

Early Praise for *Achieve: Overcome Obstacles. Find Time for Greatness. Develop a Framework to Achieve Anything.*

“...at times it felt like he was in the room telling the story to me. He explained business scenarios in a way that was easy to understand and I think the application of the process to simulated scenarios really helped me understand what it takes to move an idea to a real world product.” – Jacob Cuyler

“Michael is a legitimately impressive achiever and therefore well-qualified to write this kind of motivational book.” – Rebecca Cullen

“The personal stories were a highlight in the writing, and I found myself wanting to learn more.” – Lora Lischer

“I felt inspired and all I did was read the book! This is definitely a book that you would gift to someone feeling down or in need of a pick-me-up. Or honestly just someone who needed a little inspiration in their day!” – Jeffrey Hopkins

“The overall message was to combine action with mental preparation to break down limits that keep us from achieving what we truly want to achieve. This makes achieving things that seem to be impossible as possible.” – Salina Galeai

“...emphasize the concept of progress and forward motion, no matter how small each step is. I think this is a message that everyone needs right now.” – Kristy Phillips

“... written in a truly refreshing manner, so - thanks! The first 3 sections on Identify, Attitude and Strategy were terrific and built into (as the title promised) how to “Achieve”. I felt really energized that I could do more in my personal and professional life and could learn how in the next pages. However, then the manuscript seemed to veer into a business focus. This shift from what had been a "achieve ANYthing in life" (that is, general life

goals; any and all types of goals) message to one solely anchored in developing a business was surprising. I thought I was reading a second book. It seemed I'd gone from a personal development book to a "how to start a new business" book. BUT. BUT!!! I got it with the demonstration of the 3-Part process to achieving.”

– Tamma Ford

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Achieve:

Overcome Obstacles.

Find Time for Greatness.

**Develop a Framework to
Achieve Anything.**

MICHAEL J LEE

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 **Achievement House**

Inspiring progress, freedom, happiness, and love globally.

This book is dedicated to you who will use what you learn in this book to bring your amazing ideas to the world.

To you who will further progress and innovation.

To you who will positively impact this world in a way that only you can.

To you who will be heard and appreciated for your great achievements.

And to you who push aside fear and overcome challenges to create a better world for everyone.

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Fear Is Part of the Adventure

After high school, I spent a few summers in Myrtle Beach working with my uncle's dive shop. I also went on fishing excursions with my uncle and cousin. On one occasion off the coast of South Carolina on the way to our fishing destination, we spotted diving birds and substantial top-water activity. So of course, we decided to check it out. As we approached, it was clear a feeding frenzy was taking place.

We made our initial drift through the excitement and saw a large school of bait fish had been driven to the surface where they were easy targets for jacks and birds. The jacks were not the only predators in the water and were themselves a target for the multitude of sharks participating in the bonanza. Some rather large ones made me a bit nervous to be so close. It was an amazing sight. We floated through the action many times, and each pass was just as breathtaking as the previous. I was in awe to see wildlife in this setting. Afterward, we continued on with our day, not having much luck fishing. But we would always have that experience.

At the dive shop my duties consisted of cleaning rental gear, filling tanks, keeping the shop tidy and, on occasion, working the sales

counter. An added bonus was that I received free dive lessons that counted toward my certifications, which was the real benefit and also most of my compensation. After completing the appropriate courses, I began working dive charters as a DMIT (Dive Master in Training). If any of you have taken a chartered dive, you are familiar with my duties, which involved cleaning gear, sorting tanks, keeping the boat tidy and, on more than a few occasions, assisting queasy divers into their gear and out of the boat as quickly as possible. After a short period of time, I became a dive master for our six-pack trips (maximum of six divers). While my previous duties remained, I was now responsible for the safety of our passengers under the water and the security of the vessel.

Our charter destinations were primarily to artificial reefs in the form of sunken ships. In order for the boat to remain in the vicinity of the reef, it was required to be anchored to the sunken vessel. This was a manual process at one of our “secret” dives. To anchor the dive boat, I had to swim down and physically connect our floating ship to the sunken ship.

These solo dives to anchor the ship would regularly allow me to experience wildlife typically scared off by the flailing tourists on our charter. I would take special care to ease into the water and gradually sink to the destination to ensure what was there would stay there a bit longer so I could be in its presence. In my experience, true diving is becoming part of the environment, and that’s exactly what I was for a short while. It was exciting albeit peaceful and surreal. Often times I would see large sharks, turtles, rays, and a variety of fish that usually make themselves scarce once the commotion begins.

On one occasion I drifted down as usual on a rather rough day. Usually on rough days there would be low visibility. Not this day. I could see a mile, and the site was alive with life. The most notable was a large shark swimming off in the distance that made me shiver. It was funny because I’m usually not nervous when I’m in the water with them, especially when they’re swimming away.

Achieve

I completed my approach to the reef, and as I focused on the attachment, which was rather difficult due to the rough seas above, I noticed darkness surrounding me. I thought for a moment before I looked up, “How strange this is.” When I attached the boat and looked around, all I saw were thousands of tiny fish swimming around me – some almost swimming right into my mask. It was as if they were a panicked herd of wildebeest fleeing a pack of lions. It was pretty cool right up until I saw the jacks shooting through the crowd, and I quickly flashed back to that fishing trip with my uncle. My steady breath quickened as I remembered that lonely shark swimming off in the distance just a few minutes earlier. Did he really swim off, or did he just circle back around and was now with his shark buddies driving this herd right into me?

I remained still for what seemed like a year. Fish buzzed by my head in perfect silence, seemingly unaware of my presence. I could have reached out and touched them, but I dared not. I knew larger predators were in the water, and I wasn’t about to give them the opportunity to mistake my arm for breakfast. My visibility during the run was minimal due to the massive quantity of fish. I could see only a few feet around me but never saw one shark, even though I knew they were there, most likely concentrating their efforts around the perimeter of the frenzy.

After the culmination, I reflected on what happened before I returned to the surface – and to make sure there weren’t any lingering, unsatiated predators. I was thankful for the opportunity to work with my uncle, who provided me the chance to participate in this wonderful encounter. When I boarded the boat, my cousin, the captain, was surprised at why I took so long. After I relayed the experience to him and the passengers, we continued on with our day, leaving me with a rather amazing story that I will remember for some time to come.

Now what does this story have to do with achieving anything? Everything. Experiencing fear but not letting it overwhelm you is important. **The fear was part of the adventure**, and it brought a transformational lesson. I was fearful about writing this book to

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the point I nearly didn't. I thought of many reasons to avoid the work involved and the ramifications of allowing others into my life. Regardless, I did it anyway, and the following pages are the result.

When you recognize fear and sustain the courage to make a thoughtful decision, the result may dramatically impact your life in unknown, wonderful ways. Discover how you perceive each beautiful moment you're on this Earth. Take your time when you consider your next goal, as I did when I entered the water. Don't rush through to the end – enjoy the journey.

*Remain present in the moment so that it can instill
valuable awareness and lessons that stay with you
moving forward.*

You may be pleasantly surprised at what you find as you drift down your path to success.

You Can Do It Too

My intention for this book is to help you achieve anything you put your mind to.

These pages won't teach you how to get rich, but you can use them to get rich. They won't teach you how to land the perfect mate, but with them you can do just that.

Don't you want to complete your projects? Maybe you have an idea itching your brain but don't know where to begin. I can help you get started, get through the work, and finish the project by bringing it to whoever your audience is.

At the end of this writing, I give you an outline to follow, with an extension of the Strategy section for those launching a new business or product (as I did with several recent business ventures of my own).

The book covers many subjects. I purposefully designed it this way because this is a framework to achievement, not a detailed guide on each topic. I structured the book so that you can easily jump around to the sections that appeal to you in each moment.

If you do nothing else with this writing, read the chapter “Do More Than You Think You Can,” which will hopefully inspire you to start projects important to you.

What’s in a Goal?

To me, achieving goals is one of the greatest accomplishments I do with my time. Once I discovered a reliable process to keep me focused, inspired, and determined to finish, I began achieving all sorts of things that have positively impacted my life and the lives of many others. I’m not just talking about financial impact. I’m talking about serious, positive, personal and social impact, which may include financial benefits for many of us.

I’m personally not motivated by money. My motivations for doing anything are geared toward progress and growth. You see, I’m not writing this from my yacht after I made a bazillion dollars selling online courses. I’m still working, developing, and hustling my dreams – I’ll never stop regardless of how much wealth I have. Additionally, very few projects close to me are financially motivated. Does that mean I won’t make money from them? No. Some will be incredible asset drains but are infinitely important, while others have a chance to make a bazillion dollars.

I’m not here to show you how to make money. I’m here to show you how to **Achieve Anything** you put your mind to and hopefully help you realize your life goals. If your goal is more money, then this book will help you make it. If your goal is to build a video game, then it will help you do that, too. If your goal is a happy and loving home life, go for it. The principles in this book are not specific to any one endeavor – but to all of them.

My purpose with these words is to encourage and provide a useful framework that will help you bring your projects to the world and your goals to fulfillment. I put effort into this because I want to see the great things you have stored away in your head. I want you to take those amazing ideas and go do something with them. That’s why I’m here with you today, and I hope you achieve that success with what you learn in this writing. I hope

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you will grasp that idea and move it to completion. I hope you finish that old project and offer it to your audience. I want to see stuff get done, and I want to experience your great thing.

What I am telling you is this: You can have everything you want! What if I told you that money, love, happiness, fulfilment, success, and significance could be attained – and in a very short period of time? You'd probably say that you've heard that before in an advertisement. It's the standard hook to grab your interest by tickling an intense desire to satisfy primary human needs. But many of us don't believe this is true. Many of us think the overnight successes were luck and that it can't happen to us. The truth is that it happens every day to normal people like you and me.

While some of these successes may be due to a generous helping of luck, you'll find that others traveled similar paths that led them to the success they have today. Some of them took a lifetime, others just a minute. While I won't dwell on any particular person in this writing, what I will discuss is my personal journey of success and failure, what I learned along the way, how a single decision can drastically change your life, and how acting on one opportunity could positively impact the lives of many.

This book is not intended to be a detailed text of the exact process to achieve your most trying goals. While in some instances you will receive sufficient detail, other examples will be anecdotal and taken directly from my personal opinions and experience. Some of it will be so simple that you'll question its effectiveness, and other parts may piss you off. However, with this book you will gain an understanding of the process, attitude, resourcefulness, and tools that I learned, planned, and stumbled into that helped me become an achiever. You will learn the secrets that will open doors, hearts, and minds of people who will love your ideas and help you reach your goals – regardless of what those goals are.

In these pages I will show you **How to Achieve Anything** through four coordinated methods:

1. **Identify**
2. **Attitude**
3. **Strategy**
4. **Sell It!**

In the *Identify* method, you will learn how to identify opportunities and discover what it is you want to do, why you want to do it, and what the end result will look like.

In the *Attitude* section, you will learn how to prepare your mind to start, continue, and finish anything you set out to do.

The *Strategy* phase will teach you how to structure your project, how to be resourceful, how to determine if you should continue, and how to bring your thing to the world.

The *Sell It!* section provides a detailed marketing-related methodology to help effectively distribute your finished goal – for monetary compensation or not.

By *structure*, I'm saying to **form a strategy** to achieve your goals and then act on that well-thought-out strategy rather than reacting to whatever fires you up. Additionally, I have included several diagrams, charts, and workbook-style forms that will help you stay on track. If you are listening to or reading a digital copy without images rather than reading the physical book, you can find these images in the resource section of mikejlee.com.

That's what I'm about: Relentless Positive Progress.

Whether the goal is to start a business, build a table, evolve your love life, or transform society into one of equality and freedom – everything worth doing can be achieved through a well-thought-out strategy and achievable goals. But this is way more than a goal-setting book, which you will see as you explore the pages.

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As you read, if something inspires you, drives you to develop an innovative idea, or encourages you to act on something important, please leave me a review where you found this book, comment on one of my social pages, or share these stories with someone else so they can also achieve their dreams.

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Achieve

Identify

Michael J Lee

Write It Down

I am a constant idea generator. If I had a dollar for every “good” idea I’ve had, I’d have lots of dollars. If I had a dollar for every idea I acted on, I’d have fewer dollars. If I had a dollar for every idea I took to completion, I’d have significantly fewer dollars ... except for the ones that made me significantly more dollars.

Be an #IdeaCatcher. You see, ideas flow from an unknown place. Many people will claim to know where. But do we really know, and is that even important? The important thing to know is that we have ideas. They flow to us constantly. Many of us recognize them, many of us let them pass by without another thought.

I like to think of great ideas as bees. Yep, the tiny, playful insects that are so important to our world. Bees are the lifeline to agriculture and therefore our physical lives. Ideas, like bees, are integral to our society in terms of arts, education, the economy, science, and a multitude of other areas of innovation and entertainment.

In another sense, I like to believe that ideas are like bees in the way bees pollinate from flower to garden plant to crops. In a

philosophical sense, ideas are physical things that move from one person to another.

There's a phenomenon that great ideas are often acted on by multiple unrelated people at approximately the same time. I think this is a natural way to ensure progress of life on Earth. Maybe you receive the idea first, think about it, and then let it slip from your mind. Then maybe I receive the idea and do something with it.

A good friend of mine, Reem Kharbat (@reem.kharbat), best known for her backstory as a Middle Eastern girl who broke all the rules to reach massive success today, posed to me the question:

“Have you ever had an idea that you thought might change the world and it did? If not, what happened to it?”

– Reem Kharbat

I've had those ideas and let them slip. But over the past few years, I've had those ideas and acted on them. I've created a mobile app that can help billions. I've written books read all over the world. I've led teams that manage billions of dollars of financial and physical assets. I lead discussions on various subjects related to empowering individuals to live their best life. I built an artificial intelligence-powered investment platform, and I have one special project I'm very excited about that I haven't yet disclosed to anyone ... so stay tuned! I hope to get it out by 2022. It's not a game-changer – it's a totally different game.

If you're like me, you have a constant flow of ideas. While I don't act on all of them, **I write my ideas down**. Many of those I take through only several steps in the process, while a few of them I choose to actually complete.

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When I write them down, it frees my mind to receive new ideas. If I don't write them down, I constantly muddle them in my brain, which takes up valuable processing power, or I lose them completely.

Get a journal for your ideas. Maybe this journal is a physical journal you carry with you, or maybe it's on your phone in a notes app – which is what I do. Whatever way you are most comfortable with, ensure you get those ideas down. While they may not be relevant now, who knows where you might take them in the future. Most importantly, don't lose them!

Open to Opportunities

I mentioned earlier that ideas are everywhere. I like to believe that I'm open to receiving them. Regardless of where you think they originate, if you aren't open to receiving them, you won't. This doesn't mean that you must meditate on top of a mountain for seven days in order to reach a higher level of enlightenment and then the universe will magically grant you the power of observation. You already have that power and can use it immediately. The only reason you might not see opportunities is that you occupy all your observation power with other thoughts, such as worrying about things that don't exist, doing unimportant tasks, or sinking into entertainment, among other things.

Studies show that the human brain is capable of only one thought at a time. When we try to multitask, we are actually context-switching – which means we still only hold one thought at a time, but now we split our brain resources among the various thoughts. And this results in poor outcomes. You must learn to **open your mind to receive the opportunities** that the universe is throwing at you. When your mind is open, you will discover new and interesting possibilities. All you have to do to see opportunity is

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to observe. But sometimes opportunities aren't so easy to see and seem more like coincidences than actionable opportunities. Deepak Chopra discusses coincidences and intention-setting in his book, *"The Spontaneous Fulfillment of Desire: Harnessing the Infinite Power of Coincidence"* if you would like more detail.

By definition, a coincidence is two or more events occurring at the same time. But this happens all the time. A coincidence only has meaning when you put meaning to it. For example, when Derek brought to me the concept of Nyoobe, I didn't understand how he intended to pay ordinary people like me and you for referring nearly any product or service anywhere in the world. More important to me at the time was that I had my dream job as the senior member of the investment committee for a large fund. My role was to invest a pile of cash into whatever I saw as interesting, and I wasn't considering a career change at the time. But the more Derek and I developed the concept, the more excited I got about the possibilities, and the more determined I became to set my intentions to make it happen.

My primary thoughts about starting the company with Derek were doused in fear. It was the fear of losing my job and never finding one like it again. Along with that was the fear that I didn't have enough money set aside to withstand the economic trials that come with a technology startup. But I was open to ideas and observations.

One day I recognized an opportunity. A wealthy individual I once tried to get as a client in my investment advisory days called me out of the blue. We spoke for a while and, unrelated to the nature of the conversation, he casually told me something he was looking for in his personal life. I lit up on the comment because I knew how to get him exactly what he wanted, and I instantly related that to my desire to find the necessary resources for my startup. I recognized the opportunity and took immediate action before the opportunity disappeared. Remember what I said about ideas and how they are transitory? Opportunities are the same.

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You may not get just one great opportunity in life, but each opportunity you receive has a time limit.

Look, if you had one shot, or one opportunity to seize everything you ever wanted, in one moment. Would you capture it, or just let it slip?

– Eminem

After a month of negotiations, I finally delivered him the thing he wanted in exchange for the financial resources I needed to start the company without worrying about the possibility of being broke (which I've been before and vowed to never be again). Had I not been open to the opportunity, I may not have made the mental connection during that conversation. Additionally, if my intentions had not been set on finding a solution, then that solution may not have presented itself.

To be open to ideas and opportunities, you simply must observe what people say. Observe what you read. Observe how you think about things and, on occasion, allow yourself to daydream. When you free your mind of useless clutter, it will have room to observe all the other wonderful things that cross your path – such as love, people who can help you succeed in life at a higher level, or the next billion-dollar idea.

To Africa and Beyond

Having an attitude for opportunities may also help you avoid disastrous events. I joined a Washington, D.C.-based investment advisory firm in the mid 2000s. I loved every aspect of it. I loved my co-workers. I loved building portfolios and finding great investment opportunities. But my fiancée disliked it. I think much of it for her was homesickness. Additionally, it was a major metropolitan city, and she was a country girl who missed her horses. While I loved what I did and loved the city, I decided to start an advisory firm in Tennessee. While it wasn't where she came from, it was what I believed the perfect place for her – and I was right. She loved it. She moved her horses up to our little five-acre property, and we began planning our life together.

I couldn't just start the investment firm. Until I fulfilled certain regulatory requirements, I commuted to D.C. That wasn't fun at all. Regardless, she seemed happy, and I was preparing my next stage of financial success.

We were married several months later, in April. It snowed that day in Georgia – maybe that was an omen. I received a call from

an old friend who managed energy assets for a consulting company. He wanted to congratulate me on the wedding and also discuss an open position with his company. I told him my plans to start the new investment firm and appreciated his offer, but for some reason I didn't decline the offer. I told him the plans for our honeymoon were to spend a month in Africa on a charitable economic development project and that I'd get back to him with an answer when I returned. He seemed happy with that, wished us well, and said he'd look forward to our conversation.

My bride and I spent the next month in the Rift Valley of Eastern Africa discussing economic strategy with tribal leaders and developing health protocols for local villages. It was a project she and I designed and achieved on our own. It was a very enlightening and purpose-driven experience.

After just two weeks, we ventured a night in the Maasai Mara game reserve. That night, as the furry primate locals foraged and begged for food, my new wife was chucking up the delicious dinner we'd eaten earlier that evening. The sickness came and went but was violent, nonetheless. Thinking it was possibly food poisoning, we hightailed it out to Nairobi the next morning. Later, two pregnancy tests confirmed the presence of our first child.

After the wonderfully startling news and a celebratory evening with friends we'd met at the mission house where we were staying, we decided to further traverse the countryside to Liconi just outside Mombasa rather than heading north to a refugee camp in South Sudan – which was our original plan. The bus ride from Nairobi to Mombasa was more of an off-road adventure due to the poor state of the road at the time. It was bumpy, shaky, and on occasion, terrifying. There seemed to be no regard for pregnant passengers or for women in general for that matter, as there was only one restroom break – and that was actually just a stop on the side of the road for the men to relieve themselves. There was also a moment when I was certain the driver

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exchanged money with a police officer for some unknown reason. Corruption was normal practice at the time.

My wife suffered through the bus ride, morning sickness at an orphanage, traversing a stinky fish market to the Indian Ocean-side mission house where we were staying, and a threat of a tsunami. There was an adventure around every corner, and she felt horrible through it all. To top it off, she became sick aside from the morning sickness, and we thought it might be malaria. Luckily, that wasn't the case.

During the last part of the trip, the morning sickness portion, I thought a lot about my friend's job opportunity. I'm prone to anxiety and was worried that I didn't have the financial wherewithal to withstand a pregnancy and birth and provide all my family would need. Additionally, the financial markets looked shaky, and I believed my investment company had a high chance of struggling.

When we finally returned and reacclimated from reverse culture shock, I called my friend and indicated my desire to join his company rather than start a new venture. **I recognized the opportunity that was before me**, considered my options, and made the best decision I could make with the available information. I joined the company in November 2007. Just a month later, the pieces of The Great Recession began to unfold, sending the entire world into financial chaos. Luckily for me, I was in a financially stable company in an industry buffered by strong counter-cyclical features with steady compensation supplemented by an attractive bonus structure.

I think it was highly coincidental that my friend needed someone like me at that particular transition in my career. Adding the bit of discomfort I had about starting a new business to the demands of starting a family only confirmed the opportunity. Who knows where I'd be had I decided otherwise. Quite possibly I'd be better off, but I'm happy with the decision I made.

It's Impossible Only If You Believe It to Be So

We must **eliminate the concept of *impossible***. Before men landed on the moon, experts said it was impossible. Before Europeans sailed to the Americas, sailors said it was impossible. Airplanes, microchips, quantum physics, artificial intelligence, the four-minute mile, summiting Mt. Everest, recreating your grandmother's secret chocolate chip cookie recipe – these, along with innumerable more, were all once considered impossible. Driven by a desire to achieve and the belief that they would succeed, each of the pioneers responsible for once-believed impossible feats succeeded in the face of adversity – and in the face of critics.

On your quest to achieve greatness, you will experience the same. People will tell you it won't work. They will encourage you to quit. "Don't waste your time doing that thing," they may say. Or "You aren't trained in that," or even worse, "How could someone like you do something like that?" You might hear, "It's impossible for one person to make a difference in this world." But all of

Achieve

these statements are simply obstacles in your journey. You must learn to overcome the criticism before you can genuinely believe you will succeed.

Your critics will not believe in you, even if you have proved successful in past ventures. Because they believe it's impossible, they will try to convince you of the same – either out of love for your mental, physical, or financial security or out of jealousy or some other misguided rationale.

Everyone experiences life from their own personal point of view.

It is nearly impossible to convey your idea to anyone else. In an effort to limit negativity that may impair your success, you shouldn't put a significant amount of effort into explaining yourself to people who won't understand or support you in the endeavor.

Substantial criticism for your projects will come from those closest to you – it'll hurt, and you'll probably believe them.

However, as you may already realize, your harshest critic is most likely yourself. In other words, your own mind will be first in line to tell you “You can't!” and to beat you up every step of the way if you persist.

Put away unwarranted concerns and believe intently in your success because nothing is impossible unless you believe it to be so. Before we get started, let's go ahead and eliminate that word, as well as the phrase “I can't” from our vocabulary.

The phrase “I can't” is one of the most, if not the most, defeating phrases in human history. It's so simple to say but extremely powerful. I don't let my children say it. In my house it's worse than any profanity. I have them accustomed to saying,

I'm having a hard time with it

or

I'll need help if I'm going to do that.

That's because what they are really saying when they say, "I can't" is that "it's hard and I don't want to do hard things." That is basic human nature. They may also be scared of failing at the task. It doesn't really matter what they say as long as their next action isn't to quit or refuse to even attempt the thing we are discussing. Nothing great has ever been achieved after those foul words have been uttered.

Do Something Impossible

One of the best ways to overcome believing things are impossible is to **do something you once thought was impossible**.

If you can convince your mind to instantly do your will, then take a few minutes to write down up to five things that you think are impossible for you to do. Below that list, write down the one you think would be easiest for you to achieve. Below that, list in sequential steps at least three actions and/or resources you need to achieve that impossible thing, then immediately start working on the first step. By that point, you should already begin to believe that this impossible thing is now possible. Feel free to complete the goal to solidify your new belief pattern.

Do Something Impossible

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

List one of the above you think would be easiest to achieve

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

When you eliminate “I can’t” and the belief that anything is impossible from your mind, you will be able to achieve nearly anything you put your mind to. If you can do this, then you understand how much of this writing goes. However, not everyone can turn belief in the impossible into the possible by simply choosing to do so. The rest of this writing describes a process for the rest of us to get there.

Begin

You may want to start a business, build a picnic table, or learn to play the piano. Whatever your goal, the first step to achieving it is to begin. But starting is the easy part, contrary to what others may say. You simply have to decide to do so.

The primary questions to ask before taking your first steps toward completing any goal include:

1. *What do I want to do?*
2. *Why do I want to do it?*
3. *What does the end result look like to me?*

These are integral questions you must answer to achieve success in any venture. Along with these questions, there's a process for success. I'm sure you've heard that success leaves clues. I found the clues and put what has worked for me in this book.

Achieve

Achieving your version of success is often not an easy or instantaneous process, but

nothing worth doing is easy, or everyone would do it.

I'll explain the process I've used to successfully complete many varying projects, and I'm confident this same process will ensure your success at anything you want to achieve. However, this process won't work miracles, such as if your goal is to play professional basketball and you're five foot two and seventy years old. Your initial goal has to be realistic, but that doesn't mean it can't be enormously important or difficult to achieve.

A multitude of books and inspirational speakers attest to the fact that each of us is capable of achieving way more than we think we can. Before you can successfully begin anything, you must believe that your goal can be accomplished if you put proper thought into the process, exert maximum effort, and don't get distracted along the way.

Believing you will accomplish the goal before you actually accomplish the goal is the most important part. If you don't believe, then you won't plan accordingly, you won't be able to convince others to join your mission, and you won't execute with maximum effort. If you neither believe in your mission nor believe it is attainable, you will get sidetracked by other opportunities and distractions. Your goal must be the most important thing you focus your attention on, otherwise it will fall to the side like all the other ones you've failed at in your life. Believe me, before I developed this achievement process, I was right there on top of the list of total failed projects and goals.

What

After deciding to begin the next and most important step of the process to achieve the impossible, or anything for that matter, is to determine **what you want to do**. If you don't know *what* you want to do, then how can you do anything?

One thing I've noticed (all you single people: Pay Attention) is there has never been a short supply of available, attractive men and women, regardless of the life stage you're in. In fact, in the United States over 45% of adults over the age of 18 are unmarried. I mean, there are nearly eight billion of us on the planet, with 65% of us considered adults. A steady divorce rate and a rise in unmarried adults means a rough approximate of two billion people are not legally attached to another. The odds are clearly in our favor. The quality of all these single people is questionable, but you can determine that only upon further research into a specific person.

A trick I've learned – which applies to anything I do, including dating – is to know without a doubt what I want and, more importantly, **what I don't want**. Otherwise, I may get unwelcome results. If you don't know what you want (and do not want) in a romantic relationship, you'll find later that you chose a person who doesn't have qualities you desire, and the relationship will struggle. You'll make poor partner choices for a variety of reasons, including fear and loneliness, but the biggest reason will be that you haven't yet taken the time to determine who you are and exactly what you want. This should be a required high school assignment.

Let's start with who you are. This can be as simple or complicated as you choose. I'll make it simple in this writing by asking you to ask yourself the following questions.

- *What* values do you hold most closely?
- *What* are your priorities?
- *What* ethical lines are you unwilling to cross?

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- *What* inspires and drives you?
- *What* principles will keep you on track in a crisis?
- *Do* any of your answers overlap?

Prioritize by top value. Make sure, too, that your values are actionable. They need to be able to guide how you operate. ‘Authentic,’ for instance, isn’t a value, it’s a symptom of acting in accordance with what you say you believe in. Likewise, don’t list “integrity.” Instead, describe how you demonstrate integrity. Being admired isn’t a value either: you want to zero-in on the characteristics that inspire admiration.

Now that you have a better idea of who you are, it’s time to determine what you want. Try it now, list out all the qualities you desire in a person. Mark the ones on that list that you won’t budge on: If you are a devout Christian, your romantic partner must also be a devout Christian. If you desire integrity, then your business partners should have also displayed integrity in past ventures. Understand? Ultimately, you have two lists: one with must-haves and another with wants or preferences.

Write up such a list for the various types of relationships you have – new boss, business partner, spouse/special someone, friends, etc. – and keep it close to you so you don’t make future mistakes.

Must Have Qualities

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____

Desired Qualities

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____

If you don't know what you want – or worse, if you know what you want but ignore it – then you are destined to get results similar results to what you've already experienced. Shelea Daily (@sheleadaily), a great friend of mine and amazing coach to men

and women suffering from the abuse of narcissistic relationships, taught me that. I live by it today in my quest for a high-quality romantic relationship as well as business relationships, and, for that matter, anything I devote my time to. **I know what I want and I know what I don't want** in detail. Like I said before, if my mind and eyes are open to **observe the opportunities**, then the relationship will reveal itself. I believe this, and I won't compromise. You shouldn't either.

The Role of Passion

Once you know what you want and what you don't want, you will realize your *what* should come from a place of passion.

“You’ve got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle. As with all matters of the heart, you’ll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So, keep looking until you find it. Don’t settle.”

– Steve Jobs

If you love something with all your being, you will not be concerned with success or failure. The whole concern of an intelligent person is to see the facts and understand the problem, which is not to think in terms of failure and success.

The one caveat is that if your next project is the one you will get (or plan to get) most or all of your income from, then you should

think through the practical, down-to-earth financial implications of the endeavor, passion or not. That means you must ask yourself important questions related to the success of the project. Among these questions are the following:

1. *Can I actually make money with it?*
2. *Will people buy it?*
3. *Why will people buy it?*
4. *Why would anyone hire me to do it?*

With just a few minutes of thought, you can come up with more questions like these. You must ask yourself these types of questions if you intend to support yourself financially with the project. If you do something with passion, but there is absolutely no way or a tiny chance you will ever make money with it, then you have yourself a hobby. And that is completely acceptable if that's the objective of the project. When your goal or decision to start a project is for financial gain, it's rather easy to determine your expected success if you keep one thing in mind:

Find something someone wants, and make it available to them.

