients. One day, while enjoying the state of hypnosis myself – as induced by a colleague – I took the opportunity to add this suggestion in amongst those my friend was giving me.

As I left her office and was getting into my car, I noticed a red pick-up truck driving by. The suggestion kicked-in, and I felt a subtle wave of confidence wash over me. I remember thinking that the red pick-up was a “confidence pick-me-up.” Suddenly, a red pick-up truck had some significance for me. Then it got weird. On the way home from her office, which took about 20 minutes, I saw no fewer than 20 red pick-up trucks…!
For the next week or so, while driving, I merely had to think about red pick-up trucks (which I was doing fairly regularly) and within seconds I’d see at least one – usually several. I’d think it, and it would appear. Manifestation. Cool, huh?

It actually got to be a little annoying, as I was so busy manifesting red pick-ups that it made it hard to focus on anything else. After a week or two, I guess the Universe figured I’d gotten the point, and the thought – and the red pick-ups it created – occurred less frequently. But to this day, if for some reason I have a thought about a red pick-up, it will be no more than 20 seconds before I see one. Yesterday, while contemplating this article, I put it to the test again. I thought, “red pick-up,” and then looked around. It actually took me nearly a minute before I saw one … but then I saw three driving by, and then one parked at every corner I drove by for four or five blocks…! I’ve still got the magic.

Now, here’s the question: Am I really “manifesting” these red pick-ups…? Or, could it simply be that it’s a very popular kind of car, and the odds are that in a given period of time I would naturally see that many…? Am I just activating the reticular formation in my brain, and there’s nothing metaphysical about it at all…?

Here’s another question: *Does it matter*…?

The point is, I don’t usually notice red pick-ups – not until I put my attention on them.
Whether or not they are there to begin with isn’t important. I may not be drawing them into existence, but merely into my realm of attention. It’s not something from nothing – because the something is already there. But by focusing my attention on it, it appears for me.

Here’s where the practicality of this hobby comes in to play. What do you want to appear for you? What is appearing for you, and on what do you focus your thoughts and attention? There is a correlation, and you can use it to your advantage, or, if you are careless with your thoughts and dwell on the negative, it can work to your detriment. Both the things that you want and those that you do not want are all around – it’s up to you what you pay attention to. As my friend Mike Dooley says, “Thoughts become things – choose the good ones.” (When things appear to be going well for me, I like to imagine the Master from the old show “Kung Fu” telling me, “You have chosen wisely, Grasshopper.”)

So…what are you going to manifest for yourself today…?
License to Live

Okay - I admit it - I'm a Bond fan. Not so much that I have the whole box set of DVDs... but I've read many of the books, seen all the films (but the last one), and I'll gladly enter into a debate about who the best Bond was. (As if there was anything to debate - Sean will never be matched...though I have always been a big fan of Pierce.) But, I digress...

This morning, while doing some tapping and letting my thoughts go where they will, I was thinking about the idea that I work for God. I believe we all do - we just may see it - and God - in different terms. And I'm not here to preach any particular way of viewing this. But I am here on a mission, and that led to the thought that I was an agent of God - which led to thoughts of secret agents and James Bond - which led to the line, "license to kill..."

That one stopped the flow. I don't want to kill anyone - far from it. But I started thinking about what the "double-o" classification in the Bond lore - that license to kill - meant. The idea is that Bond has a job to do, and his government has given him complete freedom to do what he must in order to get the job done - including kill. I'm not sure how a government can give that right to someone, but that's another issue... (I mean, it’s against the Commandments, right? I wonder if "single-o" is merely a license to covet...?)
Then the idea hit me of a "license to live." We are each here to do something, and it would be great if we truly had complete freedom to do whatever it takes. The freedom to speak in front of large groups without fear...the freedom to have abundance...the freedom to easily exercise and eat in a healthy way...the freedom to open ourselves up to loving relationships... Basically, the freedom to live life the best we can. What we need is license to truly live.

It's been said that there are only two emotions - love and fear. It is fear that keeps us from living life to the fullest - and fulfilling our purpose to the greatest extent that we can. There is a brilliant movie that I can't recommend highly enough - an Australian film called "Strictly Ballroom." The central message is this: "A life lived in fear is a life half lived." We need to give ourselves permission to live fully - we need to give ourselves license to live.

James Bond is allowed to operate above the law, so as to do what he needs to do without limitations being imposed on him. In order to do what we want and need to do, we need to find ways to become unhampered by those limitations that we have imposed upon ourselves.

