

POSSIBILITIES

Unlocking Your Potential



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UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

BECOMING THE BEST VERSION OF YOURSELF

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INTRODUCTION

You know you could do great things - if you could only get some clarity on what you should pursue, what you should do first, and what talents you should develop. In other words, you need help learning how to unlock your hidden potential so that you can take the world by storm. You are looking for fulfillment, happiness, and peace of mind while providing the world with all you have to offer.

If you have been struggling to find your purpose in life, you've arrived at the best place. You are ready to embrace your whole self and own the amazing reason you are on the planet! And, you've come across this guide that will lead you, step-by-step, to finding your purpose and unlocking your true potential so that you can begin your journey to self-discovery. A journey where you'll be able to finally free up the potential you've always had within you.

In this eBook, you will discover what you really want in life. You will learn how to create a goal based on what you truly want, plan action tasks to achieve your goal, discover your strengths, get honest about your weaknesses, improve upon both so that you can get the results you want, and create the life you've always wanted.

There's a lot to do - but it's going to be an exciting ride! A ride in which you will discover more about yourself and the impact you can have on the world. It's going to be hard work - no doubt about it. Through the work you do here, you can imagine your full potential as long as you have the courage and dedication to keep going until your dream is realized!

Let's get started, shall we?

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT IN LIFE

One of the big challenges of unlocking your true potential is often the image you have in your head of what “success” looks like. To reconnect with the potential you have inside, you are going to need to take hold of that concept. Forget about what everyone else is doing. Ignore most of what others are telling you should do, or want, or be. You need to dig down deep and decide what’s right for you. To do that, you will need to be honest with yourself about what you want for your life.

So how are you supposed to figure this out?

You might not have any idea of what would make you unimaginably happy. Or, maybe you have too many things on that list and can’t decide which of them would be the best direction for you to take. So many of us get stuck in “autopilot” mode and forget what makes us happy. We get up in the morning, go to work, go home and take care of our family and homes. Then we do it all over again the next day. Before we know it, days, weeks, months, and years have passed, and we’re nowhere near where we want to be in life. How do you move away from “autopilot” and start living with purpose before more time passes by? How do you discover the purpose that’s meant for you alone?

You're the only one who can answer these questions because they are unique to you. No one else can answer them for you. A short list of questions has been provided for you in the next few pages that will help you figure it out for yourself. Keep in mind these are not questions that can be answered quickly. It will be essential for you to spend some time with them to get the true answers you've been looking for. By reviewing them and starting to delve into the answers now, it will help you get to where you want to go much faster. And it will happen without you backtracking or worrying you made the wrong choice later.

Put yourself first and set aside some time to contemplate each of these. It's best to write them down in a journal and write out the thoughts you have on each one. Then, once you've drilled down and decided the answer to each, you can rewrite your answers in a succinct way so that you can easily return to them later when you need clarification on how to turn your desires into action steps.

You can also use the accompanying workbook to write down your answers. You may find that the actual act of writing with your hands give you more concrete answers than typing them on your computer or a mobile device. Some people find that the opposite is true and that they prefer to write their answers in electronic form. The important thing is to figure out what works for you and stick with it to keep you motivated.

QUESTIONS FOR DETERMINING YOUR HAPPIEST LIFE

1. **What would you do if money were no object?**

People often limit their options by saying they don't have enough money to do what they'd really like to do - what they think would fulfill them. So, if you remove that limitation, you can see more clearly, without boundaries, what your purpose is. Once you have that inspired clarity, you can effectively come up with the necessary action steps to make it happen. Remember, you don't have to go from 0 to 100 immediately. There are ways of making progress slowly and steadily to the place where you want to be. There's no need to be a millionaire overnight. Once you can define exactly what you want, you will have the clarity to come up with a plan to make it happen!