That's all you have to do. If you have a service that someone wants, offer it to them. If you're thinking of a product that solves a person's problem, build it for them. The difficult part of this is determining what that product or service must be if you don't already have it, and how to get it in front of the people who need it.

To determine what you want to do starts with what you do best. Take a minute to list three **things you do that make you stand out**. Maybe you think you don't stand out, but I know from experience (and I'll say it multiple times in this writing) that everyone is unique and stands out in their own way.

For example, one of my three things is that I care about progress. My motivations for this book are that I want to see progress in this world through people creating and executing on their great

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ideas. It's what drives this book, related videos, podcasts, investment activities, and any speaking engagements I participate in. I want to see your greatness positively impact this world, and I'm willing to use my time and money to help you get there.

I'm also process-oriented, meaning I can lay out the steps to accomplish nearly anything. That's why this book is laid out in that manner and why I left the outline at the end. I want to convey to you that with a great process, you can achieve anything.

Lastly, I love everything. I know that's broad and somewhat weird, but I love how creative people can be, and I want to experience their creativity. I love nature and want to see how people care for and protect it so that I and generations after me can see and experience it. I love to be active and enthusiastic about life. This passion for living drives me to create *whats* that improve all these things I love. Because I love you, I founded Nyoobe to provide an additional revenue stream to help you meet your financial goals. I've designed a festival that supports native forest protection and regeneration as well as plants and trees all over the world. (Support our efforts by donating at mikejlee.com/treesandbees or join the Facebook group and subscribe for a monthly gift for less than \$1 per day.) I've used my love for life to design projects to address pollution, poverty, discrimination, inequality, economic freedoms, and freedom in general.

My *whats* are derived from my natural passions. I've tried to become successful in *whats* based solely on money, personal and family happiness, and security. They all ended up in failure or, if completed, were unfulfilling. **Ensure your *what* is something you're passionate about**, and you'll find fulfillment and potentially other surprising benefits such as happiness, joy, personal growth, and financial gain.

Be Broad and Specific

I have a friend seeking a girlfriend – a life partner, really. His *what* is that he is lonely (thing he does not want) and wishes to be in a relationship (thing he does want). **Broadly** speaking, he

wants a loving and healthy relationship with a great girl.

More **specifically**, he

wants a loving and healthy relationship with a girl who shares his values of honesty and religion, and who is attractive, healthy, and doesn't have a substance use disorder (no addictions).

The broad reason helps to quickly convey what it is he wants from the relationship. He will use this statement as a recitable affirmation, meditation, or other mindset strategy to keep him focused.

The detailed version hones his energy to focus on specific goals, so he doesn't expend energy in directions that don't directly affect his progress.

Once these statements are clear in his mind, he writes them down where he will constantly see them, such as on the bathroom mirror, a vision board, as a heading in his task sheet, and as a statement in his calendar that reminds him of this goal on a daily basis. This is a simple form of Cognitive Behavioral Training, which I touch on throughout this book.

Why

Once you know *what* you want to do (and it won't necessarily be a business goal, I get that), you then determine *why* you want to do it, to have it or to achieve it.

The *why* for doing anything is the most powerful reason for successfully achieving meaningful goals. However, a weak *why*, such as "I want to make lots of money," is usually not enough for most people to be successful. Don't get me wrong, some people become phenomenally successful with a single, financially motivated *why*. But if you do just a little research, you'll see that many successful people in history and today, regardless of the financial result, found that success in a powerful, others-centric *why*. Their *why* was dedicated to help a greater good while solving important problems. These people realize that

big problems equal big opportunities.

Thus, your "I want to make lots of money" may have a deeper *why* that underlies it, such as "I want the resources to care for my ailing father who is now widowed and needs 24/7 care." In that context, wanting to make a lot of money makes more sense and connects to a real passion of yours, which is taking care of family. An important *why* like that also helps you through the hard times in a way that a financially motivated *why* can't.

Throughout this book we'll periodically visit one of my clients, Mandy, who is passionate about fitness and health. I'll touch on her financial and non-financial motivations for pursuing this particular lifestyle and how she will set herself up for success as a health and fitness coach.

When Mandy started her health and fitness business, her *why* was to help people battling obesity. Her *why* for starting the business might have stopped at "Because I am into my own health and fitness, and this business will oblige me to stay on track with it." Taking it deeper led her to realize she was passionate about

sharing her knowledge and systems for health with others so that their lives would have a higher quality. That is really what propels her success. This *why* is so powerful because it comes from a personal place when she once suffered from obesity.

When she pours money into developing a course, hires video professionals and runs advertisements – while not making money because her time is dedicated to developing her message to the masses – her *why* will keep her going. It will keep her focused on the goal of helping many overcome the mental and physical challenges of obesity. She understands that

your why must be more important than the discomfort of delivering the message.

In Mandy's case, the discomfort is temporarily losing income so she can focus on a product she will be able to deliver to more than just a few training clients at a time. One of the six necessities of life is security, which shouldn't be taken lightly. Someone who decided to develop a fitness course solely to make money would probably put the project on hold or totally abandon it when things got tough in order to make money doing something else. Because money, unlike for Mandy, would have been that person's only motivation.

End

Once you know your *what* and have determined your deepest *why*, you then must ask yourself,

What does success look like for me?

Part of this answer will be the **end result**. Once you start the business, hobby, goal, or other project and run it to completion – which may be a business exit, a level of artistic competence, a personal learning milestone, or a sellable product – you have to envision what that looks like financially, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and any other way your project should transform lives. After all,

why would you trade your precious, irreplaceable time for anything other than something that will positively transform your life or that of others?

Visualize Success

Take a moment to think on a goal you want to achieve.

When you have it in your mind, think about how you will feel when you achieve that goal.

Take a relaxing breath and **visualize that great achievement**. Imagine what it will look like, what your life will look like. See it solving the problem for which it was designed. Walk through pictures of how it will be used, viewed, heard, tasted, or felt. Imagine the great compliments people will give you. Feel the emotions that come from that sense of achievement. Imagine yourself smiling with a group of people whose lives you helped transform or see yourself playing the instrument in front of others or buying that car you always wanted with the money you made especially for that purchase.

While you still feel the joy of achieving the goal, attach a pleasant emotion to it if you haven't already. Say out loud, "I'm happy with the outcome of this project. I'm thankful that I completed this goal. I'm blessed that I positively changed lives." Say words like these with a smile. The physical smile is necessary for the transformation you will experience that will lead you to a successful completion.

Take a relaxing breath and revel in the future reality.

It feels good, doesn't it? It's great to achieve the goal and to experience the rewards that will come from it.

Breathe in the good feelings one more time.

This positive visualization exercise is oftentimes all the motivation you need. However, if you still feel uninspired or indifferent toward completing the goal, then add the next level of visualization.

Kick It up a Notch

Now think about what it will feel like if you give up.

How will you feel if you fail to complete the goal? Feel those emotions associated with failure.

Notice how your breath is much shallower and less relaxing. Maybe your heart just thumped in an uncomfortable way.

Experience the moment just a second more, then along with the anxiety of possibly failing to complete the goal, add to it a negative emotion, such as anger or sadness.

Feel that emotion eating you up inside. Sense that anxiety building.

I hope this feeling is so bad that you want to stop reading or listening to this book and immediately get to work on your goal. If so, then good for you! Your goal is important to you.

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Combined with the positive feelings you experienced from the first part of this visualization exercise, this part of the process should instill an internal motivation to move you forward.

“Rehearsing what you see, playing it over and over in your mind until it becomes as real to you as your life right now.”

– Emmitt Smith

Who Is Your Audience?

I ask this question because diving deep into your *why* and your passion often leads you to affecting other individuals. Yes, sometimes that is the objective! Finding a soulmate definitely affects that soulmate! Planning for retirement affects your immediate family in all sorts of ways. For a new business or product or service goal, you must think through who will consume the thing that you create and, more importantly, what value it brings to those who get it or buy it.

If you don't know the effect your end result or goal has on others, you may be putting significant time and resources into something that is bound for failure.

Determining your target audience for any end goal is one of the most important beginning steps. When you determine who will most likely consume your final creation, you will effectively eliminate everyone else who will waste your time, effort, and dollars. Establishing your target audience combined with your target market share can be a powerful tool in moving you forward or halting the process altogether. These two business concepts are financially motivated in nature but can be used in any endeavor.

I go into more detail in the *Sell It!* section but for starters, it basically boils down to who is interested in buying your product? Who will be excited to hear your song? Who will be enthusiastic to learn your story of beating that scary life-threatening diagnosis?

Michael J Lee

Maybe that person is only you. Maybe it's the entire world. Each of us has something to share, and each of us has our own unique audience. We know intuitively who that audience is. Write down who will consume your completed goal and keep them in mind as you progress.

By now, if you have been actively following along, you have done the work to **IDENTIFY** *what* you want to achieve, what your deep and powerful *why* is, and *who* will be interested in the **end result** you achieve.

You are now set to get an **ATTITUDE** to begin.

Achieve

Attitude

Michael J Lee

A Decision That Changed My Life

I've always loved motorcycles. When I was eight years old, my uncle put me on my cousin's 50cc dirt bike. I crashed it into a wooden bridge but was able to ride it back. Other than the pain and fear I experienced in that moment, I instantly loved it, and I've been addicted ever since. Nearly every day from age eleven to sixteen, I was on some sort of dirt bike. It was part of that stage of my life. It was an exhilarating freedom from the structure of home life. I took a hiatus from riding during my late teens, but I became reacquainted with street bikes in college. Turns out, certain girls really like guys with awesome bikes.

When I was twenty-seven, I had more money and freedom than I could have ever imagined at that age. My investment company was profitable, I had a beautiful girlfriend, a nice house and all the toys I could think of – including a bike with all the extras. It was loud. It was fast. It even had neons throughout (if you know what those are). Most of the time I drove it like I stole it. The powerful

bike and I were one. In my earlier days, many of my friends would say I lived, and still do to some extent, a risky life. I have been told that I

live on the edge of chaos,

and I wouldn't have it any other way. I generate a level of excitement for life that fuels my desire to continue. Every day doesn't have to be packed with adrenaline, but as with any book, movie, or other interesting bit of entertainment, adrenaline-fueled excitement is necessary to maintain the attention of the audience. By the way, and as you'll find out later, I generally do everything to the maximum of my ability – even when I'm just playing around. This ensures the level of excitement remains constant.

On a fateful day when I second-guessed myself, I failed to slow down enough to avoid a car turning into my lane. Bailing over the car and letting the bike smash into the passenger door would have been the optimal scenario for my personal wellbeing. However, I had just enough time to avoid the young child in the passenger seat and diverted my bike to the rear of the vehicle.

I totaled the car and nearly totaled myself in the process. The car was turning into a church that was having some sort of event. One of the participants was a firefighter and, without his presence, I probably wouldn't be here to tell this story.

The rest of the story is interesting but not relevant here. Ask me later in the Achieve Facebook group, Achieve Mastermind, or any other place you see me. What is relevant is the outcome the experience had on my life when I made a simple, emotion-drenched decision.

Up until the accident, it seemed to me that I was highly successful at many things. I earned multiple college degrees (which was an achievement, but the usefulness of a degree is questionable), a great investment business, athleticism, an amazing girlfriend, and all the stuff I wanted – including tons of free time to travel and learn at my leisure. But that one day, my indecision in judging

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what that car would do and the near-fatal outcome of that failed read were traumatic to not only my body but also to my confidence.

I completely lost my confidence in just about every aspect of my life. I was the head trader for my business before the accident. I was a profit center. Not every trade I made was profitable, but there were few in the world as effective as I was. I stopped trading after the accident. I used the excuse of too much pain and a busted arm for a while, but it was really because of my lack of confidence. To top it off, I had a polyp removed from my vocal cords at the same time and couldn't speak for a month.

After about two months of sitting, making excuses, and waiting for my body to heal enough so I could take a poop on my own, I decided to try trading again. It was more that I forced myself to trade rather than I wanted to trade. I questioned every decision I made, just like that day on the road. It was terrible. I was afraid to enter trades. I was scared to exit trades. I did nothing but lose money. No amount of forcing my mind to cooperate would work. I didn't know how to change my fate, and I didn't have a step-by-step plan that would help me focus on the next right step rather than on what bad stuff might happen – so I focused on the bad stuff and quit. I didn't just quit trading, I quit nearly everything other than sitting in a chair watching the History Channel.

A friend took me out one day. We ended up driving to the salvage yard where my bike rested. It was severely damaged. It was broken. There was no chance it would ever see the street again. This crushed bike was my life. We were still one. I didn't only realize I was also broken, but I also realized that I had used the things I had to cover up my misery even before the accident. The money distracted me from the emptiness. The excitement of twisting the throttle distracted me from addressing significant personal deficiencies.

Depression quickly became my only friend. I lost my ability to move, I lost my money, I lost my girlfriend, I lost my voice. And

my parents, who I was living with, were at their wits' end. It was awful, and it was all due to the fear of making another terrible decision, which seemed to increase my ability to make terrible decisions.

But this section is about **beginning**. How to get started doing the thing you want to do, not how I overcame fear and depression. While related, I'll get to that later.

When I moved back into my own house, I still couldn't do much. One day I was lying on my couch attempting to learn Mandarin with audio recordings and yelled in time with the speaker, "wǒ lèi le of this shit!" Which if you can surmise was my Mandaringleish for "I'm tired of this shit." My whole body reverberated, and it was painful. That declaration was my first step to achieving a better life.

I painfully rose from the couch, determined to get out of the house on my own. I decided to go for a drive, but the problem was that my whole right side was still jacked up. I'd lacerated my right arm with a broken bone, so I had to use my left to steer. My right knee was immobile, so I had to sort of lean to the left. My right foot was broken and pretty useless, so I used my left. Have you ever tried to use your other foot for driving? It's a lot like writing with your non-dominant hand. But I like a good challenge and tried it anyway. My truck was a horsepower beast, and it was happy to finally roar to life that day. However, if it had been a person, it would have been sorely disappointed in the journey, as I was focused more on steering than on the gas pedal and generally just idled around the neighborhood.

A Step at a Time

It was great to get out of the house and on that drive; I decided that my time sitting around waiting to get better was over. While my body wasn't prepared, my mind was – and that was all I needed.

I began taking rehab seriously, and before long my physical therapist was useless. My initial exercise routine consisted of standing and attempting to raise my hands over my head. Both were challenging, but they were the next steps in my recuperation. I focused intently on each next step. I recognized each incremental success, which made me feel good about the progress I was making. I slowly etched new optimistic mental pathways while the ones that led to my depression slowly faded.

With a base of friends who visited regularly and supported my gains in the gym, I was able to climb out of the depressive state to one where progress was possible. That day with the mixed language declaration, I broke my pattern of making excuses and feeling sorry for myself. My next step after that was deciding to begin. My next step after deciding to begin was choosing to act and adopting a process. The next action was an incremental step toward getting me back into the physical shape I had been in before.

I didn't think about what might go wrong or how excruciatingly painful it was. **I just focused on the goal and took each step as it came.** That's how you start anything.

To begin, you simply must choose to do so.

That first step to decide to achieve the goal of regaining my physical abilities, along with each arduous successive step, led me to regain a level of confidence that gradually ate away at my depression. My investing activities returned to profitability as I surpassed my physical goals. While I didn't have the tools and skills back then that I have today for managing depression, achieving these mini-goals (such as regaining the ability to lift my

arms over my head) made me feel productive. But more importantly, it made me feel like I was making progress. Progress toward something better is an especially important aspect of the needs for security, significance, and personal growth.

As confidence grew and fear of making bad decisions dissipated, I began thinking much bigger than simply trading for profits. But my bank account was severely hit with medical bills and past trading losses, which limited my ability to reach these larger goals on my own. My once ample financial assets became an impediment. I wasn't sure how I would grow my business, my knowledge, or my skills, but I was determined to do so.

Then I **recognized an opportunity**. I remembered a conversation I'd had while putting on a practice green at the local golf course where my parents lived (because putting was all I could do while my entire right side was busted). The conversation was with an owner of an energy company. He was interested in my capital markets experience, and he divulged his company's aspirations for combining financial assets with its existing physical assets. I initially told him "no" because I thoroughly enjoyed what I was doing and was developing a strategy to scale it to the next level. But as I thought about it longer and realized how his company aligned with my new aspirations to grow, I decided to join his company. Maybe the pressure of lower income potential and the struggle of scaling at my current state seemed insurmountable. Whatever it was, it all combined into the decision to make the transition.

I was open to the possibility that the culmination of events that transpired after my accident were helping me reach that next level of success for which I was searching. With the corporation, I was able to grow my experience tenfold and develop skills I wouldn't have learned on my own. We successfully combined my capital markets experience with their physical assets, and within a year we registered over a billion dollars in sales while managing tens of billions of dollars in assets.

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I now view the accident as a coincidence that led to a shift in my career direction. Had I not lived with my parents after I left the hospital and experienced the trading difficulties, I may not have been on the putting green that day or open to the idea when the owner of the company I joined solicited my capital markets experience.

Had I neither generated the attitude to begin nor been open to opportunities that led to the decisions that positively impacted my life, I would not have realized the physical or financial success. I could easily still be crippled and financially broke, which sadly is the fate of some after such a life-changing event. But I wanted – still want – more. I know you do too because you're reading or listening to this book.

One decision can make all the difference. **One first step** can lead you to a life you never could have dreamed of. Now go do that first step and let me know what you're doing in the Achieve Facebook Group ([/groups/513816565947541](https://www.facebook.com/groups/513816565947541)) so we all can help you achieve that dream!

Attitude to Begin

I'm tired of hearing the term “mindset.” While it seems to be an appropriately termed expression, I'm just tired of hearing it. For this writing, “mindset” will be synonymous with an “attitude for achievement.”

I'll briefly touch on gaining an **attitude for achievement** because as of this writing, mindset training is exceedingly popular. A simple search will reveal a multitude of techniques that will help you step into the appropriate attitude to accomplish any goal you set for yourself. In this section, I simply want to reveal what I have learned and what works for me.

Setting your attitude to a state that enables you to tackle the first step of your strategy is crucial. It is what I did that day in my truck. This may include a powerful declaration or reciting a mantra or deep breathing. It might involve reading, listening to, and/or watching a motivational speech. Or perhaps pulling your mind from the outside to the inside through meditation is the way you set your attitude to successfully complete the first step.

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Whatever gets you there and helps you complete the step, you have to realize that

the most important thing to do once you complete the first step is to reset your attitude to a state that will enable you to tackle the next step.

Then, if you see where this is going, you will realize that establishing an attitude to achieve is a constant process that precedes each step of your strategy. **Continual attitude adjustment** allows you to jump into the next step of your strategy and the next after that. Adjusting for that next step is what propels you to your desired end result.

If at any point you can't **set your attitude to tackle the next step**, you will become preoccupied by the infinite distractions that crave your attention each second of every day.

If you have an important goal – one that requires intense focus – you may need to make a lifestyle adjustment. I'm not suggesting anything drastic, like becoming a vegan if you love meat, but what I do suggest is to determine what the least distracted time of the day is for you and then adjust your schedule to focus solely on that important goal during that time. By the way, those of you with “regain health” or “lose weight” goals know up front that a lifestyle change is waiting for you – or there will be no success. Those of you with goals to make beneficial changes in your character or other behaviors (because your deep *why* is to improve all your personal relationships) will also see that lifestyle changes lead to and are part and parcel of that success.

The #4amClub

When I decided to work toward the goal of becoming a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA), which is a three-to-five-year endeavor, I had two children, a demanding wife, and a business that claimed much of my time. However, between the hours of 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. I had nothing claiming me. My phone was on silent, the kids were asleep, and no one important was emailing me. It was totally quiet, and all distractions were gone once I ensured all tabs on the computer were closed – especially the ones that blasted alerts at me when the smallest of things would happen.

I began waking at 4:00 a.m. It was this minor adjustment to my schedule that allowed me the time to study and achieve the goal of becoming a CFA Charterholder. I continue to use this strategy today, specifically for one of my more thought-provoking projects, which requires an intense amount of creativity and out-of-the-box thinking. It's remarkable what can be accomplished during this time. I meet my family for breakfast amazed at what I've accomplished in just two hours. When you try it, send me a message in the Achieve Facebook group at 4:00 a.m. ET, and I'll shoot you one back after I emerge from the no-distraction zone 😊

Attitude to Achieve

After you make the decision and develop an attitude to begin, ask yourself,

What is my current attitude toward achievement?

What you think and feel today dramatically impacts the next decision you make. That's the concept of continual attitude adjustment discussed in the previous paragraphs. Are your thoughts encouraging amazing decision-making, or are they laced with fear of what bad thing might happen if you pursue this goal?

Fearful thoughts may not even be related to the goal. You may be thinking about how you don't want your teenage daughter to date a certain guy or why your favorite Netflix series ended at season three. Whatever it is, that negativity and fear will leach into other areas of your life, critically harming the seeds of success you intend to plant.

Your new project, goal, lifestyle change, or business venture could be permanently impaired if you attach to it your current feelings of fear and anxiety about unrelated matters. If this happens, you

may forever have that feeling when you think or try to work on the goal.

If you are feeling financial anxiety when you start a new project, you may feel anxious every time you think about the goal, which doesn't sound fun at all. You may not find the necessary motivation to work on your project or goal until the anxiety subsides, which it may never do since you started the project with anxiety.

It is imperative that you are in an **innovative, motivated, hopeful, and enthusiastic state** when you begin. If you aren't, then don't do anything with the goal. Do something else that isn't as important to you. Don't increase the risk of failure when you can do a variety of things to quickly change your attitude, and then begin.

Meditation

Meditation is a powerful way to **bend your mind to achieve anything**, especially if you are struggling with procrastination or beginning a project. It can help you become happy when you're sad. It can help you become confident when you're second-guessing yourself. It can quiet those negative "You Can't" thoughts. It can even help you like people who you don't like or who have hurt you.

There isn't one way to meditate. Therefore, it's important to find what works for you. Maybe it's sitting in a quiet place. If your house is like mine – which often resembles a bounce-house birthday party – then you may need to go outside or to another location. In this case, since I mostly work from home these days, my meditation time is before everyone wakes up and after they all go to sleep. I'm also opportunistic in that when I discover a quiet moment and feel like I need a mind shift, I'll take it spontaneously.

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Other people find a meditative state in jogging, music, creativity, and sleep, among other methods. The important thing is to try to eliminate the feeling of distress and replace it with the present moment.

I could write volumes on the usefulness of meditation and how it has changed my life for the better. I could also find scores of successful people who use it in their daily lives. However, it is a personalized topic that requires exploration and discovery. It is experiential, meaning you must do it on your own rather than seeking a guru. There is a tremendous amount of resources, apps, books, and retreats that can help guide you. Do some research, trial, and error, and have fun with discovering what works for you.

The one thing I will say is that it's not about clearing your mind. If you're focused on clearing your mind, then when you close your eyes to open your mind, you'll be thinking about closing your eyes and opening your mind – and wasting your time. Let thoughts come and go regardless of the method you settle on. Eventually, hopefully sooner than later, you'll understand meditation. Just don't give up thinking nothing is happening. Meditation is always beneficial to everyone every time.

Craig Hamilton of Integral Enlightenment said it best.

The human condition is pervaded by a rarely questioned sense that there's not enough: "I'm not enough, life is not enough, this moment is not enough yet."

Meditation for your mind and spirit is in some ways like exercise for the body. If you perform the same exercise repeatedly at the same level, it will cease to challenge you or produce results.

Peak experiences can be a trap for any of us on the spiritual path – particularly if we mistake these experiences for the true goal of enlightenment. We mistake these experiences with the goal of meditation.

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(Which, by the way, almost everyone does.) Because once we make this mistake, we can't help but come to meditation seeking after a special experience.

The problem with seeking after peak experiences is that these powerful states inevitably come and go. Any higher state we can experience will always be fleeting.

Meditative states, like any other state of consciousness, are inherently transitory, passing states.

We wonder why we're not "getting there." It even begins to seem as if true enlightenment is a distant or perhaps impossible goal. Meditation is about the practice of liberation from all states.

When we meditate, we're seeking to discover the enlightened consciousness that's always already here no matter what experience we're having. It is only about discovering the sacredness and wholeness of this moment right now, and that any investment in a future moment of enlightenment is missing the entire point.

Declarations and Mantras

If you've ever faced a challenge and said something to yourself in a powerful manner that helped you gain the confidence and motivation to overcome the challenge, then you've used a powerful declaration.

Essentially, declarations are affirmations spoken with power and movement. A Stanford study found **the effects of affirmations on attitude and motivation tend to persist**, even one month later (Harris et al. 2007, Harris & Napper 2005). But long-term effects on behavior have been mixed (Harris & Epton 2010). This is why a more powerful affirmation, or a declaration, yields better results especially if adopted into a long-term pattern.

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Powerful declarations must be said in a strong physical stance (not sitting on the couch or lying in bed) with a confident and meaningful tone (not thinking it in your head hoping the universe will magically grant you power). You must convince yourself that you believe 100% of what you are speaking. So yes, a lot of **your attitude to achieve is believing something *before* you see it.**

Mantras are like declarations without the physical movement. Mantras are things you want to believe but might not yet believe. Mantras are the primary method of setting intention in your life. Yours may be something like, “I am financially independent,” even though you may be so broke you’re afraid to check your bank account. When you say a mantra over and over, your brain begins to believe it. And since your brain doesn’t know the difference between something you believe to be true and what is actually true, it will focus your attention and observation to identify the opportunities that will fulfill that very belief until it becomes your new reality.

Breathing

Take a pause in the midst of a panic or depressed state. Closing your eyes and breathing deeply for several breaths will do wonders in a few seconds. A collaborative study by Stanford University, Chicago Medical School, and University of California published in *Science* found this is part of what’s been called the brain’s “breathing pacemaker” because it can be adjusted by altering breathing rhythm (slow, controlled breathing decreases activity in the circuit; fast, erratic breathing increases activity), which in turn influences emotional states.

While performing calm intentional breaths, try counting forward or backward a few seconds. Imagine a peaceful image. Say a calming mantra or a powerful declaration. Try these techniques next time you’re in a stressful moment, and notice how your mind

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clears, becomes more focused, and readies you for the task at hand. It's also a good way to break patterns, such as yelling at your kids for leaving dirty clothes on the bathroom floor.

Focused Movement

I mentioned earlier that taking a jog puts some people in a meditative state. Same goes with lifting, yoga, and other movements. I think it has something to do with concentrating on the physical movement. When I'm lifting weights, my mind is steady between sets and not distracted with everything around me, unless I'm in a gym where distractions are everywhere. However, I usually exercise at my house or in an outdoor environment so when I rest between sets or while I'm moving from pose to pose (because I don't do the monotonous run), my mind is already focused. During this time, my thoughts aren't competing against everything else. So if I have an insight about a project, I can usually protract that into measurable steps.

A Successful Journey

Let's face it, not everything we do will be successful. If you understand that, then you shouldn't feel anxiety about continuing any project you start. If you aren't concerned with the end result and put your attention solely on the actions with the goal of enjoying the process and knowing that no matter what happens you will learn a tremendous amount about the thing you are doing as well as yourself, then that in itself is a success. If you can think about everything you do in this manner, then nothing will be a failure. It may not make the money you want, or you may not get the solo chair in the community orchestra, but you will learn. And if you can enjoy learning, then you're all set to begin.

I seriously questioned whether to put the effort into this book. Not because of time or lack of enthusiasm, but because I'm saying a lot of what other people have been teaching for decades. This thinking keeps many from doing really great things. "There's already a product like that." "There are already paintings of trees." "There are already people teaching that." I'm sure you've used a

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similar excuse at least once in your life. I know I have many times. I'm having them now even as I type this sentence.

Do not be concerned with the fruit of your action – just give attention to the action itself. The fruit will come of its own accord.

We must realize that we can't be totally focused on or concerned about the outcome of our completed project because most likely it will go differently than we expect. We must gain the attitude to enjoy the journey to wherever we are going.

The goal of life is not to merely get to the end. It is to enjoy all the intricate details it brings to us in each beautiful moment.

Our goals, like life itself, will present numerous obstacles. And again like life, we must handle these obstacles along the way, understanding many of those blocks will be our own thinking. Once we can grasp the power of our own thoughts and modify them to empower our projects, then we can put some serious effort into working toward an end goal that satisfies whatever desire the project was intended to satisfy.

A close friend of mine has a serious issue with saying what other people have already said. She's an amazing person with an abundance of health and wellness knowledge (this is who Mandy represents in this story, BTW). I told her that even though her audience may have heard it from someone else, they haven't heard her message in the unique manner that only she can deliver.

The way she says it may be the difference between someone making a significant life change in favor of better health and someone who just listens and immediately forgets. This is why it is so important to be authentic. If you merely copy someone else's style, speech, or teachings, then you will struggle to find your unique audience – because your audience is looking for how *you* deliver the message, not how you *think* they want to receive the message. Understand the difference?

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I also listened to my advice, and that is why this book and any other media associated with it exist. I had to convince myself that someone out there needs this information and that they can receive it best in the manner only I can convey. Only then was I able to let go of those fearful thoughts of what someone might say. Only then did I start enjoying this journey and begin to build momentum to complete this and associated goals.

No one delivers similar information in the same way. We all have our ideal audience. While I've attributed several ideas to other people in this book, we all convey them differently, which means we all appeal to a different audience even though we are essentially saying the same thing.

You have a powerful voice. Your unique audience needs to hear the message from you and only you. If you have something to say, say it. If you have a product that will help many, build it. If you have love to share, share it. Don't let the fear of what someone might say prevent you from doing that great thing that only you can do.

It's better to have loved and lost than to F-- it all up because you were too scared to open your heart. Just get in there, give it all you have, and enjoy the ride.

How else will we progress as a society if we don't help everyone else rise to a higher level? A common theme in this book is to reach your goals, finish your projects, achieve your dreams. I want what you have. The world needs what you are building. People desire the love you want to share. We need the inspiration of your success story.

Use the steps in this book to help get you there, but don't stop here. Keep learning and pushing forward. Keep the momentum of awesomeness going project after project.