Imagine what a super agent you would be if you had a license to live... a license to be fully here, and at the same time to boldly move in the direction of your dreams. Now...give yourself one. (I did - it's in my wallet...)
Playing the “What If” Game

Ever play the “What If” game? Sure you have. We all do. Chances are, you have probably played it several times today already. But…do you play it to win…?

There are those who would advise that we not play the “What If” game, as it pretty much deals with either the past or the future. Not really a “being present” kind of thing, and living in the here-and-now is suggested as one of the great keys to happiness. And maybe one of these days I’ll tap myself into that Nirvana of present-consciousness … hey, it could happen! But until then, I find myself playing “What If.”

One way of playing deals with the past. A recent game I’ve played is: “What if, when my wife and I paddled that kayak far from shore in Maui, it had been a tiger shark rather than a sea turtle which swam under us..?” Not a pretty sight – especially with some of the possible outcomes my mind indulges in. There are plenty of other “What Ifs” that are possible around the past… “What if I had taken that job…? Gotten a different degree in school…? Chosen the number on that lottery ticket that I first thought of, and which was a winner…?” Yup – lots of “What Ifs” that can take us to a maudlin state of mind, or worse.

Another way to do it is with the future. A trip to present at a conference in Phoenix in 2003 was the first time I’d been on a plane in over two years. So, there was still 9/11 stuff
I hadn’t dealt with. I played the game of “What if someone makes the plane go down?” There was also, “What if everything goes wrong in my presentation?” Again, games that provide emotional indigestion. (Yes – I played these negative “What If” games… just because I write a motivational newsletter doesn’t mean I’m completely evolved…) Fortunately, I have tapping – which pulled me out of the upset states caused by these games. But then, that’s kind of like taking heartburn medicine after eating foods you know are harmful to your system. Is the thrill really worth the damage? Because, there is damage. The subconscious mind doesn’t know the difference between reality and imagination. The stress of those situations is real stress felt by the body-mind, even if the circumstances are only imagined. That is more stuff that is stuck in the energy system – and if it isn’t cleared, it can sit there and take a subtle toll on our well-being.

But there is another way to play “What If”… “What if I applied for that job…” “What if I asked that person out for coffee…” “What if the Kings hired me as a special consultant…” Now these are “What Ifs” that you can play out in very positive ways – and with very positive benefits. This is creative visualization, which is a great success technique. Remember, the subconscious mind doesn’t know the difference between reality and imagination. As you imagine yourself being successful, you are mentally rehearsing success, and training yourself to be more predisposed to success. As many success gurus have put it, we become what we think about. Basically, guiding our thoughts to positive outcomes is a good thing.
And, it’s pretty simple. Make a decision to play the positive “What If” game. When you find yourself mentally going down a dark alley, choose to make a turn and stroll down a better-lit street. You can do it instantly. It might take some doing – some practice and commitment – but you can do it. Make that decision now – that as long as you are going to play “What If,” that you are going to play to win.
Wishing Things Were Different

Darn…there I go again…wishing I had more time to write this. Or that it was already written. Or that I was writing it on my laptop on some tropical beach. Or that I was Dave Barry… (You may be wishing that, too – I’ll have to tap on that thought…) Basically, wishing that things were somehow different.

Anyone else here ever catch yourselves doing that? C’mon – let’s see a show of hands… Okay – you in the back…the one not raising your hand… My hat is off to you. But for most of us, this is a common past time. And…an unfortunate misuse of time and energy. Rather than wishing things were different, we could be using that time and energy making things different. And anyhow, if things were already different, what would we do with ourselves?

Think of Edison, sitting in his study, wishing he had better light to work by. If things were already different – if the incandescent light bulb had already existed – he wouldn’t have had his greatest contribution to invent. Or, what if he had wasted time just wishing things were different, rather than making it different…? Sometimes life is challenging, and we feel a desire for it to be less so. But that’s not what we came here for. How many of us are happy to open the in-flight magazine to the crossword page and say “thank goodness” when we find it’s already been done for us…? No – we came here to take on the challenges.
There’s a story of a man who stood on a mountaintop beside God, looking at the world, and seeing all the things wrong with it.

“There’s so much suffering in the world, Lord. Why don’t you do something about it?” the man asked.

“I did,” answered the Creator. “I made you.”

We are here to make a difference. We are free to choose not to, but I can’t imagine that making for a very satisfying life experience.

We also need to take personal responsibility for the state of things in our own lives. Most (all…?) of the circumstances in my life that I might wish were different are the way they are because I made them so. Maybe not in one act, but over time – through both my actions (or lack thereof) and my thoughts. Remember: thoughts are energy, and have creative power. We manifested what we see around us. And, we can manifest what we would prefer to see around us. So, we can wish things were different, or we can make them different. As always, we are at choice…choose wisely.