2. **What would you attempt if you were guaranteed to succeed?**

Another big thing that stands in most of our ways is the fear of failure. We worry about what others will think of our dream and what they will say if we fail. But really, the only way for sure to fail is to never try. Most people who would snicker behind someone's back for taking a calculated risk on themselves are simply too afraid to try it themselves. So, when they see someone else give it their all, but stumble, they can feel they are justified for not even attempting their dream. So, ask yourself the question and be open to the possibilities! Don't let others determine what your life looks like!

3. **What's your personal elevator speech?**

This is a fancy way of saying, how would you describe yourself? But it goes beyond that. In the business world, an elevator speech is what we call it when we describe what we do within the short amount of time it takes to ride the elevator up to the top of the building. How would you “sell” yourself to a new friend or at a networking event? What are the qualities you have that make you uniquely you? What could you say about yourself that would generate enough interest for someone to work with you or hire you? You can build on these qualities to unlock your potential. First, you have to know what they are. This isn't the time for you to be shy! Don't worry about being conceited or tooting your own horn. No one else is going to see what you write.

4. **What are your core personal values?**

These are the things that are important to you and the way you live your life. They help you to determine the difference between what's good or bad for you. These are things like honesty, integrity, hope, charity, and gratitude. Our core personal values usually come from our childhood and how we were raised. They can also be developed over time based on how our life experiences shape us as people. What is helpful or a hindrance to you? What is important or insignificant for your way of life? There are no wrong answers here! If material possessions are important for you in the life you want to lead, then list them out. Or, if spending time with your family is more important than material possessions, that's fine too. These are the guidelines you live by. Other people's opinions and desires don't count here. These are the tenets that ensure

your life has a meaning. Knowing these core values will help you decide on your priorities as you move further into unlocking your potential.

5. What makes you deeply content/happy?

Once you've determined your core values, it's time to think about what you already have in your life that makes you happy. Some adults have become so busy in life that they've forgotten what brings joy to their life. If you're struggling to come up with a specific answer, think back to what you were doing on the happiest days of your life? Or, you might want to think back to when you were a child or teen. How did you enjoy spending time then? Did the activities you participated in still bring you a sense of joy today? You also need to make sure these align with your core values. For example, if spending time with your family is more important than material possessions, you may opt to stop working overtime at your job so that you can be with them more. If so, you'll also want to do this while still pursuing your potential of becoming an entrepreneur.

6. What job or pursuit would you take on even if you didn't get paid for it?

This gets to the core of what brings you joy in your life. It's the activity that you lose track of time when you are doing it. What are the one or two things that pop into your head when you read the question? When you were a kid, what did you want to do when you grew up? Often, if we look back at what we wanted to do when we were younger, we can glean our true talents. What were your interests then – art, writing, drawing, or some other activity that could be a career in

today's world? When you were young, you hadn't been conditioned by society to ignore what you love so that you could get to the top. By looking back to that time, you may just rediscover your true passion, and therefore, your potential and remember how you loved to spend your time as a young person. Too many people rely on the money aspect when making a life decision only to find out that money didn't give them the level of fulfillment they were looking for. Focus on what makes you happy first, and the money will flow.

Whew, those are some head-scratchers. You may even be wondering why you need to go that deep to uncover what's important for your life. You may be thinking that you just want to dive right into the action so you can get the potential party started. But first, the work begins with knowing and understanding yourself deeply. Without knowing your true self, you could waste years going in a direction that ultimately doesn't make you happy at all. Isn't that what got you to where you are now? It's better to put the time into getting to know yourself now to avoid potential frustration later.

WHAT OUTCOMES DO YOU DESIRE?

The next step in unlocking your potential is to define what outcomes you'd like in all the different areas of your life. What do you want these aspects of your life to look like in the next few months, one year, five years, or more? These are the big picture things you'd like to create in your life and the things you plan to achieve as you unlock your potential.

Consider these areas of your life:

Personal - these can include physical fitness or health, self-development, creativity, and relationship outcomes. This could be that you want to lose weight, pursue creative skills or improve on others, or be in a healthy, committed relationship.