Leave all your greatness here when you leave this Earth.

Be brave enough to dance.

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Sing your song.

Get your voice out there in any way you can. Today there are more ways to do that than ever.

The world needs you.

I need you.

Now go do it!

Ten Steps to Change Destructive Patterns

I once had a thought pattern that was highly negative toward *selling*. It didn't matter whether it was my investment services or something from home I no longer needed. I felt like I was a pushy car salesman trying to convince people to give me money for stuff they didn't need. My problem wasn't with the things I was selling, it was with the way I thought about selling. I felt bothersome and extremely uncomfortable asking for money. This thought pattern severely limited my earning potential and the growth of my companies.

Identifying destructive patterns is oftentimes incredibly difficult because we've lived them for so long that we just think that's who we are and don't recognize them as something we can readily change. Additionally, we conform to the pattern by making statements to ourselves such as, "I'm not good at ...," or, "I'm the type of person who ...". We do this because it feels safe to do things we've always done – the familiar. We feel we have built a sanctuary where we won't be harmed by trying that new thing.

We instantly limit our abilities when we use phrases that say we are or are not one thing or another. When we label ourselves, we remove the possibility that we may be great at that thing that is just outside the prison we built for ourselves. We must understand that

greatness lies just on the other side of our biggest fear.

One of the best ways to identify patterns is to listen to people who know us best. When those people fuss at us or try to encourage us to do something differently, they've identified a destructive pattern in us and love us enough to call us out on it. Get in a habit of listening to what people say about you and how they react to the things you say and do. It will tell you volumes about yourself.

Athena Staik, Ph.D., in her study "Neuroscience of Changing Toxic Thinking Patterns," found you can change your thoughts and the standards or beliefs that form your thoughts. Moreover, she says, "This principal applies in every aspect of your life." We all have destructive patterns, so take a few minutes with the following questions designed to help identify your destructive patterns.

- Do you overgeneralize?
- Is your thinking polarized?
- Do you label everything good or bad?
- Do you avoid responsibility and jump to conclusions?

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- Do you regularly blame others or events for what happens in your life?
- How often do you complain?
- Do you think you will fail before you start something new?
- Do you over- or under eat?
- Are you often vengeful?
- Are you a loner?
- Do you use the excuse of introversion as a means to avoid social interaction?
- Do you refuse to be helped?
- Do you unnecessarily self-sacrifice for the benefit of others?

If you answered yes to any of these – well, then, congratulations! You're human. However, each of these, among others, can be detrimental to your success in anything you desire to achieve. I have lived nearly all of these at one time, and several had become destructive patterns in my life. Several can be identified in the stories I tell. These are just a sample of questions that may apply to you. Think of others. Do whatever you can to identify the patterns that don't serve your life. When you find them, note somewhere handy one or more patterns you want to change so that you will have a better chance of catching it the next time it occurs.

In addition to putting the pattern in your alerts, tell everyone. Tell everyone about your desire to change this pattern and ask them to call you out on it. Ask them to ridicule you, make fun of you, get serious with you. These loving people will be your greatest resource in achieving success over your unwanted habits and patterns. Along with their help, there is also a strategy you must do on your own.

Once I discovered how to change my patterns, I immediately thought about my pattern of hesitation when it came to selling. I thought about how unconfident I felt when I was speaking to people about my services. I then said,

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*I offer a service people need and desire. I am doing them
a disservice if I don't get it to them.*

Basically, what I was telling myself was that I was not loving my customers and clients if I didn't get them the thing I created specifically for them.

The thing about this phrase is that it stopped my pattern of negativity toward selling. But most importantly, it was true. I've never sold a product or service that wasn't highly beneficial to my target customer or client. My investment services are second to none and always outperformed my competition. I once sold gas and diesel fuel, which of course everyone needs, but my prices were always better. I created a pay-for-performance marketing and advertising app that businesses desire to increase word-of-mouth sales. However, even as recently as with Nyoobe, which has just entered the market as of this writing, I still struggle with selling. Patterns, especially ones we've had for many years, can be incredibly hard (but not impossible) to overcome. Like anything difficult to do, with time and practice they get easier.

Changing unwanted patterns is crucial before beginning anything important. Negative and unhealthy patterns that relate to your project or goal can severely impair your success. When you recognize an unwanted pattern, use the following ten-step process to eliminate the pattern – for good!

Ten Steps to Change Destructive Patterns

1. Abruptly do something that stops the pattern.
2. Intensely focus on a feeling that associates pain with continuing the pattern.
3. Intensely focus on a feeling that associates pleasure with whatever you replace the pattern with.
4. List ten reasons why you *must* change the pattern.
5. Say these reasons out loud.
6. List actions for how you *can* change the pattern.
7. Say these actions out loud.
8. List five ways you can continue to disrupt the pattern.

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9. Associate pleasure from the change and visualize the current and future gains from continuing without the pattern.
10. Note the reasons and interruptions.

Ways you can disrupt the pattern can be as simple as saying a funny word. The funny-word disruption also works in arguments with anyone. It's imperative you don't skip #5 and #7. There is intense power in spoken words, especially those you speak to yourself. Note the reasons and interruptions in a place you can periodically review, like a mobile calendar with alerts so you'll never regress.

Regarding my aversion to selling, I hesitated to introduce my investment services to what would eventually be my most important investors. It wasn't just because of my aversion to selling. I oftentimes do things differently than what traditional investment managers do and what most wealthy individuals understand as investment management. This means the possibility of rejection was high. Additionally, I have a high propensity to focus on a triple bottom line (social, environmental, and financial) which isn't common in the South East. So, one of my *limiting excuses* was that when I reached out to investors, I felt like I would be misunderstood, which to some respect is true because while I am decent at putting words onto paper, I've generally struggled when speaking them. However, I overcame that by doing the pattern-changing technique.

I first said the phrase about how valuable my services are. Saying the phrase wasn't completely necessary because I already understood the value to my investors and the causes we support. It's part of the process, so I did it anyway and felt a rise of confidence afterward – just like every other time I performed this exercise. I then listed the reasons I must change the pattern.

1. Investors need the investment opportunities I vet and analyze.
2. Investors need unbiased investment opinions.
3. The investment industry has a reputation of looking out for themselves.

4. Traditional investment management is expensive and often doesn't add value to the investor over standard passive markets.
5. My investment philosophy benefits more than my and my investors bank accounts.
6. Communities, Cities, States, Nations, and the World need our financial support for sweeping positive progress.
7. More investors mean more dollars for environmental impact.
8. My family needs my investment activities to be financially successful.
9. My investment success contributes to the attainment of my life goals.
10. I can help many people reach their life goals at the same time encouraging them to help others – Social and Environmental Network Effect.

I then listed reasons why I can change the pattern.

1. I can pick up the phone and call a potential client.
2. I can walk into a networking event and introduce myself.
3. I can use emails, texts, and ads targeting investors.
4. I can speak confidently about the financial potential of my investment strategies as well as the corresponding social and environmental impact.
5. I am a knowledge leader in the field of investment management.

I then thought of ways to continue to interrupt the pattern, which can be nearly anything. But be careful to not fall into the procrastination trap. Any of these interruptions should last only a brief moment.

1. Say the phrase I saved in my phone.
2. Say “Nope. That’s not true,” when thoughts of incompetent sales skills crossed my mind.
3. Do a quick burst exercise, such as pushups or jump squats.
4. Go outside.
5. Meditate on how investors need my service.

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6. Use the breathing technique previously mentioned.
7. Call my friend – the one who can sell sand to an ant.
8. Watch a clip from *The Wolf of Wall Street*.
9. Read highlights from a sales-oriented personal development book.
10. Watch or listen to online motivational videos.

The key to this process after identifying the pattern is to first disrupt the pattern. Without the disruption, you will most likely continue to struggle. Understand that recognizing that the pattern exists may be the most difficult part, especially if it often occurs when you're emotionally charged. Additionally, thinking of reasons to change can be tough. Do it anyway. It's only you who will see them, so write down all *reasons to change* you can think of regardless of how silly or self-serving they may seem.

If you're struggling with the mental aspects of selling (selling your ideas to your boss; selling more than your quota every month on your sales job; selling your skills to a headhunter so that you get a great new job; selling your old car for top dollar to a private individual over the web – we sell a lot!), then use this strategy to overcome your deficiencies.

I'm in several entrepreneur-focused groups and see many posts of people struggling with this pattern. It's the reason I used this example over something else. We're all selling something, and most of us struggle with it. It's naturally uncomfortable to attempt to get people to do things. Once you get your mind wrapped around how to properly think about it, then conveying your message to anyone about anything will be much simpler and you'll experience more success in your efforts.

I discuss in greater detail how to craft your message in the Sell It! section.

Attitude to Continue

“Without ambition one starts nothing. Without work one finishes nothing. The prize will not be sent to you. You have to win it.”
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

The beginning is the easiest part because it’s the most fun. The beginning of any project is when you’re most excited and most passionate about discovering the journey to where you think it will lead. Just think of the excitement people have for a new romantic relationship or their New Year’s resolutions!

One of the most difficult parts for most people is the middle of the journey (like with those resolutions). This is when an **attitude to continue** is paramount. Most projects are abandoned at this stage. This is when you have to crunch your time, brain, and resources to hammer out the details of your project. This is when you take the idea you had in the beginning and follow the strategy you designed to create that product or to learn that instrument or to do whatever it is you want to do.

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This is the stage of work – and work is what most people try to avoid. Work is hard, and for most people it's not fun. So they quit the team (quit the diet, the class, the manuscript, saving that 10% per paycheck – name the project or goal!) that in the beginning was so exciting. These people quit because achieving ***the goal wasn't more important to them than the discomfort*** they feel from the work involved to get there. These people never learned that anything worth doing usually takes time and effort. In the case of significantly impacting their own life, other's lives, an industry, or the world, these people were more concerned with their personal comfort than the impact they could have had if only they had been more resourceful.

That's right. I didn't say if only they didn't quit or if only they just worked harder. Maybe they quit because it was too expensive and they didn't have the money in the bank or sufficient credit to purchase that piano. Oftentimes, the best way to do anything significant will be with the help of others.

A resourceful person would have found people who shared their vision. They would have borrowed resources or traded equity in their project to keep going. If your mission is important to you, it will be felt in your words. Not everyone will loan you money for piano lessons, but someone with the resources will see your passion and help you financially. Or perhaps they will trade you lessons for something that you have or can do for them. Bartering (trading something for something, where no cash is involved) is one of the most useful tools of resourceful people. I'll touch more on how to become more resourceful later.

My point here is that the work stage is oftentimes hard and no fun, but that shouldn't deter you. There are numerous examples of how a persistent inclination to endure the work stage pays off tremendously. From Michael Jordan's hundreds of jump shots a day to Henry Ford's failed businesses and countless actors' "comebacks," you will find a multitude of people who had every reason to quit but didn't. Use a declaration such as, "I can do hard things!" with a powerful move of your own design that

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energizes your body and refocuses your attention on the project. I can't tell you how many times that phrase has propelled my projects forward.

There's no trick to the work involved. Someone has to do it. That person is either you or someone you convince through financial means, favors, begging, bartering, or other method that gets you closer to the end product.

The last thing you want is the regret that maybe you could have succeeded if only you had done something different or persisted just a little longer. Use what you learn in these pages to develop a solid strategy with achievable steps, and never quit until your great thing is complete. Then, for the love of God, tell me what it is in a social comment or a post in the Achieve group or other group we are both in.

Attitude to Finish

What I realized along the way to help me achieve my goals is to first discover the process that would keep me on track and then find the people with the skills to help me fully execute my ideas. While I know the process to completion, I tend to lose interest after I develop the concept to a certain point. But once I started locating the *who* to help me, I began to complete goal after goal. I even started finishing old starts from years ago! Nothing is out of the scope of the process.

I'm creative and can easily inspire myself to start anything. I can also work like a machine. What I've always struggled with, however, is **finishing**. I'd stall projects in my less resourceful days for a variety of excuses such as:

- I found other ideas that seemed more interesting or profitable.
- I don't have the time to finish.
- The project is no longer relevant.
- It seemed (or really was) too expensive.

But the real reason was that it's **just easier to quit**.

Another underlying issue is that I didn't know the process necessary to complete my projects. It also doesn't mean everything I quit just went away. Regarding my unfinished projects, many sat there, in a frozen state – mocked up to near completion and just begging me to open up the Excel file or pull the manuscript out of deep storage. My incomplete projects have been a constant thought in the back of my head:

What if ...?

It drove me crazy. Not until I created a process to **Achieve Anything** did I start knocking out my current projects as well as my old ones.

This didn't just occur to me, nor did the process magically solve my problems. I still needed to finish the projects, and oftentimes the reasons they stalled persisted, such as financial and time constraints. However, once I gained a solid **attitude to finish**, nothing short of death would keep the project from my intended end result. In some cases, even death wouldn't prevent it because I gained from others the assistance that is integral to the project's completion.

Several years ago, when I managed investments for institutions and wealthy individuals, I created an investment methodology powered by artificial intelligence, or AI. I built it up to the point of a workable prototype but shelved it due to "lack of resources, lack of time and lack of expected profitability." This prototype essentially mimicked my investment behavior in public markets, and since I was currently in the employment of utilizing my expertise on a daily basis, it didn't actually make sense for me to replace myself at that particular moment! However, the project screamed across my mind on a near daily basis.

Once I discovered the power of finding the *who* to help me complete this project, I quickly reached out to a developer who was interested in partnering with me. At this time, I was confident

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that I laid the last brick to complete the investment platform. However, the path to success is never a straight line.

I received an email from this developer saying he didn't have the time due to his focus on his current business (which is understandable considering the COVID-19 crisis was in full swing). I was distraught for about five minutes before I reached out to a contact of mine who had worked on the early stages of Nyoobe, one of my current projects as of this writing. It turns out his team has the AI and database experience along with the attitude to complete the platform.

However, again, about a month after that initial conversation, I received an email stating he didn't have the bandwidth and the person he referred didn't have the proper experience! It seemed that this project of mine would never get completed because I don't have the expertise to complete it myself at a level that I would be satisfied with (and I don't half-ass anything).

But once again, a coincidence solved my problem, and luckily I was open to receive it. The first guy who didn't have the time to build the project lives in Atlanta. He is integral because I use his quantitative software in the project. The second guy lives in Miami, and it would have been difficult but not impossible to get them together. Because I was open to opportunities, while searching for a social media freelancer to fill a gap in my marketing company, I found a guy just outside Atlanta with the AI experience I was seeking and the time to work on my project. Mick Jagger sang it best that

"You can't always get what you want. But if you try sometimes, you find, you get what you need."

My attitude at the time was the critical factor: I had an attitude of executing my strategy to complete the project.

My mind was focused on each next step, not what could go or had gone wrong. That's resourcefulness that many people don't

have. Having an attitude to finish goes hand in hand with resourcefulness. Your steps will get derailed. Things will break. People will be notoriously undependable. I could have easily said, “Well, that sucks. I guess I can’t complete this project.” But I didn’t. I quickly found the perfect partner and maintained the momentum.

Resourcefulness and not wallowing in pity and self-doubt are the keys to having an attitude to finish. You must continue your hustle and find a solution. Someone once said,

Complainers always find a problem to every solution.

These people consistently quit and never achieve anything great. It’s the people who can identify the problem and quickly **find the solution** before getting pulled down in an emotional whirlpool who are the ones who can follow the process to achieve anything. These people are resourceful. These people constantly adjust their attitude to achieve the next step of the process.

Who Cares What They Might Say?

You may have quit potentially rewarding projects because of what other people might think or because you fear that the outcome might not be what you intended. I once wrote a fiction book based on a story my kids and I created in an oral storytelling game I call, “Let’s build a story.”

Writing the book was an enlightening experience. I wrote it and then did nothing with it. Over the year it took me to write it, I never had one thought about publishing or even letting anyone else read it. The reason is that I was too concerned about what it would look like. I labeled it as something that would damage my reputation. I felt fear and potential embarrassment when I thought about making it public. I mean, how would it look for an investment professional who managed a large fund to publish a

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fiction story about a teenage kid battling monsters? My clients would think I wasn't putting in the effort to ensure their returns were safe. Right?

So, I just let it sit. But it didn't just sit. It was a project that was near completion. It constantly etched its title across my brain. This wasn't that long ago, by the way. Everything I'm writing here, I use each day to achieve anything I put my mind to.

I oftentimes re-read books that have had an impact my life. One day I skimmed the notes of one of these books and came across a section that inspired the next thought – and said it out loud, which gave it transformational power:

I must be unattached to the outcome when faced with a decision to act.

I said it out loud again and then put it in my phone as a recurring note.

I was proud that I wrote the fiction book and just let go of the thoughts of what it would look like to others. It was a fun exercise, and my kids were a major factor in its completion. But that's just it: It wasn't complete, and that bothered me. I used all the knowledge and creativity I had available to write the book and was left with the next step in the process: I had to **find others to help me** achieve this goal.

The next steps after writing a satisfactory draft of any book go in this order: After close friends and/or family read the book at an alpha reader level, send the manuscript to a group of trusted beta readers who are interested in your genre. There are many websites, social groups, and critique sites for this part. Just get to know your beta readers, and you'll quickly develop a level of trust and security that they will provide you with quality work. Oftentimes, they will expect you to return the favor. This group will hopefully give you honest feedback that you can use to create following drafts.

My beta readers' critiques empowered me to transform my fiction book, which I thought was pretty good at the time, into two books that I have a hard time putting down. I was so happy I didn't stop the process. It would have been embarrassing to release the original draft. In fact, one of my beta readers was so blunt that I was ashamed of writing it. I felt like I had no business writing. She was the best of them all. With her comments, I was on the edge of scrapping the work. But you know? Without her blunt honesty, I would have seriously regretted letting anyone I cared about read it.

On that note, a different beta reader made me have the same thoughts of scrapping the very book you are reading. She used these words and phrases: *misdirected*, *disconnected*, *didn't speak to me*, *I wasn't able to connect the dots*, *confusing*, and *unclear*, among others. I could have said, "This book is shit" and forgotten about it (which you may think I should have done). Instead, I felt strongly that someone needs to hear what I have to say in the unique way I say it. I took her valuable comments and transformed this book into a version of what you are currently reading.

I'm thankful I continued with both projects and will forever reach out to these two for advice, feedback, and consulting on future projects related to their field of expertise. That's because once you find precious people who can help you reach your goal, you always want them close to you.

I reveled in the success of the project that I effectively scrapped after I was nearly finished with it. The point of all of this was to explain that with an **attitude to finish**, any past project, no matter how old or unrelated to your area of expertise, can be revised into a current version and completed with the help of others who are experts in the area where you lack knowledge.

Ultimately, any success you have in achieving anything lies in your motivations. If your *why* is strong enough, then you will be successful in achieving anything. My *why* for the fiction books were my children. They inspired me to put in the effort, and I was

driven to achieve an entertaining story they would enjoy, regardless of my fear of what people would say.

Choices

Achieving Anything begins with a **decision to start**. The decision to start must be grounded in an **attitude to finish**. If you can maintain an attitude to finish, you will be successful. I learned a powerful truth about choices from Trevor Moawad in his book, “*It Takes What It Takes*.” I modified a speech of his into the below in an attempt to motivate you to act on those important projects in your life.

You may feel as if you actually have choices to make about where you want to go and what it takes to get there.

But in reality, it's a decision to finish and be successful or not.

Anyone who runs a marathon will tell you that the last few miles are the hardest. Anyone who quits running before the finish line will tell you that they were instantly relieved – and it's true. But days later, when the physical pain is gone, when they read about the people who finished ahead of them – who kept running – they will have a new pain.

Regret.

The only choice you have is to succeed.

Years from now when you look back at your life, all that will be left is what you did - not what you could have done if only this or that happened.

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If you are someone who believes big – then you don't have a “choice” about how you finish.

None.

This life rewards people who do it right. This life has demands – you do them and succeed or you don't do them and you struggle.

There is no middle area.

Feel free to put this book aside and make some progress. I'll get into how to deal with fear, anxiety, and depression when you return.

Fear and Anxiety

Humans have 40,000 to 80,000 thoughts each day, depending on the source you reference. Maybe a hundred of those are ideas and a smaller percentage, let's say 2%, are actually good, actionable ideas. That's two really good ideas you have each day.

Think of all you could do if you acted on two good ideas per day!

There's more to how we think, though. It's also been estimated that 70% of our thoughts are negative, and 90% are repetitive. This statistic makes those thoughts and ideas sound a little less tantalizing. It's also why so many gurus and self-help experts focus on positive thinking, which is just not the way to bring about lasting change.

People who experience depression, from my personal experience and other research I've read over the years, are more prone to repetitive thoughts of shame, anger, regret, and sorrow, while people who suffer from anxiety are prone to worrying about what might go wrong (Source: Joormann, Gotlib 2010; Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, Lyubomirsky 2008).

This brings us back to attitude, because let's face it: If you're thinking about all the bad stuff that happened to you in the past or all the bad stuff that might happen to you in the future, then there's no room in your fearful head for a good thought or great idea.

If this is you, then your next thought will be similar to the last, reinforcing the idea that you're not good enough or that your idea won't work or that no one will like you even if you complete the goal. You may be so scared that your work toward any goal will end in failure, that you don't even try.

I had those thoughts as I wrote this book. No one is immune. Fear lives inside me just like it lives inside you, except now I know what to do with it. But in my earlier days, it got me just like it got everyone else. I don't live in the past. I, most of the time, live in the future – where fear lives, along with hope and optimism. Living in the future brings unease, anxiety, tension, stress, and worry, but it is also what helps drive me to strive to achieve great things.

I am often anxious and worry about what might happen. This stress has me constantly planning and hustling to avoid that fateful moment when my fears come true. I must constantly remind myself that

the future doesn't exist, and I create it with each next action I take knowing that next action is the correct one.

I must realize, each moment, that I will never be happy if I'm constantly worried. Not that happiness is always the end goal, but happiness for most people is generally a desirable outcome.

Happiness is not a treasure to be found. It is in us already, just like love and joy.

Happiness, love, and joy exist along with sadness, pain, and other necessary feelings you would rather not experience. However,

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that's just it. Each of these feelings is in us, and it is up to us to decide which ones to express and to what extent.

Each moment (I say that a lot, I know, but if you haven't noticed, I strive to maximize life in each of these moments), I try not to wait for a better moment or wish for past moments to reoccur – which, of course, they won't. Each moment requires a feeling or a combination of the feelings and emotions that exist in you. If you are following along and really think about what I've said, you have the ability to choose what emotions to express or not express for any moment. Now, if you express happiness when a family member unexpectedly dies, then maybe that may be seen as an unhealthy expression. But you can still choose to express it – perhaps as happiness that you were privileged to know that individual, in a celebration of that life.

Try choosing an odd reaction the next time your significant other or friend does that thing that irritates you. Rather than getting angry, laugh at it. Think of it as a science experiment, and you'll get a kick out of the outcome.

In my earlier days as a trader, I made my living buying and selling all sorts of assets. It might have been stocks one trade, oil the next, then millions of U.S. dollars' worth of British pounds (it sounds like a lot, but it was mostly leverage). I traded whatever opportunity I saw and risked a lot of capital on each one. I was a homerun seeker and became exceptionally good at it. However, due to the large sizes of my trades, and even though I was accustomed to losses and risk, on occasion I made regrettable mistakes by making or not making trades. Nearly every emotional trade I made or missed was due to fear.

Love, abundance and joy live on the other side of your biggest fear.

While at an earlier age I was more susceptible to fear than I am today, I reflect back on a time when I instinctively overcame fear

by using the mindset methods I previously discussed. I began honing this skill after I nearly lost the biggest trade of my life.

In the early 2000s, I managed the foreign exchange investments for my firm. Because I was young and impetuous those days, I scheduled a vacation to Mexico during a highly anticipated monthly employment report. I offset uncomfortable anxieties with the fact that it was a popular destination, so I was confident the necessary amenities would be available in order for me devote a few hours to the financial markets.

We arrived on a beautiful Thursday morning and quickly set out to spend the day in the city. I'm the type of traveler who prefers to experience local culture and customs, so I wasn't interested much in the westernized section of town that catered heavily to tourists. We took the public bus, which was an older-model school bus, from the hotel to the local section of the city.

Aboard the bus, a woman marketed beautiful woven items while a portly, middle-aged man provided auditory entertainment with a song and a small guitar. The ride out of the tourist district was pleasant, as was the time we spent at a local café. My Spanish consists of what I remember from grade school, which wasn't much, so we consistently experienced communication issues. But isn't that a nice part of an unplanned adventure?

When we returned to the hotel, I casually located the internet café (remember those?) located adjacent to the hotel. This was before reliable Wi-Fi, before translation apps and before smartphones, so the conversation I had with Miguel to convince him that it was in his best interest to open an hour early in order for me to catch the report was interesting, to say the least. He seemed not to mind opening early, and so far, I felt in harmony with the universe.

Friday morning, I strolled into the empty café that Miguel opened so graciously for me. As I passed through the small room, he offered a casual nod, which I kindly accepted and returned. He seemed to be content at one of the stations, possibly catching up on the local news or surfing the web for a nice gift for his girlfriend.

I settled into a station directly in the middle of the café and logged into my platform. This particular report was highly anticipated. The past few had been rather large surprises, and we were expecting another. However, our analysis disagreed with the consensus estimates and indicated a drastically weaker U.S. dollar result from the anticipated report. I was rather confident in the direction, but there was no way to anticipate the size of the initial move and if there would be any follow-through. Nonetheless, minutes prior to the release I entered one of the largest foreign exchange positions of my career – and my first in a foreign country.

About the time I entered the order, I noticed commotion coming from the far side of the room. It was five or six women in black-and-white uniforms. I realized the internet café was somehow connected to the kitchen of the hotel. Partially distracted by the activity as they began to prepare to serve hungry tourists, I became slightly uncomfortable, maybe a bit out of harmony with my current stance on the market. I tried my best to tune out the disturbance and focused on the squiggly lines emanating from my laptop that represented the EUR/USD currency pair.

As minutes passed, the disruption from the crew grew louder, and another patron logged into a station a few seats over. My news feed ticked something about a company that drew my eye then something about the impending report I was so anxiously awaiting.

It was just minutes before the report, and I became ever more hesitant on my new position. Fear and doubt crept in. Uncertainty quickly began eating at my core. I imagined all sorts of terrible things happening, including the notion that the fate of my company and livelihood were on the line. The worst-case scenario played out in my mind. Fearful questions danced in my thoughts:

- What if we misread the indicators?
- What if we left out an important factor in our analysis?
- What if ... I was (gasp!) *wrong*?

My finger hovered over the key that would close the trade and eliminate my fear. I watched. I waited. I questioned. I hesitated.

I took a breath using the breathing technique I described earlier. This was before I discovered mantras and powerful declarations, but I said to myself, “I’m right. I know I’m right” in such a confident manner that I inwardly knew I was on the right side of the trade. In seconds, the fear dissipated and confidence in the work we’d prepared returned. I removed my finger from the Enter key.

The report came out just as we predicted and sent the US dollar plummeting. It was a grand slam for the trade, and in harmony I was indeed! I released a yelp of excitement and triumph, realizing it was potentially one of the largest profitable trades of my career at the time. The wait staff seemed surprised by my outburst, but I wasn’t concerned with them at that moment.

I then focused my attention on entering orders to lock in the gains because large fluctuations like these often fail to continue as follow-up news emerges. Just as I typed in the order parameters, the connection to our dealer was lost. I thought for a second, “No problem, I’m in Mexico. It’s probably a brief internet connection blip.” This was my last attempt at feeling in control of the situation.

I noticed my news feed was still streaming, which meant that it wasn’t the internet connection. So I attempted to log back in several times to no avail. I was in a mild panic and felt a shift in the universe.

I frantically typed on and spoke loudly to my laptop. I once had an investment advisor friend of mine ask me if yelling at the monitor has an effect on market direction. We both concluded that it does not, and on this particular August day it also didn’t bring back a lost dealer connection when the dealer’s entire system was down. I conveniently learned of the dealer’s issues much later.

I noticed strange looks coming from the wait staff as they prepared for a busy day. Miguel seemed a bit uncomfortable and possibly questioned his decision to allow this strange foreigner into his establishment. However, I was not concerned with their

thoughts of me at the moment. I had to protect the position! Fear was driving panic to the surface while drowning out reason and rationality.

I took several satisfying deep breaths and finally gained a bit of composure. I was so accustomed to computer-based order routing that, in the moment, I totally forgot I could *call* the dealer to enter the order by phone. Fear still controlled my actions, which led to a more humorous story than simply sending an email to my team to close the position for me. I can laugh at myself now, so I'll continue the story without fear of ridicule.

I ran out of the café solely focused on making a call. Just outside I found a payphone. However, I was in Mexico, and all I had was a U.S. toll-free number to my dealer. (This, by the way, was a failure to construct an adequate plan that I learned quickly after this ordeal. I should have had an international number to call since I planned to trade.)

Time continued to pass, and I had no idea how the trade was performing. For all I knew, the position may have drastically reversed! Anxiety was weighing on me. I felt out of harmony but was seemingly still in control of the situation as I continued to think of acceptable solutions.

I was just about in full panic when I finally thought to call my office to get them to cover the position. I experienced immediate connection issues getting the call through.

Definitely out of harmony at that moment.

Looking back on this through the eyes of the people on the street, I must have looked like a crazy squirrel that lacked short-term memory, frantically searching for the nut he already ate.

The doorman to the hotel recognized my despair and attempted to assist. He said reluctantly in broken English that my calling card was no good. His perception of my state of anxiety was accurate, and he was unsuccessful in his attempt to further help with my dilemma.

I proceeded quickly to the nearest shop, purchased another card, successfully called my office, and learned where the euro was currently trading. To my *immeasurable* relief, it maintained follow-through from the initial move.

The position was the largest gain of our firm's history.

I thanked Miguel and paid him generously for his time. I also offered the doorman a tip that should have significantly increased his week's pay. Afterward I felt, as Pharrell Williams would sing many years later, *Happy!* Ahhhh, it was nice to be back in harmony.