I used to wish that people felt more empowered to create the lives they really wanted. Then, I started writing Laurusnotes. I don’t know how great a difference it makes, but I
can’t get caught up in being attached to the outcome – doing so might block me from taking action. The point is, I’m doing something, and I feel better about myself for it.

The next time you catch yourself wishing things were different, stop yourself and ask, “How can I make a difference here?” Because you can, and you do. And on behalf of the world, I’d like to say, “Thank you – keep up the good work.”
A great teacher once said, “Judge not, lest ye be judged.” I would suggest that being judged is only one of the consequences. Judgment from others is something outside ourselves, something we have no real control over. People are going to judge you – it is part of human nature. It is likely you are judging me right now – or at least my writing. There’s no way for me to avoid that judgment – except to not write – and inaction as a means of avoiding consequences is a tragedy that I am in the business of eliminating. So, since avoidance of being judged is fairly impossible anyway, it may not be very motivating in terms of stopping myself from judging others.

I don’t know about you, but I’m pretty darn good at judging. I’m sorry to admit that I probably practice it daily. Something will trigger me, and I’m off. It’s like Bruce Banner turning into the Hulk… “Hulk will … judge!” (rather than “smash.”) And part of me thinks that feels good … for a little while. It’s like a mini-vacation from my own culpability – from my own responsibility – from my own flaws. So much easier to focus on the faults of others than to face my own.

But … it is also a vacation from my higher self. Truth is, judging others doesn’t do me any good – but it does do me harm. And it can lead me to do harm to others, if I let it. While I may feel self-satisfied in Hulk-mode, I never have a satisfied feeling afterwards – I’m usually left with a bad taste in my mouth. I’ve also just wasted a portion of
my precious time on a completely non-productive activity – and I have too many magnificent things I want to accomplish while I’m here to be doing that. And, if nothing else, I’m stirring up a whole mess of negative energy, which can have some very real harmful effects – let’s not forget the Law of Attraction. So, there are a number of negative consequences to judging.

Ed Stracher, who has some brilliant courses on expanding one’s potential, once said that judging is the single most destructive block to one’s success. While I’m not certain I’ll ever evolve beyond judging, I do catch myself a lot quicker, and cut those vacations a lot shorter. And while I can only speak for myself, I encourage you to take a look at whether any of this fits you – and whether you wouldn’t really prefer to spend your vacation time creating the life of your dreams.
“Begrudge Not, Lest...”

Simple question, and you get bonus points for answering honestly: Do you ever catch yourself begrudging people their health, wealth or happiness...?

In the last article, I wrote about the perils of judging. I’m not sure at what point I came up with the topic for this month’s article, but I am sure it was more than just for the play on words – although I have to admit that really appealed to me... :) Anyhow, by only slightly altering the biblical warning referenced in the last article, we get:

_Begrudge not, lest ye be begrudged._

You see, our subconscious mind is set up to protect us from those things that we perceive as bad. Not necessarily what is really bad – we block ourselves from all kinds of wonderful things because of faulty perceptions. And it drives us towards all kinds of things that we can consciously identify as unhealthy for us. Ask anyone who smokes if they are completely unaware of the risks that habit poses to their health...yet their subconscious has convinced them that they are better of with the cigarette than without. But, I digress. The point is, the subconscious mind is going to push us towards things it believes are good, and away from things it believes are bad – even if those judgments are misguided.
So…what happens when you look at someone who has something you’d like to have, and begrudge them their good fortune? You are basically saying that it is bad that they have that thing…which the subconscious mind translates as, “It is bad to have this thing.” Given that your subconscious is designed to keep you from having things it deems as bad, what do you think the chances are that you will attract this object you consciously desire – but unconsciously denounce – into your life…? By saying that someone shouldn’t have something you want, you are reinforcing a belief that it shouldn’t be had – and your subconscious doesn’t want you to have something that shouldn’t be had. Begrudging is also saying, “If I can’t have this, than neither should anyone else.” What is being reinforced is the idea that, for whatever reason, you can’t have this thing. Is that something you really want to reinforce…?

Now, you may elaborate – in an attempt to justify your begrudgment – saying that, “It’s not that this thing shouldn’t be had…it’s that this person shouldn’t have it because they haven’t earned it.” So, you are setting up unconscious conditions for having what you want – rather than believing that the Universe is unconditionally abundant. In this case, you can only hope that you are able to meet the standards that your subconscious has set up. If you say, “They only have that because they got lucky,” then you are begrudging them good luck – and setting luck up as something that is bad to have – thus making it off limits to you, thanks to your ever-watchful self-protection mechanism.