Professional - this covers what you'd like to achieve in your career. It might also include educational or financial outcomes. This could entail going back to school, earning a specific degree or certificate, or making a specific amount of money every year.

Spiritual - these outcomes are ways in which you'd like to grow spiritually. This may mean going to church on a regular basis, attending bible study, or going on religious or spiritual-based retreats.

Without setting specific outcomes for yourself, it's going to be difficult to get to where you want to go. And that's because you aren't sure where that is.

When deciding upon your outcomes, they should meet these criteria. They should be S-M-A-R-T:

S - Specific - Be as detailed as possible.

M - Measurable - How will you know when you've achieved your outcome?

A - Achievable - Is this goal achievable for you?

R - Realistic - Is it possible to meet your outcome by your imposed deadline?

T - Time-based - Determine a timeline for your outcome.

You have already come up with what you want in life and the specific outcomes that surround what you want. The next step is for you to decide on the action steps you need to take to meet those outcomes. How are you going to get from desires and wishes and onto living your dream? By taking action! The only way to unlock your true potential is to take action to learn and grow into what you were meant to be!

TAKING ACTION TO UNLOCK POTENTIAL

The way to reach your potential isn't by just taking action aimlessly. That's how most of us got into the life we live now that has helped us to only survive, but not thrive. What you need to do if you want to be all you were meant to be is to plan out your action steps. That way you can make sure you are always moving in the right direction. You can determine this by making sure each action step is in alignment with your understanding of what makes you happy and the outcomes that arose from that understanding.

Before you start outlining action steps, you will need to come up with a reasonable deadline for meeting this outcome. It could be 10 years down the road or 6 months. But regardless, it needs to be reasonable for your specific circumstances. Just because one person can accomplish a specific goal in 1 year doesn't automatically mean that you can do the same. If you are too unrealistic or inflexible, you may feel like giving up before you've achieved what you set out to do. Remember to always be fair and honest with yourself. We're all different, which also means each of our situations is different.

Keep in mind that this is all about you and what makes you happy, no one else. No one is allowed to judge or diminish what you're trying to do. Tapping into your potential is what's going to make it possible for you to live the life you want. No one else's potential is quite like yours. Allow your plan to be as unique as you are. You know yourself better than anyone and now is the time for you to honor your happiness and focus on what you want.

Remember the journal that was suggested earlier? Now's the time to pull it back out. Keeping everything in your head just causes stress and leaves open the possibility of forgetting something important, so you will want to write things down. It's smart to have a project or outcome notebook where you keep new ideas, your schedule, and inspirational ideas or journaling that you do around your outcome, all in one place. Again, do what works for you whether it's writing it down on paper or in electronic form.

Once you have set a deadline that is reasonable, start planning backward and plan out the action steps you need to take to reach that outcome. Break them up into achievable actions so that you don't get overwhelmed.

Let's say you want to increase the amount of money you make every year. To make things easy, we'll say that you want to make an additional \$12,000 a year. That's a lot of money to think of making all at once, but when you work backward, it comes to an extra \$1,000 per month. You can break it down even further to be \$250 extra a week. Now that you know what your specific deadline is, you can start planning your action steps to bring in an additional \$250 a

week to eventually make \$12,000 extra for the year. You'll see how to break down your goal into action steps in more detail later in this section.

To help you get started with your planning, you may want to begin with a brain dump. A brain dump is just writing down, in no particular order, everything that needs to be done to get to where you are going. But it is a very effective way of getting the details out of your head and onto the page where you can organize and prioritize them.

Before we go further, it's important to mention that you'll want to choose the one outcome from your list that seems the most urgent to you. There may be some overlap, but in general, it's best to focus on each one individually. This will keep you from going into overwhelm, which often leads to giving up. Separate the outcomes you want to reach and create action steps and a schedule for each of them, one at a time.