I could have easily missed that trade. I could have missed the opportunity to be successful. Had I let fear completely take over, which I nearly did, I wouldn't have this story to share. The story I would have had would have been of regret. Of missing the profitable trade because I was too scared to try. I would have been too frightened to experience the journey regardless of the outcome. I could have been less resourceful and given up on executing the stop order to lock in gains. Had I not learned the lesson of my lack of preparation, this could have happened in another instance of my life with possibly a traumatic outcome. I could have been too scared to tell this story due to what you might think of me, and you wouldn't have experienced the benefits, even if it was just the entertainment value of imagining the ridiculous events playing out.

At that stage of my life, I hadn't yet developed **a process to Achieve Anything** – including overcoming fear. I had only basic instincts developed from previous life experiences, which, at that age, were relatively brief.

I was actually unaware at the time that I was in the grip of panic and fear. I didn't realize that such a state of mind could have caused a serious detriment to my financial life. I intuitively knew there was a better solution to my problem, but I had tunnel vision and could think only to make that call. I was solely focused on

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one solution, which turned out okay in the end. But there could have been a better one, especially if I had planned accordingly.

On the other side of this conversation is the possibility that it serves as a coincidence for you. Me telling that story will possibly compel you to develop a better strategy for your life or prepare you to see your next moment of panic for exactly what it is.

Depression

“If you get depressed, be happy that you are depressed and allow the depression to be. Then suddenly the depression will disappear and there will be a breakthrough.”

– Osho

Depression, anxiety, and fear are quite possibly the biggest obstacles to success. It is believed by the medical community that long-term depression changes the physiology of the brain. With the assumption this is true, it must also be true that a depression-affected brain can be further changed into one free of depression.

There are two types of depression as Osho describes it: natural depression and mental depression. Natural depression is simple. It may have been brought on by an event, such as a personal or business failure, a breakup or job loss resulting in a natural and healthy depressed state. Our only action related to this event is to experience it fully and let it pass. **Merely observe the emotions and the pain will dissipate.** Appreciate the moment and the

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emotion, which is natural and welcome. Then let it go. When we do this, we find amazing beauty waiting for us on the other side. You will be happy you were depressed! You will be thankful for the experience.

Most if not all long-term depression is mental depression, which is caused by our attempt to fight our depression. Mental depression is not real. Don't get me wrong, it feels real and has real effects on all aspects of our lives. However, it is not real. It is fabricated in our minds. It has no source to feed it other than our own thoughts. We prolong our depressed state because we now are depressed about the thing we were depressed about *and* we are also depressed about our depression. Additionally, the longer we fight the depression, the longer we give it energy. Therefore, the longer it lasts.

The depression cycle is vicious. If you've been there you understand.

Our thoughts and feelings about certain events typically start this cycle that will never end until we **decide it must stop**.

Our beliefs guide our lives. These beliefs are not who we are. They are a city built of all our experiences, all the things people have told us, and all the things we have seen and read. We choose to live in this city until we decide that it's not for us and move to a better place – a place we design for ourselves. Ultimately, our beliefs are simply what we choose to believe.

Build a new reality that makes the existing reality obsolete.

Depression is based on what has already happened and no longer exists – the past. We who have lived with depression suffocate every day in thoughts of, “What if this or that had or had not happened?” Constant thoughts about that event fuel its power over us. It fuels our fear of that or a similarly unpleasant event happening again. It fuels our thoughts about our insecurities and weaknesses. It fuels our ideas about how unfair life is to us. What

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we don't often realize is that we have the hose in our hand and can turn off the fuel any time we choose.

Nothing can change what happened. Nothing can change the decisions we made. We did the best we could with the information we had at the time. Each decision was the right decision. It was the outcome that was different from what we expected. That outcome is why we experienced the emotion, and our incessant repetitive thought processes have ensured we'd never forget.

As younger versions of ourselves, we each had a dream of how our lives should be. Most of us have held on to that dream, even though we're clearly beyond that dream ever coming true. We hold on to that past failure at becoming whatever we dreamed to become, and we attach emotion to it. When our present doesn't match that dream, we label the attached emotion as something that is "bad." We experience pain when we are dissatisfied with our current life compared to our dream life.

*"WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS TO BE INWARDLY
VERY SIMPLE WHICH IS TO HAVE A MIND NOT
CLOGGED WITH BELIEFS, WITH FEARS, WITH
INNUMERABLE WANTS, FOR ONLY SUCH A
MIND IS CAPABLE OF REAL THINKING, OF
EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY."
— JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI*

I'm no different. I had a dream, and my life up until a few years ago was drastically different from that dream. However, I discovered this process and have turned my current life into the **best version** of that dream. I'm also **constantly redesigning** it as I add important elements and unimportant ones fall off.

I turned a failing investment company into my dream job. I turned a failed marriage into a great friendship. I turned my

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constant work schedule into a schedule that gives me time to play and achieve goals – such as this book, which will positively impact many other people. I’m constantly exploring who I am and what I want to do with my time. Because of this, I’m always discovering new and interesting aspects of myself that I wouldn’t have learned otherwise.

While, thankfully, my current life isn’t exactly like the dream a younger me had, it is significantly better in innumerable ways. Please don’t stop dreaming. Continue to read. Seek knowledge and wisdom. Continue to strive for the dream life you constantly design for yourself.

A friend, Khristena Schuzer, told me regarding her own battle with depression:

“... depression is a funny and deceiving thing, that is absolutely something that can leave. It takes some subtle shifts slowly in our thinking, a little momentum in our physiology, a little here and there, forward momentum, even the smallest of steps forward is enough to get us out of the pit, one small shift at a time to reset those things.”

– Khristena Schuzer

Subtle shifts occur as we focus on the next step and recognize daily successes – no matter how small. Be proud of the steps you take along the way. You just have to recognize when that happens. It might be that you finally spoke to that cute girl or guy you pass every Thursday at the grocery store. Maybe you discovered your next project today. Congratulations! That’s oftentimes the hardest part. Maybe you helped a friend today with something that changed their life – and you may not have even known your words or actions were so meaningful. Maybe you finally got out of bed today. That’s amazing! Depression is no joke. Congratulations on the success and taking action to improve

your life. It's so important to recognize these little successes. Say out loud words of congratulations – no matter how insignificant the success may seem.

You're reading this book, which means you're hopeful and optimistic it will help you achieve a new level of success. Every success you have during the day builds optimism for future growth and supports your hope for better days for you and the ones you love. Keep working and be proud of what you managed to do to make your and others' lives better.

Understand that depression lives in the past and is identified by thoughts such as regret, guilt, resentment, grievances, sadness, and bitterness. These thoughts are, most of the time, of real events that occurred in the past. We have placed on them a tremendous emotion. I handle these thoughts as soon as they occur. **I must disrupt the pattern of negativity.**

Observe the struggle and watch it dissipate. It is not real.

I do a simple mind trick that has worked in a variety of circumstances. When I'm experiencing a feeling or thought that I wish to dissipate, I say the phrase,

Look at this human, experiencing this human emotion.

I often rearrange it to suit the specific emotion, feeling, or thought. It works for me every time because it brings me to the observation. It also works because I usually laugh at myself when I say it. The psychology of why it works is based on cognitive training researched by Noga Cohen and Avishai Henik of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and Nilly Mor from Hebrew University in their study published in *Clinical Psychological Science*. They found that activation of cognitive control mechanisms helps to suppress distracting information and reduce the disruptive effects associated with high emotional arousal.

As silly as it is, my unprofessional interpretation is that

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when you participate in observing your mind without giving explanation or judging it, then you remove yourself from the experience.

Think of it like watching a movie. When you watch a movie, you aren't actually in the movie, are you? In the same way, if you watch how your mind thinks, you can disassociate yourself from the emotional thought. In this moment you have power over your feeling about the thought or memory; it is then that you can associate to it any feeling you choose.

When I first started using this phrase, I used it when I was angry and frustrated, feelings that were sometimes directed at my kids. The playfulness of the phrase helped me approach my children in a pleasant manner. I've also used it when I was nervous before a presentation and afterward delivered the presentation flawlessly.

I even used it at a theme park. You know those rides that take you straight up, seem to bounce a bit, then drop you straight down? After spinny rides, these are the worst for me. I said the phrase as we rose. I observed my fear and anxiety as an onlooker rather than myself. A calm came over me, and I instantly began to enjoy the ride. I noticed the city in the distance and birds flying by. While it was still exhilarating on the way down, I didn't scream like I usually do and didn't have an ounce of fear. That was the defining moment for me regarding the phrase. It's a staple in my quiver and reappears regularly on my phone as a reminder that I can handle any situation in a calm and thoughtful manner – assuming I choose to do so.

Additionally regarding depression, by realizing the truth that past events happened, I must understand that these events no longer exist and don't define who I am. More importantly, these events don't dictate my next action. My past and my present are two different occurrences that are independent of each other. If I can successfully believe this, then I will have no problem taking the next action with a full heart of hope that I will reach my intended level of success.

I mentioned earlier about placing an emotion on a successful achievement as well as an unsuccessful one. This same method can be used to change the way you feel about the past. If you put in the effort, it will work wonders on your life.

*When the things that prevent happiness are gone,
happiness is there – you won't have to seek it.*

Review what I said about changing patterns. I put it below for your convenience but changed it up a bit with a depression expression.

The important thing is to try to eliminate the feeling of distress and replace it with the present moment. This is also the way to change unwanted and harmful negative thoughts. When you recognize the depressed state coming on or are constantly in it like I was for so long, abruptly do something that stops it. Try saying a silly phrase, then intensely focus on a feeling that associates pain with continuing the pattern (I understand that someone suffering with depression already feels this) and associates pleasure with whatever you replace it with.

In 2017, I learned my marriage of ten years was over. I'd already known a few years before that the marriage was in a dire state, but we made all sorts of excuses to stay together. I learned she found another person she loved dearly. I was devastated. I was still trying to work on us.

I didn't realize we were supposed to be dating other people. That's the phrase I used to make light of the divorce when the subject came up. I never got a laugh out of it. I was already in the grasp of depression from struggling with a deteriorating business and poor marital relationship. I had my head down for so long that I lost touch with close friends. Depression had me again, which I'm sure didn't help my situation, but I continued to strive. At least when I discovered my marriage was over, I had merged my company with another and sold it for my dream job a year prior. My financial situation was bright again, but for the next six months or so I was in a constant flux of every emotion. I was

useless at work. I was a terrible father to my kids. I didn't want to get out of bed or leave the house. I was a mess.

On a cloudy Wednesday afternoon, I was in a terrible state while sitting at my big wooden desk in my cushy office. I couldn't decide if I should be angry or sad. I thought about how I was neglecting my children. I thought about how poorly they would handle the divorce. I thought about how bad we'd be at co-parenting. I thought about how I'd never find anyone else at my age. I thought about how meaningless life was without my family together. I thought of all sorts of awful things. These thoughts constantly had repeated over and over throughout the previous months, and on this day they were incredibly powerful. I cried while I gripped my fist. I didn't know what to do.

I set my head on my desk and somehow gained an ounce of clarity. My immediate thought was that **these thoughts aren't serving me**. I said it out loud.

These thoughts aren't serving me.

I felt better. I **broke the pattern**, which brought me to the observation that my depression wasn't good for me and that I wanted to change it.

I asked myself what I wanted to happen next. What would be the best outcome of this current reality? The answer was that I wanted to see my children every day and not change any of our existing routines. This was tricky because in order to make that happen, I had to be welcome at her house. To be welcome at her house, I would need to welcome her into mine. I desired the best outcome for my children, and there was only one way for that to happen.

This thinking eventually led me to the realization that if I were to get the outcome for myself and my children that I most desired, I would have to be friends with my ex-wife. That was hard to think through clearly, but it was the only way. I cussed out loud because I knew what I had to do next. A little glimmer of hope emerged. I

began to consider that one major piece of my life that I'd thought was destroyed might not turn out so badly after all. I began to believe it was possible – happiness was possible. Happiness not only for me but also my children and, by default, my ex-wife as well.

I mentioned earlier the concept of believing before you see. If you are aware of this practice, then congratulations. ***Believing before you see is the key concept to Achieve Anything.*** I told myself that day, with my head still on my desk, that I would be friends with her. Real friends. Not fake like others may do to get what they want. I've never been good at faking things and knew I wouldn't be able to do that. I had to truly believe it. I then said something to myself that resembled, "If I am to be friends with her, then I also have to be friends with the new guy." I had to imagine it all beautiful and happy. That's the phrase I put into my reminders.

Imagine it all beautiful and happy.

Just saying the phrase wasn't enough. Along with the phrase, I actually imagined the six of us posing for a picture in a wooded environment. I can still see the image today. We're all genuinely smiling, and we look happy.

My ability to attach a pleasant feeling to the image along with the phrase catapulted me out of my depression. It was so jarring, I cried out of joy. It was the weirdest and most amazing feeling. I honestly thought I was going crazy but didn't really care. I knew I had beat the demon and was prepared to focus on my next steps.

It took time, and the support of loving friends and family, to fully believe my life after marriage would be beautiful and happy. For me on that day it was an instantaneous but fleeting feeling that lasted an hour or so before I dove back into my previous repetitive negative thoughts. I and anyone else struggling with depression have spent years building the beliefs that keep depression alive.

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Forty-five thousand negative thoughts a day for however many years we've been having them can etch incredibly deep beliefs that seem impossible to overcome.

It's like a worn path. In order for grass to grow, we must first stop treading on the path. Second, we must create a new path – a new thought pattern.

With time, persistence, a few key projects to refocus my attention, and the help from my recurring reminders, I overcame the incredibly horrible feelings I had about it all. I once again emerged from depression. If it comes around again, which is likely, I'm now armed with effective tools to cut it off before it gets too thick to overcome.

I texted her after the revelation in my office, trying to explain what happened. Whether she understood or not, we're friends today, and my children took the divorce in step with us. It was truly the most enlightening experience of my life. To this day, I hate that we couldn't work out the difficulties of our marriage, but I wouldn't trade that moment of clarity for all the wealth in the world. I could easily still be bitter and harbor real hatred for her had I not made a decision for something better. I'm thankful every day that I am free of those harmful feelings and thoughts. If you are in a similarly depressed state, try what I did. Try to find an image and phrase that you can attach a pleasing emotion to. Love works best if you can muster it.

I still get that phrase twice a month, but I recently modified it to say,

This moment is beautiful and happy,

and I no longer imagine the forested picture because the guy isn't around any longer. Even though I shifted the phrase toward a focus on the present, I am aware that my past continues to haunt me on occasion as I think of what could have been had we made different decisions. Overcoming an event such as this one is a constant process that gets better with each moment.

After you successfully attach a positive emotion to the past event – once you believe the emotion before you see it – use the approach I explained earlier on how to change patterns. I'll say it again for your convenience.

- List ten reasons why you must maintain that new belief, along with ...
- List all the reasons why you can change the feeling to something happier, and then ...
- Say these out loud because there is intense power in spoken words, especially those you speak to yourself, and then ...
- Think of five ways you can use to continue the new belief, and ...
- Note these in a place you can periodically review, like a mobile calendar with alerts, so you'll never regress.

This next example is for all of you who are pissed because you are thinking that I don't know how powerful depression is and believe it can be waved away by a silly phrase and a bit of imagination. I said before that years of negative thoughts won't just go away on their own. Nothing in this book is an instantaneous process. However, overcoming depression, along with achieving anything else, is a process that takes as long as it takes and is as unique as the person experiencing it. You must constantly and intensively focus on what you want most. Making the decision to act is the first step, but taking each consecutive step – and only following each step – will enable you to achieve any goal you have for yourself.

I reconnected with an old friend a few years ago. I learned as our conversations grew that she suffered from crippling depression that stemmed from a rape earlier in her life. This tragic event brought with it a tremendous amount of fear and shame. At the time, I was unfamiliar with depression other than my own and didn't realize how fragile she was until our conversations became more meaningful.

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A series of unfortunate events occurred over the next few months, with her moving to a new city for work and subsequently losing that job. This sent her into a spiral that eventually led to her losing her legal custody of her only child. Her young daughter was sent to live with a family member thousands of miles across the country.

My friend and I had several conversations regarding what happened and what steps she needed to take to get her daughter back. I believed we were on a solid path until I received an unusual text one night. She texted me a few words of gratitude for being her friend, then said goodbye. I called her several times with no response. I then called her sister and explained the unusual text that sounded like she was saying good-bye – forever.

I knew she was suffering from clinical depression, but I didn't think she would attempt to take her own life. Her sister got someone there in time to rush my dear friend to the hospital. My beautiful, sweet, incredibly intelligent friend whom life handed many difficult experiences nearly left me for good that night. Had she not made the mistake of telling me good-bye, she would be gone and this story would have a different meaning to me.

Afterward, **she made a decision**. She imagined a life in which she was *financially successful and had her daughter* back at home. She used the burning desire of regaining custody to focus solely on the next right step to achieve the goal. Her *why* for attaining the goal was the most important thing in her and her daughter's lives. But she'd just handed herself another major challenge: Now she had documented evidence of suicidal behavior, and that never bodes well for a single mother seeking legal custody. However, that fact didn't dissuade her from believing in her most desired outcome before she could see it.

She designed a strategy with preparatory reflection, actionable steps, and mini-goals that created momentum and daily successes – all of which helped to transform her pattern of negative thoughts into an attitude of optimism and hope. She stopped

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living in her past trauma and chose to live in the present moment as she consecutively knocked out each step.

While her transformational journey has been rife with difficult challenges and recurring struggles with depression, she **always remained confident** she would regain custody and succeed in this goal. She was committed to do whatever it took to make it happen because she already believed it was possible. She threw aside any concept of ego and pride and humbled herself to ask for help from others. Her strong and meaningful *why* drove her to success. Today, with the help from loved friends and family, she has her daughter back and enjoys a successful career. She is probably my best example of the power of believing before you see.

*The thing you're going through now will eventually end,
and the thing you act on today could be the start of
something great.*

Five Steps to Overcome Challenges

I lost all confidence in everything that was important to me after the motorcycle accident. I felt there would be no favorable outcome from my divorce. I assumed I would always struggle with money. I believed that none of these episodes would end. I believed that how my life was in each of those moments was how life would always be. I felt I just had to deal with it and learn to live with whatever situation I was in at the time. I believed all these things even though none of them lasted, nor did any other event I have experienced in all my life.

Pain Ends. Achievement lasts forever.

If we can remember that all our life phases end, even the good ones, we will believe the one we're currently in will also end. In financial markets this would be considered a change in *trend*. If our depressed state is a decline in asset prices, then a change in

the trend would be an increase in asset prices. This is the case if we let depression run its course.



However, if we fight it and change our natural depression to mental depression, then the state will change from declining asset prices to flat, which would leave us in a depressed state.



If we get caught up in mental depression, we'll have ups and downs, but ultimately we'll stay down until we make the decision and take the necessary action to change the trend.

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Better is always better.

I'm rarely satisfied with the status quo, so regardless of my current state, I generally always seek an improvement. I could have waited for each difficult moment to pass and hoped a better moment would replace it. Instead, I chose in each instance to overcome the challenge and create a better moment. I decided to change the trend. I did this using a simple five step process.

Five Steps to Overcome Challenges and Achieve Anything

1. Challenge to Overcome _____
2. Major Goal _____
3. 1st Mini-Goal _____
4. Achieve the Mini-Goal Achieved! 
5. Next Mini-Goal _____

Do it now. Decide what challenge you want to overcome or goal you want to achieve. List your major goal along with the first and second mini goals. Then complete the first mini goal and check the box when you finish. Continue the process until complete.

After the motorcycle accident, I didn't think life would get better. It is always difficult to see outside our current situation. But I knew I wanted better, as did you if you have been there. I emerged from each of my low points using the same process. I didn't realize **this was a process** until much later, and it is the basis now for how I achieve anything.

1. Decide you want an improved state:

I decided that I was tired of sitting around feeling sorry for myself.

2. Create an attainable goal:

I created the goal of reaching my previous physical capabilities.

3. Break the goal into mini-goals and develop a strategy to achieve the mini-goal:

My first mini-goal was to raise my hands over my head using a shoulder press technique.

4. Achieve the first mini-goal:

I gradually began raising my hands higher and higher until I was able to fully extend my arms.

5. Immediately start the next mini-goal until the major goal is complete:

After I was able to raise my hands over my head, I added light weights.

I made the goals easy to achieve and then set my mind to achieve them. During this process, I created several other separate goals, which I broke into mini-goals, such as walking properly and regaining investing confidence.

When I was dealing with my divorce, I knew the way I was thinking about things would distance me from my children and what I wanted out of life. I knew I had to change the way I thought about the divorce, my ex-wife, and the reduced time I would spend with my children. I repeated the process from the other moments in my life to achieve my desired outcome.

1. Decide you want an improved state:

I was sad, mad, and crushed that my dream life had ended. I realized that how I thought about all of it wasn't good for me and decided to change the way I thought about it. To do this I had to rebuild my dream life to accommodate the current reality.

2. Create an attainable end goal:

I set the end goal to be friends with my ex-wife. With this end goal, I added a concurrent goal of becoming happy for the

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direction she was taking in her life. (Hardest thing I've ever had to believe.)

3. Break the end goal into mini-goals:

The first mini-goal was to step outside myself and look at the situation as someone else would. With this perspective, I found a woman in a broken relationship who was taking a leap toward love. (How could I argue with that? It would make a great Hallmark Channel movie.)

4. Achieve the first mini-goal:

With repetition (just like with raising my hands over my head) of saying the phrase and imagining the beautiful, happy image, I was able to form a pleasant belief that she had taken a tremendous risk in her attempt to find love again.

5. Immediately start the next mini-goal until the end goal is complete:

As I became more competent at sustaining the pleasant belief, I began including her in my activities with the children as well as joining them in theirs. Before long, we all became relatively okay with each other's presence, and today she's as close as any friend I have.

This five-step process can be used to start a business, build a treehouse, get a date, lose 50 pounds, make money with a hobby, learn something new – or anything else you put your mind to:

- Think about the thing you want to do.
- Now think about the decision you need to make to begin.
- Create an end goal that will result in the achievement of one aspect of or the entire project.
- Separate the end goal into mini-goals.
- Break your mini-goals into micro-goals if necessary.
- Complete the first mini-goal, then immediately begin the next and don't stop until you complete the end goal.

How I Love Everything I Do

I don't do anything I don't love to do. I just don't have enough time left on this planet to do unpleasant things. Don't get me wrong, I didn't really enjoy typing out this book, nor did I like the time away from my family that I traded to write it. But I love the hope that what I say will inspire and give you confidence to achieve your great ideas. I love seeing people succeed and am excited to hear of your successes in the Achieve Facebook group that I hope you join (</groups/513816565947541/>).

Do you know anyone who always seems genuinely happy? How do you feel about that person? Are you jealous? Are you envious? Are you happy for them and catch some of their enthusiastic energy?

Do you know someone who always seems mad, angry, sad, upset, anxious? Of course, we all know at least one version of each of these. We probably have one in our immediate family. We may have even been one at some point in our lives. I know I have.

I've been angry at nothing and let it affect me and others. I've been happy about nothing and let it affect me and others. The

trend today is to eliminate the sad, mad, and eternally angry people from our lives – the toxic people. But that’s the wrong approach. I’m not saying to subject yourself to abuse or spend a lot of time with people who bring you down, because emotions are contagious. That’s the basis for the elimination movement. “Emotions are contagious, so it’s best if we stay away from the emotions we don’t want to feel,” too many people say. Like COVID-19, which is currently sweeping the world, the recommendations follow the elimination movement in quarantining yourself away from anyone who might give you the virus. Same with emotions.

While I don’t disagree with limiting time with someone who may negatively impact you, I’ll always help out or lend an ear when needed. My effort may be the only thing that gets them over whatever is troubling them. My effort may be the only thing that keeps them alive when everyone else abandons them.

What if you were that person? What if you entered a difficult period of time and all your friends said, “Screw her! She’s so negative. Always crying and complaining about how bad her life is.” What if you, all of a sudden, had no one to talk to but your own negative, repetitive mind? How could you ever get through it on your own?

You can, and it will be difficult, but it will be significantly easier with someone above you pulling you up to a better place. The tricky part here is if you are the person drowning, you must be careful to not drag down the wonderful friend who is trying to help. The last thing you want is for them to let go in order to save themselves or worse, drown them while trying to save yourself.

What I learned about observing my emotions is that I enjoy happiness over anger and sadness. I know, that was very insightful and inspirational, but the truth is that many people also believe this – yet continue to choose to be miserable rather than feel something else more upbeat. You may be one of them. I’ve had loved ones die, and I’ve been cheated on, crippled, broke, and

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divorced. I've failed at business, high-ticket deals, relationships, and friendships. I've felt the strong grip of depression. I've been miserable, and I've infected others with my misery. I've been where you are and where you've been, and I'm also where you want to go – assuming you want to go to a better place. In the beginning of this spiel I said that I enjoy happiness over all the other emotions. But more specifically, I enjoy love more than anything. I realized this on a dark day when I was down and deep in a hole of blackness. It was the same day I realized feeling that way didn't serve me. I said,

I choose love over sadness. I choose love over anger. I choose love.

And I felt better. From that day, I created several reminders and habits to keep me focused on my mission to **see love in everything** I do. I didn't, however, magically eliminate the “negative” emotions because then I would be merely a fraction of the person I can be. I realized that I must fully appreciate and discover the wonder in being a full person with a healthy understanding of why I feel a certain way. Plus, I think it's impractical to suppress or eliminate emotions when they occur, regardless of the cause. Every time I've tried this, and I'm sure you've experienced it too, the emotion has built and surfaced in a more destructive way than when I fully experienced it and let it naturally pass.

Something else that helps me focus on what's important is my love meditation. I do it every morning. I simply say, “I love” in a way that reverberates throughout my core. I don't yell or scream it. It's actually quite quiet. But I feel it and feel it deeply. I also say to myself, but not a declaration, “I am in harmony with the universe.”

I read *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse in 2017, which was a particularly important year for me. At the end of the book, Govinda kisses Siddhartha's forehead and sees all the beauty of the universe. This is displayed in Siddhartha's smile, which I

imagined. I've held that peaceful and knowing smile in my mind ever since that day and can still see it clearly today. I use it to remind me to always see the love in everything.

I once lived near a mountain. I often visited this mountain for exercise and relaxation. Most people who climb this mountain only go to the lookout point which showcases large stones once used by the original inhabitants of the land as an observation point to the landscape below.

One day, I ventured past the lookout point down an overgrown wildlife trail. As the spindly brush whisked and scratched at my legs my mind traveled into an adventurous place where I felt alive and free as if exploring uncharted territory. Hickory and oak trees towered over me and also provided a parasol of shade on the blistering summer day.

Through the brush and sparse forest, I noticed gangly branches near the edge of the mountain. I exited the lightly trodden trail. As I made my way through the brush, I approached a solitary tree in a rocky clearing. It was unlike any other tree in the vicinity and I felt an instant attraction to the site.

This day I merely enjoyed the trek to the tree. However every time I visited afterward, I would sit with the tree for a moment before descending back to the mountain's base.

After I finished Hesse's *Siddhartha* and acquired the smiling image in my mind as well as a better understanding of nature and spirit, the next time I visited the tree, I approached it with reverence. I bowed in respect before entering its space. I peacefully connected with it physically as I sat on its roots and rested my back against its trunk.

After a moment with the tree, I closed my eyes and began to imagine the smiling, healthy and happy faces of people I love. I felt a wave of compassion and joy. I continued to imagine my friends in a similar way and built on that previous joy. I didn't stop there. I then imagined people such as presidents, business

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owners, and faces I've never met nor knew the names. Joy further increased. This was a time in my life when I didn't think joy existed. It was a time when I struggled tremendously with unwelcome emotions that felt permanent. It was a time I felt unloved and unwanted.

But this moment, where I was "sending love" as a minister or spiritual leader may say when regarding prayer or thoughtful meditation, I experienced the emotion I was searching for. It was a feeling I thought was impossible to achieve at that time. It was welcome and desired.

I do the smiling face exercise all the time today, with or without the tree. It is a great start your day habit. Try it now in a quiet place. Hopefully, you'll have a similar experience.

There is always love, you simply must look for it. Not in the sense that it is hidden, but training your mind to see it out in the open – in the person next to you, in the grasshopper at the door, in the tree in the meadow. Love constantly flows all around and through us. Feel it, taste it, bring it alive in your life.

The recurring reminders I mentioned earlier are how I stay focused on what's most important. The Tree of Peace and Resurrection (that's what I named the tree on the mountain) is one of my reminders. Without my daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly reminders, my analytical brain would take over and try to rationalize everything, leading me to intense anxiety and stress.

When I break life and the decisions I make into a simple objective – love – then everything else becomes easier.

Giving love is a selfless action that benefits our souls and is necessary for a vibrant life.

I only do things that are doused in love. I choose all my projects based on how they will positively affect myself and others. If you choose a *what* that positively impacts others and

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have a soul dedicated to love, you won't experience any long-term negativity and will most likely be successful in your endeavors.

Maximum Effort

Once you deal with the psychological aspects of setting on a path to **Achieve Anything**, you then simply begin.

That's it. End of lesson.

Okay, so maybe there's a little more to it than just starting. I mentioned earlier that I've started many projects I have yet to finish. I've really just begun to experience the power of this process, and that power is being displayed in the completion of projects according to where they stand on my priority list. Do you have a **Priority List** for your projects? If not, use the following guide to get started.

I rate all my projects on a simple five-star scale based on 1) how much money it will make, 2) where it falls regarding my values and 3) how much time it requires. Those three criteria are very distinct from each other but work for me; yours may be entirely different. Below is a short list of my current projects.

PRIORITIES

GOAL	DOLLAR VALUE	VALUES	TIME	RANK
NYOOBE	5	5	3	13
ACHIEVE	2	5	4	11
AI INVESTMENTS	4	3	4	11
BUSINESS CONSULTING	3	5	2	10
PIANO	1	5	3	9
INVESTMENT EDUCATION	2	5	2	9

As you can see, not all of these current projects have a monetary value. If you create and maintain a priority list, you will always know which projects to give your attention to. Nyoobe (the marketing technology company) is in the market. While I still play a large part, it's mostly in the hands of my developers and marketing team. The AI Investments project is one of my old projects that stalled because I didn't understand the power of finding the *who* to help me complete it. It's also with its respective development team. I'll have to again focus attention on it once

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they complete their portion of the project. Business consulting is new and is mostly focused on helping outstanding minds with resources and guidance. It's more of a charitable endeavor at this stage. I continue to play the piano, but I'm at a maintenance stage due to my time placed elsewhere. I will always be involved in investment education. It is my earliest passion and the impetus for all of my studies in the area. A book and social launch similar to what I've done with this one is in the planning stage.