I have, on a few occasions, found myself begrudging people their high incomes. When I
do that, I am begrudging myself a high income – why should my subconscious mind think that what’s bad for someone else would be okay for me? The Universe is abundant – and there is plenty for all. If I am going to believe that for myself, it behooves me to believe that for this other person as well. When someone gets into an another checkout line after I arrived, but their line moves quicker than mine and they can leave before I do – what does it serve me to begrudge them their good fortune? The implication of that thought is that there is something wrong with them for having something good happen to them. That means, to some extent, that they are bad. I don’t want to be bad. And I don’t want anyone cursing my good fortune. So – I’m going to keep manifesting slow cashiers and customers in front of me with a million coupons and umpteen items that need price checks. (Not that I’m begrudging them the savings they get from those coupons…) It’s the Law of Attraction – I attract things according to what I am vibrationally in tune with – and I pretty much block those things that I am not in tune with. When I begrudge others, I begrudge myself at the same time.

In an attempt to justify my digression earlier on, let’s revisit the smoker. If he sees someone successfully kick the habit, will he congratulate that person, or begrudge them their recovery? If he does that latter, what are the chances that his subconscious is identifying recovery as a good thing? The person who begrudges another their progressive victory over an addiction or other illness – whatever it may be – is begrudging him or herself the same healing and recovery.
Pay attention to the things you think and say about yourself and others. Are you in a place of gratitude for what you have, or are you more focused on begrudging others what they have? Which thought do you think will serve you best? When you see someone having something good happen to them – whether you deem them deserving or not (there’s that judgment that only leads to trouble) – consider being happy for them. That is a higher place to be – both spiritually and energetically – and you will naturally attract more health, wealth and happiness into your own life.
“Free Crab Tomorrow”

There is a seafood restaurant down by the river here in Sacramento that has the following ad boldly painted on the outside: “Free Crab Tomorrow!”

Now is that a great ad, or what? It certainly catches the attention – and it is absolutely safe for the restaurant. Since tomorrow never comes, they will never have to shell out… (sorry – I couldn’t resist.) (Just tap – the pain will subside, eventually…)

Anyhow… this restaurant has made powerful use of an unfulfillable promise. Here’s the question – how often do you get yourself excited about something and likewise withhold it by scheduling it “tomorrow?”

“I’ll start my diet/exercise program tomorrow…”

“I’ll call that person tomorrow…”

“I’ll work on that proposal tomorrow…”

The list is endless. And, when asked why you haven’t done it, you can answer, quite accurately, “Well, it isn’t tomorrow yet.”

Sure, you’re right – but would you rather be right or happy and successful?
You’ve likely heard the expression “Don’t put off ‘til tomorrow what you can do today.” (… or the popular foil for that, “Don’t put off ‘til tomorrow what can just as easily be put off ‘til the day after tomorrow…”) Now, obviously, you can’t do everything today. But you can’t do anything tomorrow. Today, this moment, in fact, is the only time you are capable of taking action – even if that action is to set a specific time at which you will undertake a task. “Tomorrow” never comes – but “3:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2004” sure does.

Simply state, that which gets scheduled gets done. How many things on your to-do list have a stated start time of “when I find the time”…? I don’t know about you, but I find it very difficult to “find” time for anything that isn’t important enough to schedule. If it’s important enough, we’ll make the time. If it isn’t important enough, then who are we kidding? We are about as likely to enjoy the benefits of that endeavor as we are the free crab.

Decide what you want to do, and write it down. Decide when you are going to do it, if not immediately, and put it on your calendar. Motivate yourself by imagining the benefits. Tap away any resistance – there is likely some fear that is making you reluctant to put it in writing – get that out of your way. Then, when the appointed time arrives, do it…and reap the rewards. Simple, yet effective.

Sooooo…when are you going to do it…?
About the Author

Brad Yates, C.Ht. was trained and certified at the respected Hypnosis Motivation Institute in Tarzana, CA, where he served on staff. He has worked with a diverse group of clients, from CEO's to professional and NCAA athletes, from award-winning actors to homeless men and women in Santa Monica, CA. Brad's eclectic background includes several years as an internationally performing actor, and he is a graduate of Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Clown College.

Brad works both privately and in group settings, and sessions are also available by phone. He presents workshops on a variety of issues, including weight loss, stress management and achieving prosperity. He also facilitates success and wellness workshops in the Sacramento, California area, where he lives with his wife and two young children.

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