To come up with the action steps you need to take and schedule them out, follow these steps:

1. Choose the one outcome that's most urgent to you.
2. Decide on a realistic deadline to complete that outcome.
3. Set action tasks for yourself - ones that directly apply to reaching your outcome. You will want to break down the action tasks into the smallest steps, so you don't get overwhelmed like in the previous example. This will keep you on track, stop you from getting overwhelmed, and keep you motivated.
4. Design a monthly action task list that will ensure you achieve your outcome by your deadline. Each of the ac-

tions you take should be directly related to your outcome. When you have an idea for an action task, test it against your outcome to ensure it is a smart, logical step towards your outcome, rather than something that will only distract you.

5. Design weekly action task lists, just as you did for the month.
6. Further, break down outcome-related tasks by creating a daily to-do list. Make sure to prioritize the tasks so that you do not get sidetracked doing things that aren't that important. You may want to tackle the biggest tasks first thing in the morning before doing anything else to ensure they get finished.
7. Review your monthly, weekly and daily action task lists frequently. Keep track of when you accomplish each aspect of your outcome. Adjust accordingly if it seems like you're having trouble reaching your desired outcome.

I can't overstate the importance of writing down and reviewing your goals regularly! This will put it in perspective though.

- 80% of people do not even think about setting goals.
- 16% of people think of them, but don't write them down.
- 4% of people write down their goals.
- 1% of people write down their goals and regularly review them.

This 1% are consistently the highest achievers. They are totally focused on unlocking all the great potential they have inside of them, and they make it happen.

If you want to be one of those who succeeds in the world, you must ruminate on your goals, write them out, and review them regularly!

Another important point vital to the success of reaching your goals and potential is to allow for flexibility. If an action you thought would be helpful isn't as effective as you had thought, reconsider the options. Don't be afraid to be flexible if an action isn't performing as expected or if you need to adjust your timeframe. Don't stop because something's not working. Go back and rework your action steps until you find what works best. The less stressful and frustrating reaching your designation is, the more likely you will keep up the pace necessary to get there.

RECOGNIZE YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

You've learned how to come up with objectives, make a list of action steps required for reaching an outcome and break it all down into monthly, weekly and daily steps, without any problem. However, you now may flinch when it comes time to take an honest look at your strengths and weaknesses.

YOUR STRENGTHS

You might feel like you are bragging when you list your strengths, even if you know no one else is going to see what you've written. Or, you may even talk yourself out of being good at something. For example, you're good at organizing stuff - your physical space, events, everything. But then negative self-talk may kick in to remind you of all the times you haven't been organized. Your house is a mess, you missed your dentist appointment this week, you were late to work a few mornings last week, etc.

Part of unlocking your potential is to see what your natural gifts are. Shut out that negative voice whispering in your ear and write down all the things you are good at. Use your journal or the designated section in the workbook that ac-

companies this eBook so that you can keep all the hard work you're doing in one place. Here are some questions that will help get you started because doing this isn't always as easy as it should be.

- What have you always been good at? It just seems to be a part of who you are.
- What are the tasks you accomplish that make you feel energized or excited? The tasks we do well often make us feel amazing!
- What do you do better or differently than anyone else you know?
- What do other people think are your strengths? Ask your friends, family, or trusted colleagues if you aren't sure what they think.
- What skills have you developed that could be added to the list?

YOUR WEAKNESSES

Hey, we can't all be good at everything. And learning new skills is one of the great joys in life. So, before you get all upset with yourself for not being perfect, remember that we grow as people as we take on challenges and build our skill sets. And more importantly, no one is perfect!

Before we delve into this further, let's define "weakness." A weakness is something you naturally struggle with. It's not a failing. It's not anything you should beat yourself up over. It's simply a skill you weren't naturally born with. We all have

weaknesses, so acknowledging them shouldn't be a big deal. In fact, most people would be much happier if they took stock of their natural strengths and weaknesses. That's because we often allow those weaknesses to hold us back from reaching our potential.