I said earlier that the middle part of the process is work. This is where most people fall off, which is understandable. Most people work all day, and the last thing they want to do is work on a project that they may never complete. I get it. I was there once. But there's just no way around it. When you have a good idea, it's very hard to get someone else to understand it enough that they can execute it as well as you can.

There are plenty of opportunities for you to **outsource** portions of your project, but the reality is that if you have thought about it in a way I have described in this book, there is very little chance anyone will catch on. You have to assume the role of contractor and sub out the separate pieces of work that you must assemble to achieve the end goal. While you grasped the idea or concept and planned each step, it's nearly impossible for you to complete it on your own as effectively as you can with help from experts in the areas you need for the project. It just doesn't make sense for you to spend your time learning something new when there are many qualified individuals with that very experience easily accessible on freelance sites. Don't waste your time learning things you don't need to learn when you can hire, barter, or partner with someone else to complete it for you.

Decide what you are good at and let others to do the rest.

Once you get into the work stage, the amount of effort you put into it will determine the quality of your achievement. For example, I learned to play the piano in 2016 when my children

began taking lessons from an instructor in our neighborhood. They went the traditional route and learned to read music and played in recitals. I, however, went to the internet and learned songs I loved through video instruction. No music reading was necessary. The outcome was that I could quickly learn to play those songs well, but I had to keep playing them over and over so that I wouldn't forget them. Meanwhile, my kids can pick up any sheet music and play nearly any song at their skill level. I put in little effort to actually learn to read music and was forced to memorize which keys to press. I was limited to the songs I can find on the internet, while my kids are developing a lifelong skill that allows them the freedom of learning to play any song and any instrument.

Another example was on Easter when my two older boys were hunting eggs. The older one enthusiastically ran, crouched, and dug his way to find as many eggs as he could. He exerted maximum effort and had a great time. My younger son, who is only fifteen months younger, was walking, talking to the adults, and complaining about a variety of things – including the number of eggs he was finding. He exerted minimal effort to find eggs. Which one do you think found the most eggs? Which one was disappointed that he didn't find very many eggs? While my younger son found eggs, he wasn't happy with the outcome. This is the same with anything we do in life.

We get out what we put in.

When we put in a minimal, half-assed effort, we get minimal, half-assed results. That is a fact. I understand that it may seem, due to the proliferation of online success stories, that many people look successful with little effort, but what you don't see is the effort that was put in off-camera to get that result. You don't see all the hours they struggled with the wording of their speech or the hours it took to design that course. You didn't see how many versions failed before they got it right, nor did you see how many times it actually took them to take that shot, along with all the production resources they used to create that great thing that

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made them look successful. My phrase choice of “look successful” was intentional, and I hope you understand why I said it that way. Just because someone looks happy or successful or rich or smart doesn’t mean that they actually are.

Believe in the process. Believe that **maximum effort will earn you maximum results**. Believe that your achievement will be as great as can possibly be.

An example of when I didn’t exert maximum effort that still chaps me today was when a company I consulted with was in discussions on a sale of a majority of their business to a competitor. Their successful company was in a great sellers’ market. They received several bids, and when all were in, three were considered.

One of the greatest concerns of the owners was what would happen to their nearly two thousand employees. The company with the third highest bid said they would keep all employees on for at least one year and management on board for five years before any layoffs due to overlap would begin. The top two bids made minimal concessions for the employees. I also knew that the owners would set aside a sum of the proceeds to pay out as bonuses to the employees.

In a private meeting, they decided to accept a cash offer from the company that offered to keep on the employees. It was the lowest bid of the three. I suggested they do something different. Their sole focus was on taking care of their people, but I believed in a better way that addressed this concern.

There was a significant difference in the first bid and the third. Additionally, the first-bid company had an equity exchange option. My thought – the one that I failed to communicate properly to the seller – was to accept a stock offer from the first company to eliminate a taxable event, then put the difference between the first and third bids into a fund for the benefit of the employees that would grow and pay out over time. This way, the seller wouldn’t have a huge tax bill. And that, combined with the

difference in bids, was nearly a \$100 million difference! Plus, the employees would receive more money over time rather than the much smaller one-time bonus the owners were prepared to give. I even devised an IRS-acceptable plan to hedge away most of the non-systematic risk from the concentrated position the seller would have in the acquiring company.

I failed to deliver the message effectively. The seller didn't take it. The benefits got lost in the various moving parts and "bird in hand" mentality. They were too fearful to take the risk even though I explained most of the risk away. Even when I informed them that the highest-bid company was already discussing the acquisition of the company they were choosing, which in my mind was a much bigger risk to their intended result, they still didn't budge from cash in hand and a promise that their employees would be taken care of.

I failed the owners. I failed the employees. I failed myself and am still chagrined when I think about it. I should have put more effort and more emotion behind my presentation. I should have done a number of things differently but didn't. I failed, in my mind, because of my effort, and I told myself that I wouldn't do that again. BTW, I've never before used the word *chagrined* in speech or in text. I feel much smarter now 😊. We're always growing or dying.

My client took the third highest offer and got their taxable cash payout. The highest-bidding company acquired the acquiring company (the one with third highest offer) and laid off most of the employees – just like I thought would happen.

There's another lesson in this. People make their own decisions, and you should accept that. We're all individuals. No one is emotionally linked to another person. The decisions I make should have no emotional impact on you. But yet, we all feel these decisions. The important thing to know is that while someone's decision may directly impact your life or the lives of those you love, it was their decision and their decision alone to

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make. There's nothing you can do about it after it's made, and no amount of crying, screaming, complaining or "I told you so" will change it. It happened and now you focus only on what you do next – which, of course, is the next step of our strategy.

Momentum

Along with maximum effort, you need **momentum**. The saying, “The poor get poorer and the rich get richer” is true, but not for the reasons you’re thinking. It also applies here when I say that happy people get happier and sad people get sadder. People who make progress tend to make more progress. People who are failing tend to fail more often. You see where I’m going with this? These are examples of momentum.

But **momentum is malleable**. As in a sports match where one team is down but then someone does something spectacular that *shifts* the momentum of the entire game, you can change momentum so quickly when you understand its mental aspects. You too might find you need to pivot momentum that is driving you to a loss into one where you feel instead like you’re on a winning streak. Momentum drives you either way.

Let’s assume for a moment that you’re going in a direction that’s making you feel like a complete failure. That means you’ve built up days, months, years of undesirable momentum. How would you change it? What do most people do? Many people who are motivated to change will attempt to force the change with more effort. But the problem with more effort is this: Can you think of anyone who put significant effort into a project and still failed? Right! There are plenty of them (including me). While effort on a massive scale will oftentimes get you where you need to go, albeit at the risk of inefficiency, what you will actually be doing is merely *trying*. And the reality is that if you just try, you aren’t really putting forth the effort required to succeed, and you’ll get poor results. You’ll get poor results because you don’t really believe success is possible. You’ll have one foot out the door in case things start to go south, which of course they will because you are putting your focus on things going south. Understand?

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The key to achieving success in anything you do, and I've already said it several times already, is to

believe in the end result before you see it.

Kathleen Taylor, a neuroscientist at Oxford University, said that “My own position is to think of beliefs and memories as very similar.” She also said, “The more times we think that our desired result is possible, the more our brain relates the belief into an actual memory.”

Moreover, Peter Halligan, a psychologist at Cardiff University, says that, “A belief is a mental architecture of how we interpret the world. We have lots of fluid things moving by – perceptions and so forth – but at the level of who our friends are and so on, those things are consolidated in crystallized knowledge units. If we did not have those, every time we woke up, how would we know who we are?” He essentially said **we are what we believe**, regardless of whether or not that thing we choose to believe actually exists in our *current* reality.

You must totally believe your effort will result in the outcome you envision. This psychological power of believing before you see fires certain synapses that result in a path your brain builds to achieve the intended result. If you can truly believe in the desired result, you will remain focused on the steps toward success and maximize momentum, enabling you to achieve anything.

Seven Habits of High Achievers

Several highly productive habits provide abundant energy and keep me focused on exerting maximum effort in everything I do, including maintaining momentum. I honestly believe that if I don't stay active, eat well, and treat my emotional state with care, then I'll die. I may not literally die, but I'll die inside. I'll lose my drive, my momentum, my mojo. I'm afraid that I'll stop trying if I get tired or sick. I won't take the risk of performing at less than my best, so I created habits that benefit my life.

Wake Early

One habit that I share with nearly every other successful person in history is that I **wake early**. I do this mainly to avoid distractions. But it also gets me prepared for the day so that I can be in the best mental state possible for whatever the day throws at me. Waking early helps me attain a state of mental clarity and focus so I'm prepared before I actually have to use it.

Be Consistent

I work on my goals every day. Does this mean I work for money every day? No. But **every day I am working toward a goal**. Whether it's to finish this book, summit a mountain, or teach my boys what it means to be courageous – I always have something I'm consistently working toward.

Sometimes life will go sideways and events will impair forward movement, but that shouldn't permanently stop your progress. Create a new goal to overcome the event, achieve the goal, and learn the lesson, then get back to the original goal if it's still relevant.

Be consistent every day in your **attitude** toward your goals – no matter what.

Stay Focused

Don't get sucked into unimportant problems. Focus on what is truly important.

I mention repeatedly in this book the multitude of distractions in our world today. Unfortunately, I believe they will not subside and will most likely become more invasive. High achievers **focus**

only on the goal at hand. We envision our dreams and become relentlessly focused on bringing them to life. The only way to achieve greatly is to remain focused only on what is most important while totally ignoring the distractions and overcoming the disruptions along the amazing journey to success.

Visualize

Develop ways to **maintain the vision of your completed goal.** I have mentioned several that I use, such as setting reminders, creating a vision board, keeping a progress journal, and telling others of your goal so they can hold you accountable.

These visions must be specific and to the point. If you list a goal as “I want to be rich,” then you will fail to reach that goal unless you luckily stumble into becoming rich. You will fail because your brain doesn’t know how to achieve “rich.” But it does know how to build a \$10 million real estate portfolio by first securing your initial property with money down on a loan, negotiating owner financing or a no-money-down option to buy at a later date, and then repeating with the next property.

There are steps to getting rich just like anything else you want to achieve. Visualize what that completed goal looks like. Visualize what each interim or mini-goal to reach that end goal looks like. Put those visuals where you will always see them so you won’t get distracted. If you do get distracted, that phone alert will bring you back to what’s most important.

Take Risks

Most everything that is worth achieving requires risk. Whether it's leaving that so-called secure job to start your own business or facing possible rejection to ask that girl on a date. Developing a habit to take risks can be the most rewarding practice you ever adopt.

Taking risks that others are too fearful to attempt immediately sets you apart. When you develop this habit, you undertake an attitude that failure may occur – and that you're okay with that. The only way to rise above monotony is to **do something new – do something “risky.”**

But you shouldn't just accept risks blindly. Reduce as much of the risk as possible by studying, planning, and calculating each move. This way you will significantly increase your chance for success.

Understanding you may fail (and most likely will!) liberates you from the emotional turmoil that the fear of trying that the thing once had upon you.

Reality is what it is, and failure is inevitable. We must accept failure without labeling it one thing or another. As soon as we label it, we attach ourselves emotionally to it. When we attach emotion to what we do, we care about what happens. I'm not saying you shouldn't care about gaining or losing a large sum of money, a romantic partner, or a business deal. What I'm saying is that if you don't attach an unwelcome label to it, fear will be unable to cripple you.

I do a lot of stuff, not all of it is risky by far, but I learn from it all. I attempt way more than I achieve. With each attempt, I learn something – even if I've been doing it for years and am already considered an expert.

Learn from Others

I learn, not only from my experience but from that of others. Throughout this book I cite people from whom I have learned innumerable lessons. Hundreds more have contributed to my knowledge through books, podcasts, speeches, masterminds, and personal conversations.

Becoming a constant learner ensures you will continue advancing to the completion of your goal by gaining the knowledge, insight, and ideas to help you overcome any obstacle that may impede your progress.

If you attempt your goal with the knowledge only you possess, your results will be substandard. Only with the insights and experience learned from others will you be able to produce a truly extraordinary creation.

Deliberate Practice

Daily deliberate practice will help you achieve maximum mental clarity and physical consistency, regain focus, revisit progress, envision your strategy, and assess risks.

My daily routine maximizes my effectiveness in the most important areas of my life.

The love declaration helps me focus on what is most important and sets me in a mental state to direct my attention only to the things that are doused in love.

I engage in a brief session of yoga poses each morning. This is merely intended to get the blood flowing, so to speak. I do only about five minutes because I usually wake fired up about something, and I'm too antsy to get to whatever is building in my brain.

Achieve

I read to help generate ideas that will ensure I'm thinking beyond what I already know.

I meditate for however long it takes to increase mental clarity. I say, "however long it takes" because it lasts until my mind takes over with all the stuff I want to accomplish that day.

I review my priorities for the day and make adjustments that increase my focus on the priorities that are most important.

I consistently choose healthy food options, which have led to a maximum physical and mental state that is unlike most of my middle-aged friends – and also significantly younger adult males for that matter. Learn how I do it at mikejlee.com/choose-health.

I exercise every day to maintain physical consistency. My goals can't afford the possibility of the inability to make progress due to physical incapacitation. My exercise routine isn't always considered working out or a routine. Sometimes it's playing soccer with the kids. Sometimes it's paddling in the creek. Other times it may be a bike ride. But if you're beginning to understand who I am and how I do things, you know I perform at **maximum effort**. My kids are old enough that I can go full out with them – and they always challenge me. When I bike, it's as if I'm competing in the Tour de France. I've developed a saying that my kids make fun of and you probably will too regarding my exercise regimen. That saying is,

You have to believe that you're about to f'n die!

Not that it was my intention to develop an attitude to master fitness, but when you are about to f'n die (for example, when a tiger is chasing you), your brain relays the dangerous sensory information to the amygdala, which sends impulses to the autonomic nervous system. This system triggers the fight-or-flight response. Once activated, it increases heart rate, routes blood to muscles, releases stress hormones and glucose into the bloodstream, and spurs other responses to help you respond quickly to the danger.

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When you generate this physical response while lifting, running, biking, or whatever physical activity you do, your body will respond with more strength, more power, and more endurance than it ever will with stimulants, supplements, and/or traditional exercise routines. This mentality is linked to your ability to believe before you see. You must trick your mind to believe you are in danger. Once that happens, you will see the difference compared to what you normally do.

12 Reasons Why We Fail

“Many of life’s failures are people who do not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.”

– Thomas Edison

1. Didn’t establish an **Attitude to Begin**
2. Didn’t establish an **Attitude to Achieve**
3. Lack of significant **why**
4. Lack of a **clear end goal**
5. Didn’t ask for **help**
6. **Fear of failure**
7. Fear of **what others think**
8. Lack of **focus**
9. Lack of **resources or resourcefulness**
10. **Impatient**
11. Lack of a **thoughtful plan**
12. Didn’t **break goal into mini-goals** and became overwhelmed

I intimately understand each of these. I've experienced them all. I've allowed each one to kill projects, and often I used several excuses to overwhelmingly make my decision to quit.

I made a mental decision a long time ago to wrap a negative emotion to my excuses. It worked so well that I not only hate when excuses boil up inside me to try to get me to avoid work or something uncomfortable, but I also hate when I hear excuses from others. My kids especially dislike this trait in me. I like to get things done. But more than that, I like to see other people achieve ambitious dreams. I won't stand by and watch someone fail due to a lame-ass excuse.

I've already discussed each of these or will in the coming pages. I'll review each in detail outside this book in various pieces of content – and just a-s thoroughly in the Achieve Group. The important thing is to recognize when you are making an excuse to avoid the work, fearing potential failure or making up some other reason that leads you to bail on your great idea.

I thought of a thousand excuses to not write this book, such as: *It'll take too long. I have other projects I'm working on. No one will read it. It's just too hard. I don't have interesting stories to tell ...* and on and on. I took these lame-ass excuses, chopped them up with an ax, buried them in the yard – and wrote the book in less than a month using the methods I've been discussing. Compared to the two years it took me to write the two fiction books without using this process, I'd say it works.

Achieve

Strategy

Michael J Lee

A Strategy to Achieve Anything

The first two sections of this book are about **identifying** the thing you want to do and getting your **attitude** right to **Achieve Anything**. This next step to take to Achieve Anything is about *how to get it done*. Here is where you form a **strategy to achieve**.

Knowing what you do and don't want is a great start. Getting straight in your head and understanding how you can control sabotaging thoughts and behaviors is next. An attitude to achieve is required to get going and keep progressing to goal. But ... But! Without a **strategy** filled with **mini-goals** and the following information, you will waste time and stumble. If you can't overcome feeling overwhelmed, you may quit.

Know What You Have, Get What You Need, Set Your Goals

The reasons and multitude of excuses for failure will disappear once you have a proper attitude to achieve and a written strategy to reach your goal.

Think about that goal you want to achieve. After you gain the right attitude from the earlier sections, the next step is to gather all the information you've already collected, such as your **What**, your **Why**, and your desired **End Result** or **Big Goal**, as well as those notes you took from those honest looks at your **Attitude** and related feelings and emotions. Write all that down in a new place – this is the start of your **Strategy**.

Then, continue by asking yourself,

What resources and knowledge do I need to reach my end goal?

Using a piece of paper, word processor, phone, or whatever writing tool you prefer, create a **Resource List** – everything you need to achieve that goal or complete that project. List them in as much detail as you can, as a continuation to your **Strategy**. Don't worry about leaving some out or not thinking of everything in the beginning – you're sure to determine more as you write and as you step through the process.

Acquire Additional Knowledge

Some of the resources you'll need involve *knowledge*. More involved than trading for what you need is acquiring the knowledge you don't already possess to achieve your end goal – **learning what you need to know**. There are many ways to acquire knowledge, and one is to go to college. I went to college. I hold degrees that have been minimally useful other than to get a job when I had little experience. Maybe you did the same. However, college isn't an option (or even the best way to go) for everyone who needs specialized knowledge to achieve a goal! Plus, college takes a significant amount of time, and most of us would like to complete our goals sooner rather than later.

Again, many of us have read any number of books on the subject of our goal, and while we continue to read and may have several left on our list, books take time that we don't want to trade for a delay in achieving our goal. With that thought, I appreciate the time you are devoting to this book, and I hope you have noticed that I tried to streamline it in a way to fast-track the points I attempt to make.

The best way to acquire the knowledge you desire is to **learn from someone who has done it**, who has successfully achieved or mastered the thing you want to do. There are people who have spent decades learning what you want to know. Why would you go through the trials and waste all the time they went through when you can

compress the knowledge they have into a short period of time,

such as in a weekend seminar or by watching a series of online instructional videos and be done with it? You won't waste that time if you are resourceful and value your time.

Moreover, people riding the knowledge wave are conducting virtual and in-person mastermind groups all over the world. Join

one or more so that you compress the knowledge of the entire group or of someone's lifetime into a few short, focused sessions. If you don't know what a mastermind is, go to <https://bit.ly/kbbmm> and learn all there is to know.

Resourcefulness

Tony Robbins once told me that so many people talk about things, and they get excited about things, but why is it that so many fail at things (that is, their goals)? I'm sure you've known somebody in your life who had great family support, lots of love, a tremendous education, and great economic opportunities, but they spent their life sad and depressed. Then there are other people life has abused and for whom life has seemed immensely unfair. They've been abused mentally, emotionally, and physically, and yet many times those are the very individuals we all hear about as *success stories*. They're people who succeed at life in the face of adversity. It has nothing to do with background. It has nothing to do with resources. Resources are not the problem. The problem is people are not *resourceful* enough. You must get really clear on what it takes to succeed. And the answer is **immense, persistent action**. Anybody who can constantly take action, then adjust their approach if something doesn't work, change to something else, try it again, and try something slightly different is the individual you and I both know will succeed. They are relentlessly persistent and determined.

Having an **attitude for resourcefulness** is a major factor in success. No one has everything they need to succeed. We all must acquire something from someone. It's just not possible to know everything. Tony's advice clearly emphasizes the examples of many people who had limited or no resources but still achieved great success. Their lack of resources didn't stop them because they understood the power of resourcefulness.

Achieve

My career and interests have always revolved around investments. Everything I've done since I was eighteen (other than that time on the dive boat and a brief period when I attempted to become a pro golfer) was geared toward becoming a highly profitable investor. At that early age when I decided to master investments, I believed that all I had to do was to choose, and eventually it would happen. I didn't have a strategy or a process. I just said, "This is what I want to do" and then started off in that direction. But to get there, I travelled a winding and sometimes painful road that took significantly longer than expected. Still, I got there.

On my journey were several successes and failures. But what I want to highlight here is that I never lost sight of the goal. I remained somewhat on the path. When I was diverted, I shifted my strategy, made an adjustment, found someone with the resources or abilities to help, and rejoined the path. This is what you do to be successful. This is what you do to achieve anything. Be flexible, stay calm, make thoughtful adjustments, focus only on the next step, maintain course, and achieve your goal.

Have and Wants

After moving through the prior two steps, you now begin the strategy stage of the four-step process by listing

1. **Resources you currently have and knowledge you possess** that would facilitate reaching your goal in a deliberate manner
2. **Resources and knowledge you don't possess but feel you need in order to achieve your goal**

On your Resource List, you may include your current job and side hustles. You'll list people, such as friends and family with specialized experience and knowledge. List anyone who may be financially, emotionally, physically, or mentally involved. List learning tools available, such as workbooks, websites, and progress journals. You want to list bank accounts, savings plan,

401k, and assets (and all those amounts), such as your car and house if financing is a component. List further education, such as courses that would provide necessary knowledge or skills. You would list these along with other resources that will help you gain the knowledge and assets necessary to achieve your goal.

Then continue to list what you need but don't yet possess or have access to.

Do something similar now for your goal. This works whether you wish to heal a medical diagnosis, learn a musical instrument, change careers (by expanding on a hobby you are passionate about), and improving relationships, among others.

Who do you know who will support you with knowledge you need? Where can you self-acquire needed knowledge? What businesses and professionals in your area support this kind of goal? You get the idea? Get writing!

Your next step in planning how to Achieve Anything is to go through each of the items on the Resource List to determine which of the **resources you currently have and those you want or need to acquire**.

Transform your **Resource List** now into a **Haves/Wants List** by putting a big + where you have the thing, and a big – where you need to acquire it. Alternatively, for Mandy's goal, her **Haves/Wants List** will be structured like the following table she made by hand (but I love Excel spreadsheets, so here you go):

Achieve

Haves	Wants	Where to get wants
Fitness/Nutrition/Psychology knowledge	Video creation capabilities	Outsource and inhouse
Proper science-based nutrition knowledge	Additional health psychology knowledge	Online mastermind and identified health and nutrition psychologist course
Proper movement for different ages and athletic abilities knowledge	High quality camera	Online sale this weekend. Also, will look at online classifieds

[A more complete version for Mandy's health and fitness business goal can be found in the section [Mandy's Haves and Wants List.](#)]

I suggest you do the Haves/Wants exercise for everything you do – for every project, for every goal, for every change you choose to make.

If, for instance, you are decluttering all the closets in your home, what type of Haves/Wants List do you write up? Will you need to buy some big plastic bins (HAVE 2; WANT 8 more)? Do you have permission to hold a garage sale (No; WANT), and if not, where is your local thrift store (Yes, HAVE 2 of them)? Do you have a solution for items in too poor a condition to donate (No; WANT)? Continue on, and you will know what you have and what you still need to declutter with success!

You can use it for your other projects in a similar way (start a business, get a college degree, become a better leader at work). You can also do it for your life (improve your relationships with your siblings, find your soulmate). When you do it for your life, you will create great ease for yourself.

The *haves* side in a life exercise will reveal to you all the wonderful people, places, and things you have the fortune to experience regularly. These *haves* are also a reminder of what you're grateful

for (or should be). On the *haves* side, you may find that you already satisfy many of your basic human needs for security, significance, growth, and contribution. Be thankful for each of these and nourish them.

On the other side, you'll often find things that, when you think about it, aren't really things you need, such as a new car or more money. Not that these things aren't important to you. After all, you listed them for a reason, and that reason may be to attain more fulfilment. What I'm saying is that most of your *haves* are things you actually need and care about, while the *wants* are just that – they are or were desires. They're not essential to life and living and happiness, but they're more for comfort and convenience.

When you think about it this way, you will find that you have way more than you thought you did. (Hint: More new businesses are built more on resources and knowledge that the entrepreneur already possesses than on cash loans. It's called *sweat equity*.) You'll start thinking of ideas about how to use what you *have* to achieve your goals and become excited about the next phase of your life when you achieve more success in the areas you choose for yourself. (Hint: You may have “gym membership” in the WANT column. Don't forget that you HAVE the kids' jump ropes, your teen son's dumbbells, your spouse's treadmill, and any number of yoga mats in the house right now.) But more importantly, along with determining your end goals, you will know what you want to achieve and begin developing a strategy to get there.

What you will have after this exercise is a firm grasp of what you need and how to get it. Do this Haves/Wants List for every significant project you attempt. It will get you focused on efficiently gathering all the necessary resources to achieve your end goal.

Assuming you have the financial resources, buying what you need to reach the goal is faster. If not, beg, barter, or borrow the

physical resources! Trade one of your skills for something physical you need. Get creative.

There's a TV series a friend was on in which the guys started out with a small item and eventually traded it up to something much more valuable. My friend traded them an airplane for a '67 Chevelle! Bartering gets things done in certain circumstances. If my friend can trade a plane for a car, well then! You can surely find something to trade for what you need.

Set Your Goals – All of Them

Early in the four-step process of **Identify, Attitude, Strategy, and Sell It!**, you envisioned your big end goal. By following the first two steps in this **Strategy** section – identifying **Resources and Knowledge** for your project/goal, and determining which among them you **Have** and which you still **Need/Want** –your project gets completed before you actually achieve it in the real world! This is where you start to see the feasibility and potential for success of the project.

It is also where you believe your success before you see it. Each next step will clearly display what resources to use, where to get those resources, and who will help you along the way. Hopefully, if you've written it down like I've suggested, it'll all be nicely laid out so you can maintain focus and not get delayed by distractions while trying to think of what to do next. You'll just keep moving forward until you have no more steps to complete.

Will it be easy? Sometimes. Other times you won't have any idea how your project/goal could possibly be completed. Then someone will step in or something amazing will happen, such as an insight while driving to work, or you'll just be stubbornly persistent and the solution will come to you. Whatever the reason, and assuming your *why* persists through the entire project, the successful outcome will be the same.

You've probably read books or taken courses on goal-setting and realize how powerful the process is. It took me a long time and many failed projects to realize this. But once I started to set goals and follow the process to achieve anything, I systematically began achieving all my goals – at least the ones that continued to be important to me.

The whole point in listing it out in the way I present is so that there is never a time when you're asking yourself, "What do I do next?" You always have a next step until you finish.

Procrastination, indecision, and uncertainty will kill all your great projects.

Powerful Mini-Goals

From the **Identify** step, you know what you want. You have stated it in terms of a **Big End Goal** that, once achieved, fulfills an important *why* for you.

Now it's time to connect your beginning step to your end goal with a number of incremental **mini-goals**. So after throwing away all your excuses and choosing to tackle the goal or project, you **define your mini-goals** – those small, do-able, **intermediary action steps** that lead you by the hand to the end of your project or to the achievement of your goal.

When you write down an end goal, attach a **time frame** to it. When you create mini-goals to support your goal's achievement, attach a time frame to each one, too. Start with the near term (today's mini-goal), and go out as far in time as you think is necessary. Maybe you have a project with a completion date of the end of the day. Or maybe one has three stages that will be completed in one week, three weeks and three months. If you use this simple method for your life, maybe you want to go out as far as twenty years and create a timeline for when you want major events to happen, such as marriage, financial independence, or purchasing that new car you've always wanted.

Achieve

Note your end goal and mini-goals in your **Strategy**, but also post them separately somewhere you can regularly review them so your brain will start creating a path to achieve each goal. You may look at a specific one on a certain day and ask, “How will I ever earn enough money to buy that house in five years?” Your next thought may lead you to the first step in that specific journey.

What’s so powerful is *not* that you can identify each of your end goals, such as an important life goal or an important career goal. What is powerful is the momentum you create when you break out the mini-goals required to reach the end goal. Mini-goals are easily completed – that is their grace and beauty. And because of your easy success with one, you enthusiastically move to the next, and the next ...

The goal of buying that amazing house may seem impossible on its own, but it appears much more achievable when you break down what it will require to get there, such as learning a new skill that will get you a promotion or taking that sales course to help you sell more cars – both of which lead to more money in your pocket to apply to your new-house fund.

The goal of losing those seventy-five excess pounds may seem hard, frustrating, and unachievable, until you remember mini-goals. These intermediary goals say, “Just five pounds this month.” You achieve that, and the next mini-goal says, “Just four pounds this month and no more added sweeteners or sugar in my food or drink.” Absolutely do-able, and the months and the mini-goals go by, and the weight melts off.

Whatever it is, you have an enormous capacity to create the path to whatever you seek in life. You just have to chunk the big goals down into bite-sized mini-goals. When you start completing these easy-to-achieve mini-goals, you will feel like you’re making consistent progress because you are, and you will be constantly successful. This progress and success will generate the necessary momentum to achieve your impossible dream.

Take some time now to list your end goals for a specific project or your life and place on them a reasonable time frame stated as if you have already achieved them. (Example: “Lose 50 pounds; Achieved 12 months from today.”) Then break each goal into smaller mini-goals and actions you will take to achieve each one. Then assign them their own individual time frames. (Example: “Lose ½ to 1 pound per week the first 4 weeks by increasing my healthy fat intake with a shot of organic olive oil each day to reduce hunger and by reducing carbs to 50 grams per day.”)

Once you do this, post it somewhere you can see it often. I’m often on my computer, so my goals are listed and broken down into spreadsheets and related text documents. The text documents allow an easy way to outline my goals, while the spreadsheets let me organize each specific goal by portion to be completed. Maybe there’s an easier way, but this is how I do it for now. In addition to these files, I set reminders on my phone that help me maintain my focus and momentum.

Recruit Others to Help

Your Haves/Wants List most likely includes buying things (which I won’t discuss here). Some include you learning new things. But others urge you to hire people who are already experts in areas useful to your goal.

There are amazing freelancers who can do most of your work for you. However, they come with varying degrees of quality. Finding high-quality freelancers is actually a difficult process – even with reviews. Go through the reviews, study the freelancers’ work, ask them questions, and get to know them. Speak to them in person or virtually if the job is complex and/or long-term. Voice inflections and facial expressions are recognized by our instincts and are valuable signals to listen to when choosing people to help you do your great thing. Know exactly what you want, which can

be determined from doing the exercise we discuss earlier in the **What** chapter of this book. Finally, hire based on your needs.

I've personally had lots of success hiring video editors, book editors, graphic designers, virtual assistants, web developers, and software developers using freelance sites. Through this process, I've discovered several amazing people who I wouldn't have found any other way. I'll say it again: Once you find great people, do what you can to keep them.

The beauty of freelancers is that they work on your project for an agreed fee or rate, and when done, they stop billing you (unlike a salaried employee).

What I've learned is that with most of this type of remote freelancer, you tend to get what you pay for. A trick I use to get higher-quality help for less is to simply ask them to work for less than they ask. I know, it's a genius insight. However, if you ask enough people, you'll find a few needing work – especially if your job doesn't involve much time. They may pick it up to establish the relationship or to create a reputation for high-quality work. Posting jobs on freelancer sites is also a convenient way to source help, and qualified people just joining the platform will often be willing to work for less to become established. The problem I've found is that you'll get all sorts of applications and proposals, which can be challenging if you're looking for specialized talent.

Additionally, there's a possibility you have or can get something they need that can help reduce costs. Ensure you ask questions in the getting-to-know-you phase and really learn who they are and what they need to achieve their next level of success. Chances are, you both share similarities in this area.

Another fun way to acquire resources on your Wants List is to run a contest. This is especially interesting in graphic design or other creative-type jobs. I am always amazed at the creativity that comes out of this process. I respect creativity so much and often want to choose several submissions.

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The one thing that you can't freelance out is your time ... wait, you can do that too! Hire a virtual assistant to do all the things you don't want to do.

If you don't know what you don't want to do, then I have just the exercise for you.

The Do Not Do List

The **Do Not Do List** does exactly what you think it does. There's absolutely no sense in doing anything that doesn't maximize your time. This includes going to the grocery store, doing laundry, editing your own book, posting blog articles on your site – anything. It's intended to eliminate the time-wasting, soul-sucking, insignificant, or unfamiliar things that eat up our time.

Look again at your Haves/Wants List. How many could you transfer to a Do Not Do List?

WHAT ACTIONS AND WHAT THINGS DO YOU SPEND TIME ON THAT DON'T SERVE GROWTH, GREATER INCOME, EMPOWERMENT, HIGHER PURPOSE, FAMILY OR A BETTER FUTURE?

Action	Automate/Delegate /Eliminate	Who	Resources

Achieve

It's quite simple. Fill in the first blank with what you spend your time on. Then write in the appropriate action. List people and any resources you need to accomplish the delegation or automation, then briefly describe how you'll do it with any necessary details. I take it a step further and create this list in a spreadsheet. This list makes the flow easier and limits delays due to procrastination because, remember,

most brains will take every chance to avoid work.

That little bit of time it takes you to think about who to delegate something to opens you to distraction. Distraction can delay or kill a project, and it's everywhere.

Build Your Project With Your Strategy and Mini-Goals

Achieving your goal is fairly easy from this point forward. In fact, you are almost there!

Your **Strategy** is a list or other document that tells you *WHAT* to do, by *WHEN* to complete it, and the *NEXT THING* to do ... all the way to goal achieved or project completed. It moves you forward in time and always gives you something to **DO** to get closer to success.

So far you have many elements of your Strategy, probably in an outline form of some type:

1. Your **What**
2. Your **Why**
3. Your desired **End Result** or **Big Goal**, and a desired achievement date
4. Awareness of the importance of **Attitude** and some shifts you will make within yourself to support your goal or project completion
5. **Mini-goals** with **deadlines**, listed in the order you do them, that lead you step-by-step to the Big Goal
6. **Resources** to help achieve the Big Goal
7. **Hases/Wants Lists** of those Resources
8. Who to **outsource** certain tasks to
9. Your **Do Not Do** List of resources you won't do yourself

This may be a list or a bulleted outline, but any way you write it up is fine as long as you see the **chronology** of the steps you must take. This is when you take all those ideas and insights and put them in an order that will, most efficiently, get you to your goal. Once it is complete, you can set out to gain whatever you need to fill in the blanks. (See [Mandy's business Outline](#) at the end of this book.)

You know your end goal – but now you also know and have written out the steps you must take to reach it! The actions

you must carry out to reach it should appear in your Strategy.

There will be more actions to insert and/or you'll want to reorder the sequence to be more productive or logical. Just get started now. This first pass is how you feel at this moment in time and how you can achieve the goal or efficiently complete your project.

This is an exciting part for me because this is the stage when everything starts coming together in physical form.

You may have a spreadsheet project with various side calculations and unnecessary tabs, or maybe you're staring at that half-note trying to figure out how to get your pinky on it while staying in time. Whatever it is, this next step is when you begin putting it together.

This step is separate from any creative stage so that you'll feel successful in its completion. I mentioned earlier how important recognizing every success is to creating momentum. If you remember, momentum is integral in achieving anything. Recognize the success for completing the step and then move on.

I also separate it so that there is a defined line between the creative beginning and the first stage of structure. That's because this stage uses the analytical mind. While creativity is still a large part of this early step, it gives way to analysis and organization, which are necessary for whittling down the ideas from any previous creative step into something that makes sense. If I were to combine any other step with a highly creative step, I would sacrifice creativity for whatever efficiencies I thought I would get out of it. This would result in a less interesting outcome because I didn't use my full creative capacity.

I included at the end of this writing the process Mandy used to launch her new health and fitness business successfully and profitably. It includes everything we've discussed so far.

Test Your Initial Draft

You have hammered out your initial **Creation** – ..maybe several versions of it – as you thought of new mini-goals or new resources to facilitate your progress.

Several versions? Oh, yes. You learn along the way! Remember that it is your strategy, and it is not carved in stone at its first writing. The first draft was you brainstorming on how to reach an objective. Maybe you got something wrong about your own skills. Maybe you didn't realize how long one aspect of your strategy would take without help or multiple mini-goals. Be willing to be flexible to allow you to get to your end goal faster.

I have forty-four different text files saved of my first novel. Now that's what I call unorganized – sure doesn't sound like I had a solid strategy! To be fair to myself, it was the first novel I'd ever written, I didn't have a clue about what I was doing, and some of the files are for different print sizes as well as feedback from various beta readers and editors. Nonetheless, there are forty-four of them and countless saves within each. I did significantly better with the second in the series, with twenty-one text files. As you can see, there will be improvement at each revision, so I encourage you to

focus on each next step but don't try to get it right on the first go - because you won't.

The reality is that every single time I read any book I have written, including this one, I improved it with changes. I could literally still be adding to and revising that first book. You may never be completely satisfied with the end result, but at some point you have to decide to stop and release your work to your intended audience. For my piano aspirations, I love playing for myself, but ultimately I wanted to have the confidence to play for others. This confidence came only with repeated practice and increased skill, as well as not caring so much about what people thought. This comes down to **mindset** and **maximum effort**. I eventually

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had to just start playing and not care about missing that note or starting over because I lost the rhythm. I will never be a concert pianist. I know this as well as anyone who listens to my music. That doesn't change the fact that I desire to please my audience and myself with the performance.

At this step, you will have a nearly completed goal. It is now time to test it. As for my first novel, this was the stage when I sent it to beta readers to tell me how bad it sucked. Since my storyline was okay, their critiques helped me with the overall concept and direction.

Testing is the same for any project or goal. For a product, this is where you test its resilience with a beta test a soft launch or create a market acceptance survey. For **my AI investment platform**, this is where we press Enter on the keyboard and watch it accurately predict asset returns.

This is the last low-cost stage. After this initial stage of testing, you must choose to continue the process or scrap the project.

The next section helps you decide when to scrap, modify, or sell your project before you sink potentially significant funds into its completion. It also describes the process for taking your amazing product to the market, making first contact with someone who caught your eye, or engaging an audience with a riveting story.

Scrap or Sell

This stage is when you take the testing data and make a decision – Scrap it or Sell it. Selling it doesn't have to mean you charge money for it. Selling it could be playing your music for others. It could mean hanging that picture on the wall. It could mean giving that book away in exchange for an email list to market your other products. It could mean actually selling your health and fitness course to your audience.

Deciding to scrap a project is usually easy. The testing was terrible, or the project or goal was all wrong for you in spite of best intentions, or your approach didn't work (but you have brainstormed others that just might do the trick) and the idea had a high probability of failure. It might be that your **Identify** step was not complete or in harmony; or it might turn out that you didn't do all of the **Attitude** work you believed you had. We've all been there. If I had a dollar for every time I failed, I'd probably have earned way more than what I've made otherwise. Failing is easy and can be fun with the right attitude.

Developing an attitude to fail helps you bounce back quickly and refocus your energy.

One way to think about it is that when you fail, you eliminate a bad idea, which frees your mind and schedule to think of and act on the next great idea.

Scrapping a project doesn't always mean it goes away forever. Sometimes it just sits there waiting to be rediscovered in a different way. For example, I originally scrapped that AI investment idea. The initial testing was poor, and it didn't do what I thought it would do. I got it out of my mind and moved on to more relevant projects. But one day, it came back up in another way that brought me a new level of excitement for the project. I thought of a new way to adjust variables and test it, which led to spectacular results.

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You see, no matter how hard we try, no matter how long we free-write, brainstorm, and mind map, we don't always think of everything in the moment. Sometimes the solutions to our problems come when we aren't even thinking about them.

My AI investment project was good. I just didn't know how to make it great when I first started working on it. It wasn't until after implementing AI into Nyoobe that I thought of it in a new way. I gained knowledge I didn't have before that allowed me to move closer to completion.

Other projects, such as a marketing strategy I developed to increase social followers and sells through giveaways, were scrapped completely. Not that giveaways are a bad idea, it's just that I learned in the testing phase that the way I intended to go about it was unattractive to the businesses I approached. The project wasn't a complete disaster because I developed several creative sales funnels and translated some of the marketing ideas to my other businesses. Testing is integral to achieving anything, and for the love of greatness, scrap projects that are no good! Otherwise, you're wasting valuable time, money, and resources you could be spending on more promising ideas.

Collect the Data to Measure Your Success

One of the most valuable business models and personal goal tools you can use today is data and analytics. Companies are storing data on a massive scale. We've only scratched the surface of what to do with it all. But for now, we use it primarily for marketing and measuring progress, and you can do the same on a smaller or more personal level.

Ensure in your testing phase that you capture the story of your journey, analytics to prove your project's viability, and anything else that is useful in conveying your message to your audience.

For example, Mandy's goal is, as we know, a commercial business. She easily conducted a survey on what middle-aged mothers found most appealing when it comes to exercise. Surveys provide data. Mandy needed to get a sense of how that section of her course would perform (or not). She captured that data and created content to use in ads, her other groups, social channels, her book, and elsewhere. The data from the survey guided her efforts.

In my AI investment project, my partners and I captured and continue to capture the predicted returns data that will be used in various marketing content.

Nyoobe captures privacy friendly data that helps members earn more referral income and businesses become more effective and efficient in their marketing and advertising efforts.

Autonomous vehicle companies have cars driving twenty-four hours a day to generate data to support various aspects of their business, such as safety, accuracy, and practicality.

Have you ever been to an antique car show and come across an immaculately restored vehicle that looked like it just rolled off the 1949 assembly line? If you have, you'll find an old-timer sitting in a chair next to a thick photo album of the restoration process. He

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recorded each step of the process so that the story could be told with images that verify his hard work and the love he put into that project. It also shows, in vivid detail, the quality of the restoration for anyone interested in buying the car. Because he took the time to collect the data, he will get a premium price for his car over a similar car without the documented restoration.

Capture the data. Capture the process you use. Utilize it effectively in marketing your final product.

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Sell It!

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Prepare for Your Audience

A much harder but more exciting decision to make is how to take your project to the market – either to sell it for actual money or to share it for free while monetizing it on the side. Or maybe what Sell It! means to you is offering someone else your message or allowing them to look at your creation.

Like I said before, your market may be your immediate family or the entire world. You were to choose that target impacted person or group in the first step to **Achieve Anything**. If you haven't yet, do it now.

Additionally, Sell It! doesn't mean you must take money for your completed goal. Everyone is selling something, and in the following pages you will learn the process for pitching your company, asking someone out on a date, or delivering an entertaining concerto. This step is when you think about packaging your project for a buyer or simply presenting it to another person in the best light possible.

Oh, sidebar: I get it. You say that when you succeed, at that weight loss goal for example, you won't be interested in this Sell

It! step. But wait! If people start asking you, “Wow, how did you do it?” (How did you stick to that diet, motivate yourself to keep going, etc.?), then you are impacting people every time you respond! Keep reading anyway for pure inspiration.

You must be aware of the time and effort you spent to get the project to this stage. A vast majority of people never make it this far. Remember, most avoid work, and the stage you just went through was work. Congratulate yourself because if you make it this far, you are in an elite crowd.

And now – share! Many people are interested in “How to Go from High School Dropout to Ph.D. Doctorate.” Tell them. Many are interested in “How to Attract a Soulmate” – so share how you did it! Your strategy, documentation, and results along the way are valuable! Many weekend warriors need a process for training for a marathon, renovating their grandma’s 1950s furniture, stepping outside their comfort zone, and going to Karaoke Night at the local club. Whatever your own end goal was, others might be interested, so share it. (And, again, why do you think YouTube is so popular?)

Not to say the work is done, because depending on where you intend to take it from here, you may have a significant amount left before you finally achieve your end goal. Or, you may be finished at this stage. However, if you are taking this product to others, I will step through a process to ensure that your time and effort aren’t wasted with an unappealing presentation.

How to Get Anyone Interested in Your Idea

I won't get into all the tools and techniques available to market your product (if that is what your goal entails). At this point you should know from the previous sections what you need to do for your business or goal. Let's face it, your end goal might not have a single thing to do with something to sell for money. However, if you have an intended audience other than yourself, you must present it in a way that ensures attention is sustained till the end of whatever it is you intend to do.

What I will do is touch on a few ways that will help you understand how to use the available tools and give you the platform to utilize others. But first, we need to discuss your approach.

Selling people on anything –buying your product, taking you on a date, listening to your song, reading your book, or watching your video – can be as complex or as simple as you choose it to be. Additionally, marketing and advertising involve high creativity,

but that doesn't mean they have to be complicated. For example, I once saw a post from Gary Vaynerchuk that was a stick drawing on a whiteboard with a simple three-word phrase in a speech bubble. Next to it was the exact same drawing with a different three-word phrase completing his point. The stick drawing wasn't highly creative nor were the words he chose, but considering it was Gary who did it and the words he chose were to the point, it received tens of thousands of views and hundreds of comments. Now you may say that it got that response only because it was Gary. But the fact remains that he put little effort into that particular piece of content. In fact, he regularly says not to get caught up in the professionalism of the content you produce.

"Just get it the f out there!"

he would say. My point is that the quality of the content you produce often isn't as important as the *delivery*. I frankly enjoy videos with the dogs barking in the background or kids shouting for "Mom!" as she is talking to you. Authentic. Fun. Engaging.

Before you can begin to craft your message, you must further develop who is your target consumer of that message.

Your Unique Audience

When I tell stories, I tell them in a way that appeals to whoever is listening. The stories I tell my children may be the same stories I tell you, but I will use different words, phrases, and examples with my children. I will generally tell them in a more playful and immature way that appeals to their senses. Your messages, products, deliverables, or whatever end result it is you are bringing to life need to be crafted toward your unique audience. If you don't know who that is, then you risk them losing the point of what you spent time and money perfecting.

Achieve

You must think through who will consume the thing you create – even if that person is only you. Think about what they read, where they shop, what they buy, and where they hang out. More importantly, think about why they do these things. Do they read entrepreneur-themed articles? If so, the reasons could be that they are interested in making money, owning a business, or developing innovations. Do they buy high-priced fashion accessories? If so, they may be overly concerned with portraying a certain social image. If they shop for groceries at Walmart, that will tell you something different than if they shop at Whole Foods. All of these *observations* will help you identify who will consume your finished product as well as how to craft your process with them in mind.

Think about when you're speaking in front of an audience, the trick is not to focus on the entire group, but to find one person in the audience you connect to and then focus on them the entire time. By focusing on them alone, you ensure you'll resonate with a tribe of like-minded people.

My target investment client looks similar to the following:

A male...creative, open-minded, entrepreneur, intelligent, confident and comfortable in all aspects of his being, free and adventurous. A person who likes progress, pushes life to its limits and adds value to the world. Who loves personal and spiritual growth as much as he loves The Eagles, and can't resist helping a stranger every chance he gets.

That is the level of understanding you need to have about your audience, and the most effective action is finding that “one” person amidst the rabble and noise who will model your target persona.

Ask yourself:

- Which person needs this?
- What are they really consuming? (Emotion vs Product/Service)

- What are their wants, needs, and desires?
- What segment of this market is necessary to target to achieve my objectives?
- What type of people (age, sex, income, marital status, number of children, work status) should I be directing my message?
- What practical and emotional pain points do they face?
- How does their problem make them feel?

By answering these questions, you can now focus your message only on those who will most likely take the action you desire but also you will now better understand how to craft your message because you know exactly who you are crafting it for.

Your Message

When thinking about crafting your message to your unique audience the only question you should be asking is,

What is the highest good I can want and create for this person?

If you are only thinking about what you are getting out of the message, then it will be felt by your audience and poorly received. People, generally, only care about themselves and aren't concerned with what you want. Don't get me wrong. There are lots of great people out there. However, when it comes down to it, we are all very busy and only have a small amount of time to devote to activities outside of our commitments. Therefore, your audience will do for themselves and the ones they love before anyone else. Additionally, we are bombarded every day with messages that are trying to get us to do stuff that benefits the conveyer of the message. We've become adept at ignoring and overlooking these messages – as if they aren't even there.

“So how do I get my message out there?” you may be asking.

Emotion.

Achieve

You must appeal to your audience's emotions. Studies have proven that we no longer, as a mass, buy functionality. We buy an emotion. We buy a feeling. We buy to bring us closer to that version of ourselves we wish to be. Your message, whether it's to get someone to buy something, have a conversation with you, or other action, must appeal to some personal emotion they have in a way that gets them to stop what they are doing and devote their valuable time to you. To do this you must answer a few more questions.

- How does the message/product/service make them feel?
- How does it advance the goals they have for their own lives?
- How does it help make them a better person?

To help with these questions, think about the Practical, Emotional, and Identity benefits of your message to your audience.

Practical Benefits

These elements are what your product, message, content, idea, service does. This is the functional capabilities that provide value to your audience.

Emotional Benefits

When thinking about Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, Emotional benefits correspond to safety, belonging, and affiliation and esteem desires. These benefits make them feel like they're a member of the tribe and, therefore, secure.

Identity Benefits

These benefits correspond with the top of the Hierarchy of Needs. These benefits assist your audience in completing this statement:

“When I do this, I feel ____.”

When your message feels emotionally relevant to the lives of your audience, you become an intimate part of their lives. Not only does this inspire action, but research also shows emotional ties are the best way to maximize value. These people will visit more often, buy more stuff, have fewer objections, click your ads, and open your emails.

You must tap into the fundamental motivations of your audience and aim to address their deep, usually unspoken, emotional desires. Consider what emotional *wants* your messages address.

For instance, some particularly strong motivations include the desire to feel like you belong, the desire to succeed, the need to feel secure and safe, the desire to stand out and feel unique, the desire to feel free, the desire to be thrilled. Once you zero in on what motivator you naturally tap into, it's clearer how to shape your experience to make sure you're meeting these emotional desires. Remember,

we rarely make wholly logical decisions about what we do; instead, we choose based on how it makes us feel.

Content

Every bit of content needs to tell a story. I realize that you probably already understand the power of storytelling in sales, but you haven't yet heard it from me. Even though most of what I'm about to say has come from my consumption of many sales and marketing books, seminars, and courses, along with decades of adventure fiction, it's all relevant and expressed in my point of view.

Writing fiction for today's readers is hard. Not that sitting and typing your imagination is the difficult part, but engaging a reader is infinitely challenging.

We live in a three-second world.

Achieve

If you don't grab your audience's attention right away, you will lose them. If you lose them, you won't sell to them. If you sell products on review-based fulfillment services, you will most likely get poor reviews if you sell a low-quality product. A quick glance at the star rating will keep a person intrigued or encourage them to move on. This is the same with first impressions. The quality of your product is paramount, but the delivery is exceptionally important.

For goals like a new relationship, **Attitude** is what sells you to a person or pushes people away from you. Think about it, if you seek a life partner or spouse, you have only yourself to present – you are the *product* you are *selling*. Make yourself the best person you can be while always being the True You through techniques discussed in these pages.

Have you recently watched any new series on your favorite video delivery service? Observe what is popular. If you have paid attention to how each episode begins, you will notice a significant amount of action in the very beginning. For example, in the Netflix series *Flash* that I watched with my children, each episode is structured exactly the same. Each one starts with a bad guy doing bad things, then the Flash stops him from continuing the bad thing in dramatic fashion. This first scene is designed to get your attention, which it usually did with us. The story and plot follow with varying degrees of impactful action that maintains a steady pace, which leads to a satisfying climax of overcoming several challenges. It also doesn't always end with the Flash capturing the bad guy. Oftentimes, the Flash makes significant mistakes that lead to the villain escaping or someone the Flash cares about getting severely hurt – sometimes fatally. The end is always a cliffhanger hook that gets you to stick around for the five seconds or so that it takes for the next episode to start the sequence again.

Your message (your story) also involves a hero, villain, supporting characters and a setting. Your hero (the Flash) is your customer, potential mate, boss, and in the realm of self-help, yourself. The

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supporting characters are you and the team you assemble to assist the Flash in his personal goals of saving Central City (the setting) from the bad guys. See? We all live in a story and our job is to help others (our hero) achieve their goals. This is the sole focus of the project we complete, the product we build, the service we offer, the love we share. It is all for other people. Only when we think about life and business in this manner are we truly successful.

Your ads, content, and initial conversations with your future soulmate need to follow this same process. Your **Attitude** and behaviors do the same in the case of a personal goal.

“We die a thousand metaphorical deaths. Resurrect those experiences in your stories and you’ll become immortal with your audiences.”

– Park Howell

The Intrigue-Story-Go Method

There are various three-word phrases that explain a methodology of delivering your message. I've developed and use the **Intrigue, Story, Go method**, which I detail below.

It is an effective technique for connecting on a first date, messaging to attract clients, or pitching a concept to venture investors.

Intrigue

This is anything that **grabs your audience's attention**. It might be an action-packed opening to your novel, or it might be a compelling question that gets a client to question a certain aspect of their life. Whatever it is, it should be designed to incite a deep urge within the person consuming your message to read, watch, listen, click the button, or take whatever action you want them to initially take. It's simple to think about but rather difficult to execute.

With the proliferation of online sales, we all have a keen eye for sales copy. We've all seen the ads that scream "Buy my stuff" from an unauthentic mouth hungry for your dollars. If what you offer is action and adventure, then you better give it to your audience instantly, like in the Flash example. If they want to lose weight, you have to intrigue them to ask, "Is this the person who will help me lose weight?" If you want your first date to believe you are a great person, you have thirty to sixty seconds upon meeting to give that great first impression.

If they don't believe within the next few seconds that you can answer the question they ask, they'll keep scrolling or ghost you when you ask for a second date.

Once you intrigue them with your opening conversation, scene, headline, or fifteen-second video, you must answer their next question:

"What's in it for me?"

They're interested in reading, watching, or listening to more, but if you don't answer this question, they will move on. Remember, we all know that if we scroll past one piece of content, another just like it from a competitor will follow right behind. This is the same with personal and business relationships. If you don't get it right for that person, someone else will. The key to all intriguing messages is to deliver them with as much authenticity as possible.

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Intrigue your audience with your offer or message, and they'll hang around for the rest!

Don't be like the guy whose only desire is to sell you his product or service. It's easy to see he's in it only for himself. If your *why* is truly important to you, is something other than personal gain for yourself, and you don't do what the shady sales guy tells you to do, then your *why* will also be important to your audience.

When you answer your audience's question – “What's in it for me?” – you have to simply tell them what's in it for them. If the question you get them to ask is how to lose weight, then tell them how to lose weight. If they want to know what happens next, then make sure you give them a way to see what happens next. Your messages should never include “I,” as in, “I want you to do this,” or “I am so great at doing that.” Always phrase it in a way that focuses their attention on themselves. Let's face it, most people are concerned only with themselves and their own issues. They don't care who you are or what you've done. They just want what they want, and they need to believe you will give it to them. Otherwise, they will find someone else who can. Believe in yourself and your *why*. Speak from your heart even if your content is a cartoon or quote graphic. Get what you feel into the minds of your audience, and they will trust you and consume your message.

Story

Everyone loves a good story. This is the meat of what your goal is – your *story* is the plot, the education, the health, or whatever your goal delivers. It is what you are trying to convey, what you are trying to do, or what you are trying to solve. This book, for example, is a step-by-step guide to help you achieve anything. If I had titled it, “*The Power of Processes*,” you wouldn’t have given it a second thought. However, you are interested in achieving your goals, and you picked it up thinking it would help in some way, which I hope it has. However, I can’t help you with a title, a book cover, or a well-planned advertisement other than what I’ve said. I can help you only by creating this book in a way that engages you to absorb the information provided. If I haven’t done that, then I’ve failed at helping you. Scattered throughout this text are relatable stories that give examples of how I and others have used these processes to achieve our most desired goals. I have, hopefully, combined education with entertainment and sprinkled a little inspiration on top.

Anyone who can educate, entertain, and inspire with their stories will be immensely successful.

When you **incorporate stories** into whatever it is you do, your message will be exponentially more powerful. When you craft your message in story form, you have the power to engage your audience’s attention in an entertaining and memorable way. With even the briefest of stories, you can subtly include everything you want the listeners to know about you. You can do this by interweaving relevant experience and influential facts that help them relate to you and your offering.

Structuring your story may take many forms, such as the Fichtean Curve, Hero’s Journey and In Media Res. (I use a combo of the Fichtean Curve and Hero’s Journey in my fiction writing.) There are many free online resources to help you discover a structure that works best for your story. What I will emphasize is that you

must engage your audience, which simply means you must get them to ask questions.

Questions, Please

A story that someone reads to the end had an intriguing beginning and a compelling plot laced with copious action. This action may be in the form of bullets flying or cars crashing, but it may also be a dramatic break-up or startling, unexpected business failure. Whatever it is, **a great story gets you asking questions:** “Why did that happen?” “Will it happen again?” “What will they do about it?”

The questions themselves aren’t exactly important, but it is imperative that you get your audience to ask questions. (Do you recognize “conversation” here? If it is a monologue, it is definitely not a conversation!) If you can get someone to ask a question about what you’re showing or telling them, then you will most likely get them to stick around to see what happens next. Isn’t that what I’ve been teaching you – to focus on the next step? Even if it’s “Look at this idiot! Why the f did he do that?” then you got that guy! He may not like you, and he may think what you showed him was stupid. But guess what? He’s sticking around to see what other stupid things you’ll do. Many have realized financial success off the simple concept of being stupid.

This works if you’re telling a bedtime story to your children, having that first chat with the love of your life, or selling a product to a prospective buyer. Everyone wants to be entertained. If you can accomplish that, you will have the chance to finish the story to your children without them becoming distracted or get that second date because she desires to learn more about you. I’m not saying to be mysterious and suppressive. Just be yourself and structure your stories in a way that reveals who you are and what you want to convey in an interesting way.

First Impressions

If you are someone such as **a relationship or life coach**, you can add your personal successes in **story form** to show you can help your audience solve a problem. Tell stories about challenges or failures that you overcame that they just so happen to share. Telling how what you learned from that failure can help them avoid it.

Let's assume you provide consulting services and you are speaking to a civic group. Your intro may go like the following:

Hi Civic Group. My name is Mike, and I'm a consultant with Achievement Advisors. We specialize in guiding local businesses through the process of achieving anything. We do this by first working with your management team to acquire the mental clarity to achieve the next level of success for your organization. Because if your team isn't focused, then neither will your projects. Additionally, we work hand in hand with management through the work because that is often the hardest part. With this service, we offer our network of business professionals for one-on-one strategy sessions to help you succeed in the most difficult challenges your business will face. Finally, we will be with your team in the last and most important steps of completing your process. We do this over a six-week term, which is then month by month if additional time is necessary.

Do you think that introduction would have grabbed anyone's attention? If you were to start off a speech with that lame-ass intro and looked up from your notes, you would notice 95% are enraptured ... by their phones. If you started like this, you'd probably also have a visual presentation packed full of uninteresting slides. It's human nature to be drawn to the most interesting thing, and neither that intro nor your slide deck are very interesting. You would lose the group for the entire speech to a dancing cat or unread email.

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I can't emphasize enough how important framing your initial message to be interesting is to your success. Think about any nightclub you've been to or seen on a screen. You'd see a variety of people dressed in all sorts of fashion and doing their best interpretation of the latest dance move. But the one who draws the most attention is the attractive female dressed in something flashy and dancing very well by herself. Even the women in the club would be watching because she is interesting. She caught their attention and held it with her moves.

I'm not saying to take dance lessons and ditch your wardrobe for sequins and heels. What I'm saying is to express who you are with a fascinating story. This is the second way your introduction can go. Tell the story of your product or your achievement or your offer in a meaningful video. Explain that the origin of your health passion is a past trauma. Intrigue your intended audience, or you will lose them – possibly forever. I mentioned earlier that you must get your audience to ask questions. In the story phase, you answer those questions. If you're especially creative, you answer them in a way they didn't expect.