It's important to be aware of your weaknesses so that you can determine how to deal with situations where a skill or ability is necessary, but you 1) can't do it or 2) know others who could do it much better or much faster. Then, when you run up against these situations, you can best decide if you should buff up on the specific skill or if your time is better spent using your strengths.

When that's the case, you can hire someone else who is qualified to do the job, while you focus on what you're best at. Problem solved. But if you struggle with everything because you are unwilling to take an honest look at what you aren't great at, you could spend a lot of time, money, and effort needlessly.

These questions should help you know when to do the work yourself or seek outside help.

- What skills or tasks do you struggle with or have needed help from others with?
- What tasks do you procrastinate doing because you don't feel confident in your ability to perform them?
- What tasks bog you down and drain your energy?
- What do others see as your weak area(s)?

- What negative work habits do you have that could be considered a weakness (for example, you're disorganized or always running late)?
- What personality traits do you have that you experience as weaknesses or negatives?

Make sure to place and expand on your answers in the workbook that came with this eBook.

MAP OUT YOUR STRENGTHS TO POTENTIAL

Now, let's go back a step, just for a minute. One big stumbling block to meeting our goals and making our dreams come true is that we believe we don't have the strengths, talents or skills that others have. We see people in our lives who have "made it." We read about people who have overcome huge obstacles to reach their potential and who end up changing the world.

Then we look at our strengths. Hopefully, after the above exercises, you are more realistic about owning your strengths. But it's easy to fall back into the pattern of thinking they are nothing compared to what other people have in their personal potential toolkit.

But here's the exciting thing: There's more than one path to reaching your full potential! And if it's your potential, then you surely were given the strengths, with possibly some weaknesses to overcome, to reach it!

So, if believing you don't have the big vision that Steve Jobs had or the support systems your friend who's built his own

potential has, it doesn't matter. You too can unlock your potential by mapping out your strengths and using them to get where you want to go.

Strategic thinking is necessary at this point. You need to look at your list of weaknesses and find ways to use your strengths to leapfrog right over them. If you look at successful people who have “made it,” you'll find they also have weaknesses. However, they've learned how to use their strengths strategically so that their weaknesses don't hold them back.

Let's look at an example to make this clearer. Let's say you know one of your weaknesses is a lack of technical skills. Now that can be a game-changer in our modern, tech-savvy world. So, you took a couple of classes to learn more about using current technology to master your field. However, none of it made any sense to you. You made little in the way of progress and ended up feeling like you were too stupid to build your dream life.

Yet, one of your biggest strengths is the management of resources, including employees. This talent also includes having a real knack for finding just the right fit for positions you need to fill. So, does it really matter that technology isn't your bag? Not if you fully utilize your management and intuition skills to hire the right person to run that side of things for you. As long as you continue to manage your new IT hire to the best of your ability, he can do all the tech stuff, which will free you up to do the things you really love to do and shine at.

Map out how you might be able to use your strengths to overcome your weaknesses. Instead of working harder to “fix”

your weaknesses, this is where you build on your strengths. It may sound like I'm suggesting that you never work on your weaknesses, but that's not quite what I mean.

The problem with working on weaknesses is that sometimes people focus so much on them that they lose sight of their strengths. If you work on your skills in the areas you're weak in but find you just can't seem to "get it," then there will be other ways to achieve your potential using your strong skill sets.

Going back to our previous example, taking those classes about technology probably didn't transform you into a computer whiz. You may still not understand all the intricate details necessary to make all the parts work. But, because you took the class, you now understand enough of the bigger picture to make decisions with the guidance of your newly-hired IT employee. That is both overcoming your weaknesses and building on your strengths.

Now it's your turn. Go back to your list of strengths and weaknesses. Lay out your ideal outcomes next to each of them and come up with ways your strengths may help you realize your outcomes.

DEVELOP YOUR STRENGTHS & MANAGE YOUR WEAKNESSES

Self-improvement is key to living a successful life, no matter what that looks like to you. No matter what your ideal outcomes from the first chapter are, you can reach them with a dedication to self-improvement. We either grow, learning from our mistakes as we go, or we become stagnate and survive through life. When you put it like that, it's easier to commit to improving yourself in ways that will make a huge difference in unlocking your potential. Self-improvement will allow you to live the life you desire and deserve!

As was mentioned at the end of the last chapter, when people think of self-improvement, they often see it as a way to focus their attention on their weaknesses. This can quickly lead us down the rabbit hole of beating ourselves up about past failures. It can also make us feel like we have too many weaknesses to overcome. What I propose for self-improvement instead is to get even better at what you're already good at. That's right - working around your weaknesses, rather than trying to get rid of them, is a much better use of your time and energy.

REASONS FOR FOCUSING ON BUILDING ON YOUR STRENGTHS

- It builds self-confidence instead of tearing it down.
- It takes less time and effort because you discover the things that you do well are also easy and enjoyable.
- Focus on the positives in your life, and they will increase. Whatever we put our attention on in life increases. Concentrate on the positives.
- It makes you happier, and being in this state will help you to increase your overall potential.

Now that you see the advantages of using self-improvement as a means of building on your strength, let's look at ways you can make that happen.

HOW TO BUILD ON YOUR STRENGTHS

1. Invest in learning more about what you're already good at. You might be an expert, but there are always more things to learn and new strategies to employ. For example, if you are a great manager of resources, you may build on your skills and techniques by reading about the way other successful leaders manage their teams to improve productivity and morale. You can take classes at your local college, take an online course, or read up on the specific topic or subjects you want to focus on.
2. Spend time with others who match your desire to build upon their strengths. You'll learn a great deal about yourself as well as finding out new ways to implement

your strengths. Not only will surrounding yourself with like-minded people help you to build on your strengths, but it will also provide you with a network for support. It's said that you are the common denominator of the five people you are around the most. In other words, you're influenced most by the people you hang out with the most. So, surround yourself with positive people who encourage you in unlocking your potential. And if you have negative people in your life who spend a lot of time complaining or making excuses, limit how much you're around them. These tactics will lead you further down your path of unlocking your potential.

3. Step out of your comfort zone. It's easier to hide behind a book to learn something new. Instead, stepping out of your comfort zone along with influence is one of the best ways to learn. When you do this, you'll be put into places where you need to step up your game to get the job done. Without forcing yourself into new lessons and ways of learning things, you may never fully develop the potential you have within you. When you step out of your comfort zone, what you're really doing is overcoming your fears. You don't have to take big leaps. Just start with small steps so you can get more comfortable with the process and you'll find the challenge much easier.
4. Teach others your strengths. There's no better way to learn than to teach. Try mentoring others who are working to improve the skills you have. Remember, the concept of surrounding yourself with like-minded people works both ways. Not only does it work in your favor, but you could also be the one person someone needs to help them unlock their own potential.

5. Use the experience as an opportunity to learn more about yourself. Sometimes when you go out of your comfort zone, you'll find that the experience was positive, and it introduced you to something you liked or that can help you on your journey. Other times, you may find out that you discovered something you didn't like or that didn't work particularly well for you. Regardless of your experience, use it as a way to learn more about yourself. Take what you've learned and apply it as you move towards reaching your outcomes.

At this point, you may be asking how focusing your energy on your strengths can lead to better results. The answer is simple - if you have the potential within you, then you already have the strengths you need to reach it. It's just logical. Don't compare yourself to others who have already realized their ideal outcomes. Your potential and strengths are different from theirs, and that's a good thing. The best way to unlock your potential is to be the best you that you can be. Focusing your energy and time on becoming the best version of your unique self is the wisest course of action.

BUT WHAT ABOUT MY WEAKNESSES?

Though we encourage you to minimize your focus on weaknesses, there are some that you will need to work on as you go. They could be crucial to unlocking your potential. For example, if you procrastinate doing anything new or challenging, you probably aren't going to get very far in achieving your outcomes. Other weaknesses are easier to overcome because since other people have them, you can team up with them to get the job done. But fundamental weaknesses will need to be improved.