There aren't many second chances in this fast-paced world. If you don't intrigue your audience and provide a compelling and interesting story, they will lose the benefit of your great thing. And that could be detrimental to them. However, your audience will never know because your message was substandard. It was rubbish. It couldn't catch water with a bucket. You get the point. Don't spend all your time and effort developing something amazing and then let it die with a poor message. It's not selling if your audience needs it. It's not begging if you believe intently that if they don't hear you, they will be worse off.

As for Mandy, she passionately believes that people will *die* if they don't buy her course. Yes! She knows the dangers of obesity and has a clear mission. But if she puts out a weak-ass ad, she will fail – and so will her audience. If her audience fails, they die. And she just cannot have that happen!

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You have to put in at least as much effort in getting your message out as you did to finish the entire project.

“But I don’t know what to say. I don’t know what words to use,” you may say. It’s okay. Most people say that and use it as an excuse to avoid the work in creating a great message. I can’t tell you what to say because I don’t yet know what you’re offering. Join the Achieve Facebook group and ask there. I or someone else will help you figure it out.

What I can say for this writing is that people are always looking for something that will improve their lives. However, most people don’t know what that thing is, and most of the time it’s not a thing in the first place. Most think it’s something or someone that will make them happy, so they watch entertaining videos or episodes to live vicariously through the actors. They may go on terrible dates or enter difficult relationships. These actions and experiences activate a place in their brain that temporarily satisfies the desire they want.

Many others look for stuff to buy to make them happy. But what they don’t realize is something I mentioned earlier but is worth saying again: Happiness is already in them. They simply need to choose to express it. But they don’t know or believe this is possible, so they continue to look for stuff and fall into meaningless relationships – over and over again. Hopefully, your final product will help them find the thing they need. But you must first give them what they think they want.

20%/80% Rule

Knowing the truth about first giving them what they want and *then* what they need is a powerful approach in getting your message to your audience. When you craft your message, you must show them what they *want* in an image, a video, or compelling words. Once you catch their attention, you must **give them at least 20% of what they’re looking for** – what they **want** – on your first contact with them. Only then will you be

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able to later deliver the 80% that will be what they actually **need**. There's no better way. You have to give them some portion of what they *want*. But that's often not what they *need*. They need your completed project; they just don't know it until they stop to find out. Once you get them to stop and you give them what they want, there's a good chance they'll stick around for what they need, especially if you mix in their need throughout their want.

Take Mandy, who understands the 20%/80% Rule. She uses this to craft her ads and her course. One ad starts off with how to lose weight but finishes with the outcome of a healthy life, which her course delivers through improved health and vitality. Her course is designed with her consumer's goal of losing weight at the forefront (what they are looking for). But this is merely a side effect of proper health habits, which are taught throughout the course (what they actually need). She will give them a small amount of weight loss tactics and a whole lot of healthy lifestyle education reinforced with daily goals and social challenges.

Something else Mandy has that will make her extremely successful is her ability to

enter the conversations her audience is already having in their heads.

She knows the population is overweight and unhappy. She knows they wish they had more energy and vitality. She knows these are the things tired, middle-aged women are constantly thinking about. She knows they look in the mirror every day wondering what happened to them and wishing they could somehow turn back the clock to the former, skinnier and more active versions of themselves. She knows her audience is asking these questions because she once asked the same questions herself. Mandy has the answer, and she understands how to enter that existing conversation.

When you think about what you should say, think about your audience and what they are constantly thinking about. This

shouldn't be too hard – after all, you did just create a product or service intended for them!

There's a good chance you had or are still having such conversations with yourself. You may have created your project because it solves a problem you once struggled with. Mandy was overweight and had health issues, so she found the solution for herself and is now teaching it to others. **I wanted** an AI-powered investment platform that could crunch data better than I can, so I built it.

What to say doesn't involve catchy headlines or sales tactics. It has to do only with you entering the conversation that your audience is already having, which is probably one you've had with yourself and answered with your project.

So, when you're in front of that civic group, don't give them a boring, self-interested intro. Open with that business failure and what happened after you gained the skills that turned your failure around. And explain to them how you can now use those skills to help your audience in their business. Get them to identify with you, to say "me too" to the stories you tell them – the stories that each of them has gone or are going through. You know you're connecting with them as you look into a crowd of nodding heads. Then you know you've entered the conversation they are having regarding human resources, accounting, marketing, advertising, or whatever it is that you do.

You intrigue them with your compelling story and enter the existing conversation. If you lack that particular story because you are young and inexperienced, you can either wait until you have that experience, which I don't recommend, or you can use the story of someone else, such as a mentor, friend, or well-known personality. Stories are powerful regardless of who's in them. Tell a compelling story. Enter the conversation. Give your audience what they want *and* what they need in an interesting way, and you'll have the influence you need to achieve anything.

Go

The Go of **Intrigue–Story–Go** is exactly what you think it is. Once you *Intrigue* someone by understanding them on their level and then tell them a *Story* that enters the conversation they are already having with themselves, the next step is to **get them to Go do** it – whatever it is you want them to do.

For example with this book, I Intrigue you with the title or possibly an ad that got you to ask, “Can this help me achieve my goal?” I was able to get you to ask the question because I knew you were already thinking of that project. I then told you multiple *entertaining* stories based on *teaching* you how you can achieve anything. Now I’m telling you to *go* do the thing I want you to do, which hopefully is *inspiring* you to complete all your meaningful projects.

Your *Go* for your audience may be to sign up for your course or maybe stick around to hear another song. Whatever it is, you first intrigued them to listen, then you told a story, and now you want them to go do something. This is the case in each part of your project.

My ad or social post that *Intrigued* you promised achievement, then it got you to listen to the *Story*. Finally, it encouraged you to *Go* get the book. If you have a consumer product, such as a food bar, you may intrigue your audience with how tasty your food looks by creating a visual ad that is scheduled between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. You chose the ad and the schedule because you entered the conversation that they are hungry for a nutritious snack. They may then read your text or listen to the video that tells the short-story version of how your company’s mission is all about real food. Your *Go* is for them to go buy it.

Intrigue–Story–Go works for any message you want to effectively convey. Start working now on each part in relation to the goals you are now closer to achieving.

Marketing Essentials

Scarcity and FOMO

Getting people to do things is difficult, especially if your *Go* is for them to trade hard-earned money for what you're offering. There are a few tactics that are used in manipulative ways, such as creating scarcity and the fear of missing out.

I use this all the time with my children. In my quest to teach them time management skills and sharing, I will often say something like, “You only have two hours to clean your room and play with your friends at the pool. Do you want to spend that time cleaning and complaining, or would you rather clean your room fast and use all the remaining time to play with your friends?” This creates *time scarcity* and the *fear of missing out* (or **FOMO**) on what their friends are doing at the pool. My children are coming along nicely, but they still get caught up in labeling the chore as something bad rather than completing it quickly and moving on to what they want to do.

Mandy uses this tactic sparingly and honestly to kick up registrations for an event starting in a few days' time and that still

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has openings. Her ad might look like this: “Only 3 places left at the discounted, first-timer rate! Sign up by tonight or miss out till next summer!”

Whatever it is you do, one of the best tactics – and the most over-exploited – is creating within your audience the sense of scarcity regardless of whether scarcity actually exists or not. This also isn’t a new concept. Is there a furniture store in your town that seems to always have a going-out-of-business sale? Liquidation events are *scarcity* events.

“Hurry before the best deals are gone!”

“Get them while they last!”

“The sale ends in twenty-four hours!”

These are popular because they work. Humans don’t like to miss out. These furniture marketers are entering three conversations their audience is having: “I need a new couch.” “Couches are expensive.” “I don’t want to miss out on a great deal.”

That last one is important because it’s another conversation that savvy marketers feed on. FOMO is real!

“Don’t miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!”

“One night only!”

“Don’t live in regret. Act today!”

Scarcity and regret are powerful motivators to get people to do the things you want them to do. Combine them, and a high percentage of your audience will act on your offer. “That’s great!” you’re probably saying. You may have already thought of ways to create scarcity and regret in your next offering – or to get your children to clean their rooms.

But wait!

What happens to Mandy after you buy a limited-time-only course, the limited time passes, and you see another (or worse, the same) limited-time-only ad for her course? You'll be pissed. You'll realize that Mandy deceived you into purchasing her product. She'll lose all credibility in your eyes. Mandy will have to walk this line very carefully (and she does) to ensure that doesn't happen. She must also avoid giving her audience the impression that another limited-time event will occur soon after. When you become known for limited-time events, you lose the effectiveness of scarcity and regret. Even if she uses the limited-time offer followed by an evergreen model that doesn't have all the bonuses, she could still get into trouble with some clients. Nevertheless, the scarcity/regret model does work. Just think through it carefully so that you don't sound like a furniture store liquidation event.

Reverse Selling

Reverse selling is another strategy that, when used properly, is probably the most powerful messaging tactic. It will provide tremendous value to your audience and make it easier for you to distribute your finished project.

Let them sell you on why they should do what you want them to do.

What you want them to do might be become a client, buy your stuff, or listen to your lecture. But if you are our health and fitness coach, you have only a limited amount of time that you choose to devote to your one-on-one clients. If you are a musician, there are only a certain number of nights you can perform in a year, much less at a single location. Because of this time constraint, Mandy should choose only the absolute best clients, and the musician wants only her best fans at her shows.

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This method can be accomplished in many ways, including everything from simple automated sales funnels to an old-fashioned phone call. Sticking with Mandy, the purpose is to narrow down everyone who wants to work with her to only the ones who will experience the most impactful results. These will be the clients who will make the greatest breakthroughs by consuming her service. More importantly, they will be forever cheerleaders because she hand-picked those who have the greatest chance to succeed with her service. The best part is that because of her client's extraordinary outcomes – resulting in great referrals, reviews, and testimonials, along with the personalized nature of the tactic – she will have a steady supply of outstanding clients because her conversion rate will be higher than any other sales method available.

The way to do this begins like any other: with an intriguing message that gets her prospects to consume her story. The difference is in the *Go*. Rather than sending prospects to her payment service to become a client, she sends them to an application of some sort. The stated purpose of this application is to ensure that her potential client is not a *good* fit, but a *great* fit. This is where the scarcity message is so powerful.

She combines a simple message that she has limited time and her services are in high demand, with a phrase that conveys the message that, in order to provide the absolute most value, she has to *ensure* she is a good fit for them.

In addition, she will say something that acknowledges their time is valuable and that she doesn't want to waste it if she and the client aren't a great fit for each other. Someone who knows they need what she is offering will complete the application ASAP. Someone else will question whether it is worth their time to finish the process because they know they can't submit convincing answers.

Mandy could then review the questionnaire and confirm them as a client if all the necessary information is submitted. But it doesn't

have to and shouldn't end with the questionnaire if she has a high-end offer. The next step she should take is to follow up with a call or chat. This can be performed in several ways, such as through an email sequence that gets them to claim a spot on her busy calendar for a screening call to "absolutely confirm" she will be a good fit for them, or a chat session through which the interview can be performed on the spot.

This same methodology is applicable in all types of relationships. Think about the exercise we did by determining what we want out of a person. This method is essentially used as an application on dating sites that works to funnel out only the closest matches.

Remember when you do this, always word your offer in relation to ***the prospect's needs and desires***

A more personal way is to reach out personally through an instant message or a call, or have someone else do that for you, depending on your available time. A simple ten-minute chat is all you both need to ensure you can provide the best service possible and to acquire the best client who will be a forever cheerleader.

This slightly more complex, yet still remarkably simple, process will send your conversion rates through the roof. When done properly, that personal touch and the framing of all your messaging in regard to their needs and desires, combined with a little scarcity and possible regret, is the most effective method.

If this part scared or overwhelmed you, don't worry: Most of it can be automated for businesses with today's technology. Setting it up properly requires only a bit of planning, which you should have a firm grasp of by now.

Remember, decide what you are good at and hire others to do the rest.

So You Have Only One Piece of Content

So let's briefly look at what Mandy can do with the various pieces of content she derived from a video she did with a fitness instructor. She took that forty-five minute video and cut it into two fifteen-minute videos, five five-minute videos, ten one-minute videos and twenty fifteen-second videos. In addition to this, she cut five images to which she will attach quotes, voiceovers from the podcast audio, and intriguing questions to encourage post-engagement. She also had the video transcribed for text-related content. If you counted, that's forty-three pieces of video and image content from one forty-five-minute video plus whatever she can get from the transcription.

Through the social publisher tool she chose, she scheduled each of these to be posted at regular intervals on the various social media outlets. She posts the audio as a podcast. She posts each of the fifteen-minute videos to Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn with links to the podcast and video podcast located on her website. She posts the five-minute videos to the Facebook groups which she's a member of as a value-add. She schedules the one-minute videos for Facebook and Instagram and uses them for ads. She schedules the images for Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and uses them for ads. She'll also use the video for future courses and trainings. The transcription will be adapted for a blog post, LinkedIn article, and numerous quotes that will be attached to her images as well as quote graphics. On a larger scale, she will use the podcast transcriptions as text for a health-and-wellness book packed with quotes and commentary from her guests.

Let's not forget about hashtags. These keywords will help guide your audience to your social pages when you know what your audience is thinking and searching for, and where they hang out. Be sure to niche it and use the hashtags of the people who also target your audience by going to their posts and seeing which ones they use. Instagram also has a neat feature that lists hashtags

related to those that match your audience. Be sure to use those too.

The point to this section is that, yes, Content Is King, but if you don't manage your content in an intelligent way, you will be overwhelmed, overworked, and frustrated with the results. And that can lead to poor posts, posting the wrong content at the wrong time, and failing at getting your message out.

Value-Add Video That Sells All Your Stuff

When thinking about value-add video content that you post to build a social following around your product, service or mission – and for the love you have for everyone who sees it – please be conscientious that **each message has a purpose**. I know, the value you give is the purpose, but that doesn't have to be the only thing you talk about.

In the beginning of your post, briefly mention that book you have available or will have available. You don't have to go into detail, but you can mention it. Additionally, you can say how awesome your last interview was and where it can be found. Also, do something to get your audience to interact with the post. If you're doing a live, get them to say something in agreement with what you're talking about or ask them to leave a comment about their challenges or results relating to what you're discussing – algorithms love interactions. And why not end with a *Go*, which may be for them to buy your product, visit a channel, or learn about your upcoming product, service, or event? Always remember to; *intrigue* them with your headline, image or video; give them a great *story* that benefits their life; and then get them to *go* do something.

While this section's topic is video, this method can be used in an in-person networking environment, on a date, or anywhere you

desire to get not only the purpose of your message out but also to convey who you are. If you are familiar with selling, you understand that people often don't buy products and services – they buy feelings, which include their feelings toward who they believe you are and whether or not they like you.

Launch – Grow and Borrow a Following

The absolute best way to launch anything successfully is to have a following beforehand. Without a following, you will launch your great idea to the sound of crickets. Actually, the crickets won't even show. You'll get nothing. If you've done this like I have in the past, you'll either not care, because reaching a wide audience wasn't your mission, or you'll freak. When your launch fails, you'll most likely (if you haven't already) start creating ads and throw lots of money at it in hopes of getting your message out.

“I plan to achieve this goal” should be your Attitude from the start.

As an investor, I always said regarding bad trades, “It's time to get out as soon as I start hoping an investment will work out.” You see, I **plan** for investments to do well – no hope is involved. I **plan** for them to do a specific thing. Not all of them will do what I think they will. My job then is to close the position and move on.

Just like investing, I plan for a launch to go well because I set it up for success. There are books and coaches that discuss launching whatever it is you want to launch. I suggest you read a couple and maybe hire a coach. These two great resources will go into more detail than I will here. However, when a successful launch means you start with the right audience, then you should already know what to do – if you've been paying attention.

The launch process isn't to maximize your initial sells, assuming you are selling something. Maximizing sales comes with advertising and scaling your product or service to reach the market share you predicted in the beginning stage. The launch does a few things, and, if done well, establishes momentum, which as discussed earlier is a key to success.

The first step of a launch could be considered a pre-launch. The pre-launch could be simply telling your audience about the impending launch of your great thing. It could also be a huge production where you spend lots of money to maximize the initial launch results. If you're like the rest of us and haven't done this before, you're probably hesitant, unsure, and scared of failing. I'll help you get over this in the next few sentences.

Regardless of how you choose to launch, it is imperative you launch to an enthusiastic audience. Whether you have a finished product or just an idea, one of the most effective ways to pre-launch and reduce the fear of failure is to conduct a founding member campaign.

You create a **founding member** campaign simply by asking an existing audience that is interested in your idea or new product to be the first ones to try it. If your idea is an online training course, you can invite them to try it for the lowest price possible, or possibly free for a limited time, and never raise the initial price they eventually pay.

Mandy conducted a founder's launch by offering her new course for \$99 to *founding members*; on top of that, it is on a first-come, first-registered, *limited-count* basis. She makes sure she explains that she intends to sell the course to a more general public for \$249!

This is one way to establish the viability of your idea before going full-launch, because there's no better confirmation that you're on the right path than someone trading cash for it.

The founder's launch can be unveiled as easily as a single post to a social account. In that post, describe your idea, explain how you

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see the value it will bring to your audience, and invite them to join as a founder at the lowest price possible.

Make sure you manage expectations by stating your thing is new and that you will improve on future versions – and that your founding customers will continue to benefit at the original, low price.

Finally, ask them to take action by sending you a private message or replying to an email. This is important because, let's face it, no one wants the embarrassment of posting something and expecting to receive comments – and then getting none. A private message or email ensures no one will know if 1 person or 1,000 people responded. In the private message you encourage them to commit to your offer, which may be exchanging money for a membership, committing to purchase a product once released by making a deposit, or doing something else that meets your goals.

After you conduct this simple campaign, analyze your results, refine your message, and do it again (doesn't this sound like my earlier comments on collecting and using data?). It may take several revisions to see impactful results, but it will be worth the effort.

I mentioned that you don't even have to have a finished project – or have even started a project – to do this, as long as the consumers interested in your thing understand that it isn't yet complete and that if it never gets complete, their money will be refunded. If you complete it, then they will receive the first version and hopefully be happy they participated in the beginning. If you don't complete it after a certain time, refund their money. If you ensure there is no risk, they'll trust you when you present to them your next great idea.

Mandy launched her first course with the following post:

Hey guys, I love all of you who are part of this healthy lifestyle family. I've committed a significant amount of

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my time recently to build a course that will help people overcome obesity.

I'm super excited about it as it covers all the years of experience I have devoted to helping hundreds of people overcome the mental, physical, and emotional habits associated with the traumatic disease.

I still have a few final touches to add before I can offer it to everyone but know that even this imperfect version offers so much to those who are suffering.

Since most of you understand my methods and believe in me enough to follow my lead in creating a vibrant life for yourself, I want to invite you to be a founding member of the soon to be launched Healthy Lifestyle Course.

Founding members will receive the following benefits:

- 1. Lifetime access to the course for one low price that will include additional versions, modules, bonuses, or anything else I offer with the course in the future.*
- 2. Access to the private Healthy Lifestyle group.*
- 3. Nutrition guide.*
- 4. Fitness plan.*
- 5. 30% discount to a one-year subscription to Delivery-Organics Meal Service.*
- 6. No risk guarantee. I will refund your investment within 30 days if you aren't satisfied.*

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Direct message me if you are interested. I'm only offering this one time and will only accept founding members for the next five days.

Please, if you know someone that needs this course, send them this link. I want to help them and only you can make that happen. There will never be a better time to join.

Love, light and please eat right - M

She created several versions of this post, including variations of a heartfelt video describing her personal battles and triumphs over obesity. The pre-launch from this simple campaign, in addition to requests for reviews as founding members stepped through the course, set up her first course for success.

When you launch to an established following, you get your product in front of **people who already love you**. While they are trying out this new thing, they are trying it out with a pleasant feeling for you. They aren't skeptical or overly concerned that maybe they got ripped off. They already like you and already have a good opinion about your product.

As we learned in the beginning, people think about things from their individual perspective. For example, one of my children doesn't like hummus. It's not because he doesn't like the taste, because he's never actually tried it. He doesn't like the name – and, by the way, what you name something is infinitely important. But back to my picky eater. While I couldn't care less if he ever eats hummus, the fact is that when/if he ever tries it, he will hate it because his mind has already told him it's bad. It's the same with a pleasant mind. If your followers love you and you've been telling them how great this new book, product, or service is, then when they try it, they will love it because they already believe it's great. Understand?

That doesn't mean all you have to do is hype your food bar and not put in the effort to actually make it tasty. You must still

produce a great product. But to ensure mass adoption, your followers will be integral in cheering for you, recommending you, and sharing your content because they love you and want to be a part of your success.

Take for example a book. (I know, I use this example a lot because it's clearly what I'm thinking about at the moment.) Reviews are crucial for a book to be successful. Everyone knows books are time-consuming. Everyone has read terrible books, and no one wants to repeat that experience. A book with no reviews is a book that won't get read. You have to launch a book with reviews, or the launch will fail.

But reviews really aren't hard to get for your book, food bar, or video service. You just have to have a following of some kind. Along with scheduling content and buying ad space, interacting in social groups is a powerful and free way to grow your audience.

The process for growing a following using **groups** should take less than five minutes a day. You go into the group, ask a question, find a question that somebody asked, and answer it. You give one piece of quick support to somebody who just shared a goal or a win, then you give one piece of guidance to somebody who obviously needs it. That should take you under five minutes. Then you repeat for the other groups that you're in. You want to make sure that you're focused on the members' needs related to the topic of the group, and that you're providing real value rather than just commenting.

Another powerful way to build a following is to partner with **affiliates** and **social influencers** through paid and exchanged shout-outs and cross-postings. The idea behind this method is to access their following. When influencers and affiliates with a following similar to the one you seek endorse you by mentioning you in their posts, many of their active followers will also follow you. Additionally, if you can get those influencers and affiliates to share your launch, many of their happy followers will also go do the thing you want them to do and do it happily, which is the

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mindset you want them to have. Essentially, their happy followers will act like or actually become your happy followers. From this you will receive all the benefits regarding reviews, recommendations, and shares, which will bring even more happy followers. The growth can be exponential, and there is little in the social world more powerful.

Lastly, go live with another person who has your audience's attention on a topic related to your offering. When you do this, you will get to the front of all the stories posted. Think of customers, friends who know you, attendees, affiliates, etc. All of these people have a following that could be your audience and forever cheerleaders.

Once your following-building strategy is in place and your affiliates and influencers are established, you then begin to hype your product. I'm not saying to jump around and shout about how great your thing is. That, however, may be an interesting *Intrigue* video. Hype is simply getting people excited about what's coming. Remember me saying that it's important to mention your stuff in your value-add posts? This is part of the hype. I do it in this book. Always mention the release of your upcoming projects in an authentically enthusiastic manner. The people watching your content love you and want what you have, otherwise they'd move on. Don't be scared to tell them what's coming. They want and oftentimes need your offering. Make sure they know about it ahead of time so they can help ensure its success.

Post content specific to the upcoming thing you are creating that your followers, influencers, and affiliates can share. Give hints, trailers, and sneak peaks just like new movies do. Private screenings, tasting parties, and other prelaunch events will help drive the excitement. Drive these pieces of content to your audience through all means available. Make sure you hit every available source for at most two weeks during the hype phase. If it goes longer than two weeks, people will forget and lose interest. If you have a sign-up event, you can't launch that part more than a week ahead of the event.

You need everyone to remain excited about your launch. But if you're talking about it for a month or longer, the excitement will be lost and you will not be able to recreate it. You have only one chance, so make it count. Think of a launch as a blitz. A blitz is an all-out campaign intended to overwhelm an opponent. You don't want to think about the people who will love your product as opponents, but what you are overwhelming is your followers' excitement. You want them to be as excited about your offering as you are. You want them to be running alongside you, cheering for you all the way to the goal. This is what the hype phase does. It creates cheerleaders on a massive scale.

*Where there are cheerleaders you have crowds, and
where there are crowds you can't hear crickets.*

Toward the end of the hype phase, introduce **social proof**. Social proof is simply a culmination of reviews and testimonials of people who have experienced your thing before your official launch. Maybe you have a few of your readers do a short video of their experience with your book, or maybe you designed a course that changed people's lives and they give a testimonial of their transformation. Ensure you gather evidence of social proof in your testing and pre-launch phase. The pre-launch phase of this book will be the social posts, and my social proof will be compiled in the comments and reviews of my content in addition to the comments from alpha, beta, and early-access readers.

If you are your product or service, such as a coach, consultant, or another type of service provider, then your best method of closing clients is with a live webinar or event to which your hype and register phases brought your viewers. The live event, as with everything else, should follow the **Intrigue–Story–Go** methodology. It doesn't have to be complicated or salesy.

1. **Intrigue them with your enthusiasm for the thing they are already interested in signing up for or purchasing.**
2. **Give them a relatable story that also shows why they should choose you.**

3. Get them to go do the thing you want them to do.

Do these tasks with genuine enthusiasm and excitement. Unfortunately, due to filters, photo and video editors, and proliferation of online sales, we are all accustomed to fake news, fake content, and fake people. If you avoid becoming one of those people, you will always have a market for your stuff. Otherwise, be prepared to be tossed aside and forgotten.

After your closing *Go* in your live event, you must follow up with an email, chat, or call sequence. The email and chat can be automated, but the call sequence is highly personal and dependent on what you offer. There's not a trick to this; you just have to follow up to remind viewers why they participated in the webinar and why they want your product. Then you give them an easy way to get it. Don't be spammy or salesy, just be authentic, thank them for participating, and remind them. Don't forget to use the **Intrigue–Story–Go** concept in all your messaging.

Mandy's Sales Funnel

I can't write about selling something without discussing sales funnels, which I will do very briefly in an example from my point of view as a potential customer.

Let's say I'm lazy, out of shape, and lacking energy. I'm too tired and too inexperienced to cook my own healthy meals – I don't even know what healthy meals are. I jump on social media while sitting in a recliner, because that's what I do every afternoon just before I turn on the game console when I get home from sitting all day at my work desk and commuting in my car. After I scroll past my friend's cat meme, an image of a fit woman catches my eye. I'm single, which I know is a surprise, considering the description above. I also work with a bunch of dudes, so I may have already been thinking about my lack of interactions with

females. Unfortunately for me, she's standing next to a fit dude who makes me wish I had his abs.

She said Jim, the guy standing with her, was once overweight. But just six months ago he met Mandy, who transformed his life in three easy steps. The text in the post has a similar message but promises more energy. I say to myself, "I have six months, I'm overweight, and I like easy." So, I click the Learn More button, which takes me to her landing page. Mandy intrigues me with the hopes of an easy three-step process to less weight and more energy.

The landing page has much more information than the short video and gives the high-level details of her story, study course, testimonials of people who went through the course, various reasons why she's an expert in the field of healthy lifestyle changes, and a lot of inspiration about her process being easy and fun. The site also includes a five-minute video of her speaking about her passion to help men just like me – men of a certain age who struggle with physical life.

As I scroll down the intriguing text, I learn the back story of her battle with obesity, which led to traumatic health complications. This makes me fearful that I could experience similar health-related issues, so I'm encouraged to read more. I also learn that Mandy has a book that will be a bonus when I sign up for the course, but only if I sign up within the next three days.

The book looks very professional and doesn't seem flimsy. I'm hoping it contains many good ideas that would help me. In addition to the book, I would receive several other bonuses, such as a meal plan, workout strategy, and discounts for a meal-delivery service that help people like me who don't cook. I think that maybe Mandy is an affiliate with the meal-delivery service, but I don't really care if she earns a commission or not.

I get distracted and lose the site before I decide to buy anything. Fortunately for me, I see a similar advertisement when I view a different social feed the next day. I assume it's a retargeting

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campaign, since I interacted with the ad the day before. This time I still don't buy, but I sign up for her free newsletter because she promises to deliver health-improving information on a weekly basis.

I then begin to receive her automated email sequence that is delivered by a mass-email service. Sure enough, that first email comes and delivers a great in-office exercise I could do without looking goofy. It also contains a link that encourages me to purchase the course while the bonus offer is available. Mandy states that the bonuses are offered occasionally, so I'm not as concerned about missing out. But I really want to get started, and if I don't catch this bonus offer, I would have to wait months for the next.

I still don't buy the course but continue to receive encouraging and helpful emails that contain ideas that I start to add to my daily routine. I even cook one of the featured healthy recipes. Through these emails, I begin to feel like I personally know Mandy and trust her advice.

One day I am on one of my social feeds and see Jim, the dude Mandy was with in one of the earlier ads, talking about how he lost the weight. He is so enthusiastic and seems full of energy, which is something I'm still struggling with. Mandy is in the video but just smiles as her former client does most of the talking. It turns out that he generated a strong social following from posting his healthy transformation. I start following him after seeing that post.

He encourages me to get Mandy's book for free. I think to myself, "I didn't buy the course, but maybe I can get out of the book what the course is offering. All I have to do is pay for shipping." So, I follow the link, which takes me to a landing page to buy the book. However, on this page there is another offer says if I pay just \$20 more, I would receive the fitness and nutrition guides. I think for sure this would give me what I need to reach my goals, so I finally decide to become a customer of

Mandy's and enter my information to pay the \$27 for the book and guides.

When I submit that page, it takes me to another page with a video of Mandy thanking me for the purchase and telling me how she's excited to help me achieve my health and fitness goals. She then explains all the extra benefits her course offers over the book and guides, as well as how her products work together. Additionally, because I believed in her enough to buy the book, she says she would give me an extra 15% off the course if I buy it with the purchase I just made. She also says that I could text her if I have more questions. Below the video is a checkbox to add the course to my order, a button to complete my original order, and another button to learn more about the course from Mandy herself.

I, of course, have been receiving Mandy's emails, am following her on social sites, have been on the fence about buying the course, and am extremely interested in the opportunity to speak with her in person. So I click "Chat with Mandy." This activates a chat session in which I am greeted by Mel, Mandy's chat bot. The chat is courteous and quirky, like I would expect from a robot. Mel encourages me to answer a short series of questions about my health and fitness goals. Once that flow is complete, the bot informs me that Mandy will be with me shortly.