The first thing you need to do is to decide if you have a weakness that could advance your chances of reaching your outcome if it were improved upon. Are there fundamental skills or personality traits that will hold you back if you don't conquer them? Or, are there skill sets that you don't have but can easily find in someone else? Asking yourself these questions while looking at your weaknesses list is the first step.

If you find weaknesses that do need to be improved upon, here are some techniques to make the challenge less daunting:

STEPS FOR IMPROVING WEAKNESSES

- **Accept it** - Accept your flaws for what they are. They are a part of you, but not the most significant part. You can't move past them if you don't acknowledge them.
- **Love yourself anyway** - We all have faults. Even your hero does. Your weakness helps make up your true self, so embrace them.
- **Make daily strides to get better** - Don't expect perfection. Strive every day to be a little better than the day before. This process is only accomplished slowly and steadily.
- **Focus on small wins** - Don't wait to celebrate or pat yourself on the back until your weakness has turned into a strength! Celebrate each small victory towards overcoming your flaw.

- **Continue to build on your strengths** - Always keep in mind that your main focus should be on building on your strengths so that you don't give up on reaching your goals.

If on the other hand, you can reach your outcomes and your full potential by outsourcing the tasks you aren't good at, come up with a plan for finding these employees and ways you will manage them using your strengths.

GET STARTED

By now you should have a better understanding of how to unlock the potential you were born with. Each of us is here for a reason, and we are happiest when we are living that life. And that potential is attainable! Otherwise, it wouldn't be inherent within us. Even those who have reached their most unimaginable goal and are living within the flow of their potential had to work hard to get there. But that's part of the journey. We're supposed to learn a great deal along the way, which makes it all that more exciting.

If you're ready to unleash the latent talents you have to share with the world, now's the time to get started. Once you are clear on the outcome and what outcome you want to work towards first, create your plan for reaching it. Keep digging deeper until you have a set of short-term objectives that will lead you to your larger goal. Then, start taking action!

While you must have a firm understanding of where you want to go and why you want to get there, you won't get far if you don't break down the big tasks into smaller ones that you can complete step-by-step. Overwhelm is your enemy, and one sure way to let it win is to only look at the whole, big picture and to not take each one of the action steps necessary to get there. There will be days when you don't feel like completing the task set for the day but do it anyway. The results will be well worth your effort.

Some people can plan until the cows come home, but when it comes time to take action - they freeze. They worry they have chosen the wrong outcome to work on first or they are worried about making a mistake. The biggest mistake you can make is not to take any action. Just start. Start small and keep taking action towards your goal each day. Utilize your Outcome Journal to keep track of what works for you and what needs improvement.

Try different things until you find the perfect way that works best for you. Gather feedback from friends, family, and co-workers to get their ideas of how your plan is working. Just keep adjusting and improving your plan and the way you approach tasks until it all clicks together.

Needing to rethink a step towards your goal isn't a failure. It's success because you are learning and growing as you go. Remember, this is all a process that will lead you to live the life you were meant to live. Don't expect your plans to be perfect. Allow for flexibility and adjust as you go. Not to mention that once you figure out what methods work for you, the next time you set out to achieve a goal, it will be much easier.

Remember when we discussed SMART goals? The M stands for measurable. You need to find a way to ensure you are actually taking productive steps towards your ideal outcome. How will you measure the way you are inching closer to your fullest potential?

TIPS AND REMINDERS

- Break down steps into the smallest possible tasks. Instead of an action step that states: *Learn about investing for the future*, break it down into several smaller steps, such as: *Join the 401K plan at work, make an appointment with a financial advisor, make a list of questions for the financial advisor, invest \$50 from every paycheck into my account*, etc. This will keep you from getting overwhelmed and giving up.
- Make sure your effort isn't being wasted by being busy instead of taking action. Our society sees being busy as a virtue. But in reality, we often waste a lot of time doing things that aren't productive or necessary. Take stock of your to-do list on a regular basis to ensure you are using your time and energy wisely. It might be helpful to plan out your day in 1-hour blocks to identify where you can eliminate any daily tasks that eat up a lot of your time so you can find time for more productive tasks.
- Don't expect perfection. Sometimes getting a task completed to the best of your current ability and moving on is more important than a task being perfect or not being completed at all. Perfectionism is really just a way of procrastinating. If you are stepping way out of your comfort zone and putting off getting a task done, it may be because you are afraid of failure instead of trying for perfection. Being honest with yourself and owning up to your fear will serve you much better than spending unnecessary time and effort on something that is good enough.

- Although it's important to come up with your own plan and do what works best for you, it's smart to use the tools and strategies that others have already designed. If you find a suggestion that worked for someone else that you think will work well for you, use it. While your path is unique to you, there's no need to totally reinvent the wheel when you can use the wisdom of those who have gone before you.
- Own your fear and self-doubt when it arises. And it will. We all have worries that come up from time to time, regardless of how self-confident we are. If you want to be a doer instead of just a dreamer, you're going to need to overcome your fear and do those things that scare you. Recognizing your fear or doubt is holding you back is the first step towards owning it and then overcoming it.
- Have a deadline but allow for flexibility. There are going to be times when a project takes longer than expected or you come up against unexpected obstacles. This can stop some people in their tracks. They feel like they failed because they didn't meet an arbitrary deadline, and so they give up. Don't let that happen to you. You should always be gathering feedback and adjusting your plan based on what you learn as you go along. If that means pushing back a deadline, at least you'll know you are working wisely and that you will reach your potential. You'll never do that if you give up.
- Expect setbacks and impediments. A good, solid plan is important, and so is following it. But there will be unexpected setbacks along the way or times when you have

to change course in order to reach your goals. Don't let them derail you. You can't prepare for everything but expecting things to not always go smoothly will help you work through those challenges.

CONCLUSION

We all have hidden reserves of potential within us just waiting to be discovered. You should congratulate yourself on taking the first step in accessing your potential by learning about how you can unlock it. Now you can live the life you were meant to lead!

You now know what it takes to reach your full potential. First, decide what you are most passionate about - what makes your heart sing. Once you know that, figure out what objectives need to be met to have that in your life. You may have more than one objective that needs to be reached, and that's fine. Just tackle one at a time so that you don't get overwhelmed. Next, break down all the individual action steps you'll need to take to reach your objective. Crunch them down until they are in monthly, weekly, and daily tasks.

Don't forget to schedule time to review them daily to keep yourself on track. It's also a good idea to review the reasons why you are taking this action. There will probably be times when you wonder if all the effort is worth it. Remembering the passionate life that you are working towards and have imagined for yourself will keep you motivated, even when things get tough.

Keep your attention on the different ways you can build upon your strengths while also overcoming any weaknesses you may need to improve upon. If the flaws you are trying to overcome are skills that can be easily outsourced, go ahead and make a plan to make that happen. This will free up your time and energy to focus on your passion. This technique is used by many entrepreneurs to grow their businesses as fast as possible.

Remember to take action every day towards your objectives. It will take time, but by taking a small step each day, you'll be amazed at how quickly it can all fall into place. Use the exercises in the accompanying workbook to help you stay on track.

It's your potential, and only you can claim it! Don't stay stuck in the same survival mode you've been living with when your life can be fulfilling. Imagine what it would feel like to wake up every day knowing your purpose. Think of how it would feel to live the life that was meant for you and you alone. Not only that but you'd be able to share that life with every single person you encounter as well as the entire world around you.

Amazing results are just around the corner and achieving your potential is within your reach! Now go and get it!

If you'd like to explore more about reaching your full potential, you might be interested in reading my book, *Stop Hiding Behind Yourself*.