Sure enough, Mandy joins the conversation with as much liveliness as you can show through a chat session. The session is quick and to the point because she is already aware of my goals from the previous question session with the bot. We discuss my options and quickly devise the most efficient way for me to utilize her course and additional materials. She also uses this time to talk about her one-on-one coaching sessions and thinks I would make great progress with it.

I tell her I can't afford the coaching sessions. She then suggests peer groups as a great way to achieve health and fitness goals such as mine. She says she has limited room in one of her group training sessions that are half the cost of her one-on-one sessions.

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She requires anyone in group training to first complete the course. Otherwise, I won't be able to add value to the other members, which I understand.

She then offers me a deal I can't refuse. She says if I purchase the course while in the chat session, which includes the book and other materials, she will grant me access to the weekly group training after I complete the first two sessions. I become interested in this offer because I feel she is giving me special treatment. Additionally, she says she will knock 30% off if I pay up front for the course and six months of the group training.

Because I truly believe she really wants me to become a healthier version of myself and is making concessions to get me actively involved, I decide to accept her offer. I buy the course and six months of group training through a link she provides through the chat session.

This is a version of a sales funnel that uses various tools to find your ideal customer and encourage them to purchase not only the product you offer in your ads, but additional products and/or services. As with anything regarding sales, sales funnels are limited only by your creativity to construct them.

Mandy also has a similar funnel that targets women, but since I'm not a woman, that funnel didn't reach me.

My Goal: A 30-Day Book Launch

I like to say that I created a goal to write, publish, **launch, and start distributing a book in a month**. But the reality is that I didn't *want* to write this book. I was *compelled* to write it. I had something to say that could help people achieve their dreams, and I would have been selfish had I kept it to myself. This compulsion resulted in a drive to deliver this message in my unique way through various social media channels. Regardless of whether I wanted to or not, I wrote the book and have taken a little more time with editing and improving it to a degree at which others would enjoy it.

You may say that it doesn't take thirty days to launch a book or anything else. This may be the case if you are a known writer or a known anything. I virtually had no following when I began writing this book. I think I had five hundred or so Facebook friends, fewer than two hundred on Instagram, and just more than one thousand on LinkedIn. I never used Twitter. I have an old, inactive blog. I barely knew what TikTok was. I avoided cameras. I just wasn't into building my social network. I completely understood the value, I just didn't have a purpose. That is, until I began thinking about the launch of this book.

I finished the first draft of this book eleven days after I began, which means exactly what you think it means: I still didn't have a following. "No problem," I said. I've seen people generate an active following in less time than that, plus I know how to do it.

My first task was to write the book. I chose to complete the book first because I've written books before and know that the process can take an awfully long time because you have to depend on several different people for edits, revisions, graphics, and illustrations. Had I started the launch process prior to having the completed book, I would have put the success of the launch at risk by dragging it out too long. Plus, I wrote it while quarantined and couldn't do the filming required for the content.

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The idea for the book came to me as all ideas do, just like I mentioned in the first section. It just arrived while I was in the middle of another project. I quickly wrote down the idea, which snowballed into the outline I used. My **Identify** step was then complete. I tried to push the project aside but was overly compelled to continue, which was evidently the right thing to do because I finished the first draft in record time – for me at least.

As quickly as I wrote it, the process was never easy. I had to constantly adjust my **Attitude** to maintain an **Attitude to continue** and **Attitude to finish** the work, because as much as I love to get a story out and to help people, I certainly don't like the time it takes to do it. Plus, as with any project – especially a time-consuming book – you never know if the end result will be the quality you expect nor do you know if you'll even complete it. I was constantly feeling neglectful of other projects important to me. But I continued on and gained the right mindset to finish. This book is the product of that effort.

This book went through all the stages I mentioned in the writing: idea generation; continuous attitude adjustment; goal-setting; outline development; first draft; editing, which began with beta readers who were also my initial test phase; further drafts; more testing with different readers; more revisions; the ultimate decision to bring it to the market; professional developmental, line, and copyediting; a cover design competition; and finally the social campaign and launch.

This book, as I've said before, wasn't written to make money. If the launch is successful and my social following does grow as expected, it will provide a platform that I and others who think like me can use to help many people around the world solve problems and achieve their great ideas.

This launch gets the book in the hands of people who will hopefully share the information and knowledge. It will also hopefully result in positive reviews, which will in turn encourage even more people to get the book and complete great goals. The

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more people I can help, the more amazing achievements will be brought to this world. I'm all about progress, and we can't get there if we don't know how, are too scared to act, or are too lazy to exert the effort required to finish.

When you go through your launch process for your great idea and scale it to the market share or level of success you initially expected, understand that this process can be scaled to any level you desire. This may require higher-level influencers, a better ad campaign managed by professional marketers, more education and experience that can be acquired from high-level masterminds, or an executive management team that can take your organization to the next level.

Do More Than You Think You Can

I realize I included many different concepts and strategies in these brief pages – and not all will apply to every goal you set for yourself. Each of these topics has volumes written on it you can find elsewhere. This book wasn't intended to be a detailed, step-by-step guide on any of these subjects. I assumed that if you're reading or listening to this, then you have experienced other more detailed works on each of the subjects.

My intention was to combine many of the things I've learned into a **structured process** with relevant examples that reminds you of that last book you read on mindset or inspires you to think about that digital marketing mastery course you completed last summer. What I describe in this book has helped me achieve the great things which I spend my time on, and I hope it helps you, too.

When you set out to start, continue, or bring to the world a project, you must know **you can do way more than you think you can**; reach **higher levels of success** than you ever thought

possible; and live a life with **more happiness, vibrance, and love** than you can imagine.

You can have all you want out of life, but **only if you choose** this for yourself.

Making excuses won't get you there. Wasting time on bad ideas won't get you there. Complaining, criticizing, and condemning won't get you there. Sitting on your couch watching other people live exciting lives won't get you there. All of these practices just waste your time, and time is your only asset. Everything else can be replaced.

You can do so much more with that time than you think you can. You can positively impact so many more lives than you ever thought was possible. You can be a greater version of yourself for the rest of your days on this beautiful planet – if you choose to do so.

Bill Gates once said that we overestimate what we can do in a year and underestimate what we can do in ten. He is wrong. I believe

we always underestimate what we can do.

I don't believe any of us thinks we can do more than we actually can. I believe our minds are limiting and we always set the bar too low. Our minds are wired for safety, and failing is logged as damage. "It's a bad thing," we tell ourselves.

It simply isn't true that failure is bad – or good, for that matter. Failing simply means we didn't mix the proper quantities, we got the wires crossed, we didn't put in enough effort, or we didn't plan properly – and in each of those cases, there is something we can learn. If any step in this process (especially the one where you determine your *why* and your *belief* in your ability to reach the finish line) is out of whack, then the possibility of an incomplete project or a goal unreached increases. But that doesn't have to be a bad thing.

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You've no doubt heard that failure is acceptable and a normal part of the process, but it always feels bad. I don't care who you are, what you do, or what you were trying to accomplish. Failure feels bad – and that's okay.

What you do next is what determines your fate.

That failure can't be undone. It happened. You then choose to continue with the next step, or you choose to quit, or you choose to wallow in that low energy significantly longer than is required. It makes no sense to me to relive moments I labeled as "bad." It happened and felt horrible. But then it ended, and I don't want to feel it again. Remember what I told myself when in deep depression: "I choose love." We have choices.

*"You have to feel the pain to lock it in your brain."
– Slade Lee*

Paul Chek calls it the pain teacher. However you choose to label it, it's your job to use that experience to do better next time. To avoid feeling that way again, I pay really close attention to what I did. I study the process I used to get the result. I then do something different. But I don't wallow, because I don't like feeling that way and

no one else cares.

It really sucks to realize no one cares whether you fail or succeed. But that reality is freeing for all of us who care what others think, which is just about everyone. After I fail, I take immediate action, which may be making an adjustment, completely starting the project over, or scrapping the project and putting my effort and energy into something closer to my heart. Take care in what you choose. As the Guardian of the Holy Grail said to Indiana Jones, "**You must choose, but choose wisely.**" And we know what happens when you choose poorly.

My endeavor here doesn't end with this book. The reality is that I'll probably give away more than I'll sell. We really need a grander goal than to just sell a book or whatever it is we have created. While I wrote this book so you could learn and grow from my knowledge and experience, I really don't expect a large number of sales, nor do I expect to make any significant money from it.

Out of all the books on bookshelves most sell fewer than four hundred copies. With that statistic, you can't write a book with the intention of making a living from it, especially if you're new at it like I am. I wrote this book because I have knowledge to share, and I'm doing everyone who is looking for this knowledge a disservice if I don't get it to them.

The book serves as a symbol that I'm someone who understands how to achieve things. Anyone who is looking for guidance and direction in how to gain the skills to achieve anything will find me and my content. They will find me because I put forth the effort to plan each step and execute flawlessly without getting distracted, quitting due to lost momentum, or talking myself out of it because I couldn't sustain the required attitude to build a quality product or finish.

What I hope to get out of this journey is to inspire people to complete their great projects and offer them to the world. I think the way society is structured limits creativity and suppresses great ideas. I strive to bring ideas to life through inspiration and instruction as well as investments in innovation. I look forward to the near future when I sit with you in an investment capacity as you detail the inner workings of a project you completed.

The concepts and steps I lay out in this book are not all-encompassing by any means. The social landscape is ever-changing. You must continue to build knowledge and grow spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

You must continue **Identifying** great ideas and recognizing opportunities. Periodically assess what you want and what you do

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not want. Maintain an **Attitude for Achievement**. Then when you want something you do not yet have, you build your **Strategy** to have it and simply follow the steps to success!

But more importantly you must continue to strive to add value to this world, because ultimately when we're done – when we take our last breath, when we say our last words – all that will be left is what we did. Let's all make for certain that on that day, hopefully far in the future, we are proud of the actions we take today.

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Afterword...

Michael J Lee

On Creativity

We combine creativity with other steps in the process discussed in these pages to narrow our focus and structure our projects in a way that makes the most sense to us as we progress.

I didn't specifically mention a creative step in this process even though it is the most important step. I didn't mention it because creativity is neither a process nor something you can teach.

Creativity is what remains within us when all our insecurities are gone. When we are free from fear, ego, desire, discipline, ambition, and the general striving for anything, creativity can emerge.

Creativity is freedom from conditioning. Creativity is when we are our true selves expressing our innate talents.

Creativity is related to receiving ideas and recognizing opportunities. Creativity is related to achieving an attitude to achieve. Creativity is related to developing a strategy and completing your great thing. Creativity is how you conceived the goal to begin with.

Creativity, like emotions (including happiness) and everything else we interpret, is already in each of us. We must simply choose when and to what extent to express it.

I didn't describe the creative steps because that is something you must discover on your own. You must enter a total creative state in order to produce the optimal outcome for your goal. Otherwise, you may have less than spectacular results.

Your creative state must not be influenced by an arbitrary time frame, the opinions of others, or fear of any sort. It must be free to roam and discover whatever it discovers. It must be free to create. You must be free to fully realize its intense power. The only way this can happen is if you are free from fear and social

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conditioning. You must unlearn all you have learned from teachers, parents, friends, family, politicians, preachers, and gurus – at least attempt to leave it all as you enter a total creative state.

Meditation can help get you there, but most likely you, like me and everyone else, are burdened by years of misdirected teaching, mental and emotional abuse, manipulation, brainwashing, neuro-linguistic programming, and punishment. Once you can find freedom from this societal, familial, and environmental conditioning, then you can be free. Only then will you find creativity.

Mandy's Health and Fitness Course

The **Identify, Attitude, Strategy, Sell It!** approach applies to **Achieving Anything**.

For Mandy's new business, she knew she wanted to educate, and she would need courses/classes to impart her information to clients.

How did Mandy create her course? Here is Mandy's Strategy:

Mandy can help you understand both the **Identify** and the **Strategy** steps – and how it might look on paper. Bear with me if none of your wildest goals involves starting a business. Adapt what you are reading to your own What, Why and End desires.

Mandy's **What** is that she wants to start a business teaching people to be healthy. Broadly speaking, she

wants to solve the problem of obesity and poor health choices that people don't know they're making.

More specifically, she

wants to solve the problem of obesity through nutrition and exercise by providing nutrition guidelines, why people should eat with health goals in mind, and recipes using her nutrition advice as well as a detailed exercise regimen designed for different athletic, age, and weight-loss goals.

Mandy's **Why** is so powerful because it comes from a personal place related to a difficult time in her life. In her process, she realizes not only that she desires to 1) positively affect the lives of everyone who consumes her course and related products, but she

also wants to 2) have more time with her growing family as well as to 3) provide financially for herself throughout her life.

Mandy's **end** is three-fold.

She understands that health issues are a primary concern and those concerns are expected to persist throughout her lifetime. She is preparing her health and fitness services for the long term, and hopefully, if she consistently executes well, she will produce multiple courses and masterminds while maintaining a steady flow of coaching clients for as long as she is capable.

Afterward, she'll hand her coaching clients off to her team of coaches licensed under her health and fitness umbrella corporation. You see, Mandy is ambitious.

Mandy's Resource List for her business:

- Video instruction
 - o Content
 - Knowledge transfer
 - Psychology of health
 - Proper science-based nutrition
 - Proper movement for age and athletic abilities
 - Food and nutrition
 - Fitness movements
 - o Camera
 - o Lights
 - o Usage rights music
 - o Location
 - o Video-editing software, training, and editor
- Physical text guides and book
 - o Content
 - More detailed version of psychology/nutrition
 - Diagrams and schematics of proper movement

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- A stand-alone booklet for quick reference
 - Nutrition plan
 - A stand-alone booklet for quick reference
- Time
- Voice recorder
- Transcribe service
- Possibly a ghostwriter
- Editor
- Cover designs
- Website
 - Member portal
 - Ecommerce
 - Web designer
 - Web builder
 - Hosting service
 - Domain name
- Social presence
 - Social media account set-up
 - Style guide
 - Freelance hire
 - Private social group
 - Content creation
 - Post-schedule
- Selling
 - Email automation service
 - Chat automation service
 - Social scheduler with ad creation
 - Ad account set-up

Mandy's Haves/Wants List

Haves	Wants	Where to get wants
Fitness/nutrition/psychology knowledge	Video-creation capabilities	Outsource and inhouse
Proper science-based nutrition knowledge	Additional health psychology knowledge	Online mastermind and identified health and nutrition psychologist course
Knowledge about proper movement for different ages and athletic abilities	High-quality camera	Online sale this weekend; also, will look at online classifieds
Content for book and stand-alone materials	Lights for shooting video and taking pictures	Purchase online
Voice recorder on phone to record book content to send to transcribe service	Usage-rights music for fitness videos	Purchase online
Social accounts: FB/IG/YT/LI	Location to shoot videos	??
	Video-editing capabilities	Local meet-up Freelance site
	Nutrition guide design	Identified online freelance site
	Movement guide design	Identified online freelance site

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Time to shoot videos	Reduce in-person coaching and move to virtual until complete
Transcribe service	Identified online
Ghostwriter - if I get stuck	Online freelance site dedicated to writing
Book editor	Online freelance site dedicated to writing
Website with member portal, ecommerce, and blog	Easy website builders or professional through freelance site or referral from a friend
Private social group	Create group linked to my business page
Content scheduler Email automation Chat automation	Online research

If, like Mandy, you want financial abundance and security through a business, you next determine your target market. Here is how Mandy went about it:

To **identify** her target market, Mandy (like any business owner) determines through an analysis of her social followers that middle-aged women are who she relates to best.

Furthermore, she posted two surveys in a Facebook group that showed an overwhelming percentage of the group favor mid-priced, in-fashion clothing brands and also make health-conscious food-buying decisions over price-based decisions. This tells her

she won't have to be a low-price leader in her product and can effectively create her messaging to appeal to these and other women like them. She knows where they shop, what they buy, and how price-sensitive they are. But more importantly, she knows they are health-conscious, which is her offering.

She finds through brief research that there are approximately 43 million middle-aged women in the United States. To determine a market share, she could run a hypothesis on the effectiveness of advertising conversions for her target market and establish, based on an estimated budget, that she could possibly reach 20% of this group. Only 1% of those may interact with her ads while approximately 3% of that 1% actually buy her products. However, she chose to use a financial equivalent for her goal – which is to double her current income of \$50,000 per year in the first year and to quadruple it by year five while helping a thousand people reach their health goals.

She also asked herself the question mentioned earlier in the *Who is Your Audience* section

Mandy also needs to dive deeper into the educational aspect of the business and create a series of lessons that she presents in a logical flow to clients. She will utilize the Story-Teach-Tool concept – something I learned from Dean Graziosi. It's an effective teaching method that is a more creative version of “tell them what you will tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them.”

You start with a relevant story that intrigues your audience to listen. Ensure the lesson you intend to teach is included in the story. After your interesting story, teach your audience the details of what they need to know that was lacking in your creative story. Afterward, give them the tools required to go do the thing you just taught them. Much of the writing I've done in this book follows this method.

Using the Story-Teach-Tool concept, Mandy's course outline might look something like this:

The *Always Healthy* Course

- Module 1 – (The Story)
 - The Journey
 - What, Why, End
 - Mindset Matter
 - Roadblocks to Success
 - Do the Work – Effort and Momentum
 - Desirable Results
- Module 2 – (Teach)
 - What Is a Healthy Lifestyle?
 - Psychology of Health
 - Advertisements, Shame, and Peer Pressure
 - What the Professionals Say
 - ??
 - Myths of Proper Nutrition
 - Isms: Vegetarianism, Veganism, and Carnivorism
 - What Are Nutrient-Dense Foods (NDFs)
 - Myths of Proper Movement
- Module 3 – (Tool)
 - How to Think About Health
 - Resources
 - Apps
 - Trackers
 - Social Group
 - Goal-Setting
 - Calendar
 - Journal
 - How to Properly Eat
 - The Guide
 - How to Properly Move
 - The Guide

She'll use this outline to create (or commission a writer to create) the text copy to use in her videos and text deliverables. Each video will be split into a variety of pieces that will be used in advertisements, as well as the promotional and value-adds for all her social engagement.

The splits will be intentional toward her intended audience and topic. For example, she may split out a section discussing stubborn weight loss, which she will use as a value-add post in the Stubborn Weight Loss Facebook group. She may split off a section discussing a yummy keto-vegan recipe that she uses for an ad to draw more followers to her Keto-Vegan Instagram profile. She may cut out a section that discusses exercises for third-term pregnancies for an ad to bring women into her Mommies Only membership website. Additionally, the videos can be transcribed into text to create a book, white pages, blog post, quote graphics, tweets, and ad copy among others. The number of pieces of content you can repurpose is limited only to your imagination.

When she completed her outline, Mandy recognized a missing piece of the psychology module for her course. She identified an online course that will fill in this blank. She's working on a tight budget to produce this course, so rather than signing up and paying for the course, she decided to direct-message the course creator to see if there are any other options. They had a great conversation regarding his affiliate program, and he agreed to give her access to the course free of charge in exchange for her allowing him to perform the psychology module in her course. This is a win-win for both because she needs the information and he needs the exposure to people in his target market. Additionally, they both agreed to do a series of live videos to deepen their individual networks.

Without completing the outline, she may not have recognized the missing piece or left it out altogether, resulting in a less interesting product.

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She then videoed the respective modules, ads, and b-roll. She hired freelancers to assemble the videos in a professional manner, develop a website on an integrated platform that caters to education-based businesses, and create and schedule social content and ads. She left herself to continue to coach her high-end, one-on-one clients, interact in social groups, lead group trainings, and perform all other aspects that she doesn't outsource for her rapidly growing business.

Quotes

As They Appear in the Text

(Quotes without names are the author's own)

“Remain present in the moment so that it can instill valuable awareness and lessons that stay with you moving forward.”

“Have you ever had an idea that you thought might change the world and it did? If not, what happened to it?” – Reem Kharbat

“Look, if you had one shot, or one opportunity to seize everything you ever wanted, in one moment. Would you capture it, or just let it slip?” – Eminem

“Everyone experiences life from their own personal point of view.”

“Substantial criticism for your projects will come from those closest to you – it’ll hurt, and you’ll probably believe them.”

“Nothing worth doing is easy, or everyone would do it.”

“You’ve got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle. As with all matters of the heart, you’ll know when you find

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it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So, keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.”
– Steve Jobs

“Find something someone wants and make it available to them.”

“Big problems equal big opportunities.”

“Your why must be more important than the discomfort of delivering the message.”

“Why would you trade your precious, irreplaceable time for anything other than something that will positively transform your life or that of others?”

“Live on the edge of chaos.”

“To begin, you simply must choose to do so.”

“The most important thing to do once you complete the first step is to reset your attitude to a state that will enable you to tackle the next step.”

“Ask yourself, ‘What is my current attitude toward achievement?’”

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“Do not be concerned with the fruit of your action – just give attention to the action itself. The fruit will come of its own accord.”

“The goal of life is not to merely get to the end. It is to enjoy all the intricate details it brings to us in each beautiful moment.”

“Our goals, like life itself, will bring numerous obstacles. And again like life, we must handle these obstacles along the way, understanding many of those blocks will be our own thinking.”

“You have a powerful voice. Your unique audience needs to hear the message from you and only you. If you have something to say, say it. If you have a product that will help many, build it. If you have love to give, offer it.”

“It’s better to have loved and lost than to f it all up because you were too scared to open your heart. Just get in there, give it all you have, and enjoy the ride.”

“I want what you have. The world needs what you are building. People desire the love you want to share. Keep learning and pushing forward. Keep the momentum of greatness going project after project.”

“Leave it all here when you leave this Earth. Don’t take any of your greatness to the grave. Don’t be afraid to dance. Don’t leave your song unsung. Get your voice out there in any way you can. Today there are more ways to do that than ever. The world needs you. I need you. Now go do it!”

Achieve

“I offer a service people need and desire. I am doing them a disservice if I don’t get it to them.”

“Without ambition one starts nothing. Without work one finishes nothing. The prize will not be sent to you. You have to win it.”
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

“You can’t always get what you want. But if you try sometimes, you find, you get what you need.” – Mick Jagger

“Complainers always find a problem to every solution.”

“I must be unattached to the outcome when faced with a decision to act.”

Choices

“You may feel as if you actually have choices to make about where you want to go and what it takes to get there. But in reality, it’s a decision to finish and be successful or not. Anyone who runs a marathon will tell you that the last few miles are the hardest. Anyone who quits running before the finish line will tell you that they were instantly relieved – and it’s true. But days later, when the physical pain is gone, when they read about the people who finished ahead of them – who kept running – they will have a new pain.

Regret.

The only choice you have is to succeed.

Michael J Lee

Years from now when you look back at your life, all that will be left is what you did – not what you could have done if only this or that happened. If you are someone who believes big – then you don't have a 'choice' about how you finish.

None.

This life rewards people who do it right. This life has demands – you do them and succeed, or you don't do them and you struggle. There is no middle area.”

– Trevor Moawad and Michael Lee

“Rehearsing what you see, playing it over and over in your mind until it becomes as real to you as your life right now.” – Emmitt Smith

“The future doesn't exist, and I create it with each next action I take knowing that next action is the correct one.”

“Build a new reality that makes the existing reality obsolete.”

“Happiness is not a treasure to be found. It is in us already.”

“Love, abundance and joy live on the other side of your biggest fear.”

“If you get depressed, be happy that you are depressed and allow the depression to be. Then suddenly the depression will disappear and there will be a breakthrough.” – Osho

Achieve

“What is important is to be inwardly very simple which is to have a mind not clogged with beliefs, with fears, with innumerable wants, for only such a mind is capable of real thinking, of exploration and discovery.” — Jiddu Krishnamurti

“... depression is a funny and deceiving thing, that is absolutely something that can leave. It takes some subtle shifts slowly in our thinking, a little momentum in our physiology, a little here and there, forward momentum, even the smallest of steps forward is enough to get us out of the pit, one small shift at a time to reset those things.” – Khristena Schuzer

“Observe the struggle and watch it dissipate. It is not real.”

“Look at this human, experiencing this human emotion.”

“When you participate in observing your mind without giving explanation or judging it, then you remove yourself from the experience.”

“Watch how your mind thinks and you disassociate yourself from the emotional thought. In this moment you have power over your feeling about the thought or memory and can associate to it any feeling you choose.”

“When the things that prevent happiness are gone, happiness is there – you won’t have to seek it.”

“This feeling isn’t serving me.”

“Imagine it all beautiful and happy.”

“Forty-five thousand negative thoughts a day for however many years we’ve been having them can etch incredibly deep beliefs that seem impossible to overcome.”

“This moment is beautiful and happy.”

“The thing you’re going through now will eventually end, and the thing you act on today could be the start of something great.”

“Pain ends. Achievement lasts forever.”

“Better is always better.”

“I choose love over sadness. I choose love over anger. I choose love.”

“There is always love, you simply must look for it. Not in the sense that it is hidden but training your mind to see it out in the open – in the person next to you, in the grasshopper at the door, in the tree in the meadow. Love constantly flows all around and through us. Feel it, taste it, bring it alive in your life.”

Giving love is a selfless action that benefits our souls and is necessary for a vibrant life.

“Decide what you are good at and let others to do the rest.”

Achieve

“We get out what we put in.”

“If you just try, you aren’t really putting forth the effort required to succeed, and you’ll get poor results.”

“Believe in the end result before you see it.”

“Don’t get sucked into unimportant problems. Focus on what is truly important.”

“You have to believe that you’re about to f’n die!”

“Do you know what resources and knowledge you need to reach your end goal?”

“Compress the knowledge they have into a short period of time.”

“This is what you do to be successful. This is what you do to achieve anything. Be flexible, stay calm, make thoughtful adjustments, focus only on the next step, maintain course, and achieve your goal.”

“Many of life’s failures are people who do not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” – Thomas Edison

Michael J Lee

“Most brains will take every chance to avoid work.”

“Focus on each next step but don’t try to get it right on the first go – because you won’t.”

“Developing an attitude to fail helps you bounce back quickly and refocus your energy.”

“Just get it the F out there!”

“We rarely make wholly logical decisions about what we do; instead, we choose based on how it makes us feel.”

“We live in a three-second world.”

“We die a thousand metaphorical deaths. Resurrect those experiences in your stories and you’ll become immortal with your audiences.” – Park Howell

“Anyone who can educate, entertain, and inspire with their stories will be immensely successful.”

“You have to put in at least as much effort in getting your message out as you did to finish the entire project.”

“Enter the conversations her audience is already having in their heads.”

Achieve

“Create scarcity and the feeling of missing out.”

“Let them sell you on why they should do what you want them to do.”

“Where there are cheerleaders you have crowds, and where there are crowds you can’t hear crickets.”

“We always underestimate what we can do.”

“What you do next is what determines your fate.”

“You have to feel the pain to lock it in your brain.” – Slade Lee

“You must continue to strive to add value to this world, because ultimately when we’re done – when we take our last breath, when we say our last words – all that will be left is what we did. Let’s all make for certain that on that day, hopefully far in the future, that we are proud of the actions we take today.”

The Achieve Anything Outline

The outline below is what I used to write this book as well as build recent businesses and complete important goals. I hope in the preceding pages you have seen how to use this process to **Achieve Anything!**

Identify

- Capture the idea and recognize the opportunities
- Believe it is possible
- What do you want to do?
 - o Broad
 - o Specific
- Why do you want to do it?
- What is your end goal?
- Who is your target market – if applicable?
- What is your target market share?

Attitude

- What attitude do you have right now?
- What attitude do you need to begin?
- What attitude do you need to continue?
- What attitude do you need to finish?

Strategy

- **Goal-Setting**
 - o Set major end goal
 - Set mini-goals
 - Set micro-goals
- Identify and attain resources
- Haves/Wants List
- What knowledge do you have that can help you complete this project?
 - o Assign knowledge to applicable steps
- What do you need to know?

Achieve

- Assign need-to-know knowledge to applicable steps
- How do you get the need-to-know information?
 - Assign how to get knowledge for applicable need-to-know steps
- Who else knows what you need to do?
 - Assign person/people to applicable how-to-get-knowledge steps
- Who has the experience to help?
 - Assign person/people to applicable who-can-help steps
- Organize your knowledge
- Do Not Do List

Build Your Project

- Build first prototype, draft, etc.
 - Modify prototype
 - Adjust parameters
 - Additional resources
 - Proof of Concept/advanced draft
- Test
 - What resources are needed for official tests?
 - Who can help?
 - Where to test?
 - How to test?
 - Record results for marketing
- Scrap or sell
 - Analyze the testing data and make a decision
 - Scrap
 - Testing wasn't positive, and the idea has a high probability of failure
 - Sell
 - Testing confirmed your hypothesis
 - Prepare project for the market
 - Packaging
 - Design
 - Logos
 - Create sellable product
 - Resources required

Sell It!

- Advertising and marketing
 - Tools and content
 - Content

Michael J Lee

- Storytelling
 - Intrigue-Story-Go
 - Story-Teach-Tool
 - 20% relatability, 80% what they need
 - Let them sell you on why they should be a client, buy your stuff, listen to your music, etc.
- Video
- Images
- Blog
- Sales copy
- Website
- Social tools
 - Affiliates/influencers
 - Social platforms
- People
 - Sales force
 - Customer service
 - Web/social managers
- Launch process
 - Affiliates/influencers
 - Hype
 - Social proof
 - Register
 - Live webinar
 - Sell
 - Sell again
- Expand sales or skills
 - Do you need more resources to expand sales?
 - Do you need more knowledge to expand sales?
 - People and companies
 - Advertising/marketing consultants
 - Advertising/marketing companies
 - Hire professionals
 - Affiliates/influencers
 - Training
 - Courses
 - Masterminds
 - Books

Achieve

- Have you reached your target market share?
- Can you expand market share past your initial target?
 - What is the market saturation of the product?
 - Is there a time limit for the product or service?
- Can another leader expand market share past your initial target?
 - Experienced CEO
 - Experienced sales development team/leader
- Exit strategy
 - Merge with competitor
 - Sell to employees, investor, or competitor
 - Wind down

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About the Author

Early in his career, Michael became a successful professional investor, taking large, calculated risks in concentrated positions that afforded him the financial ability to direct his future fate rather than working for someone else's dreams.

With this experience he consulted with companies producing billions of dollars in sales and managing tens of billions of dollars in physical and financial assets.

He graduated with degrees in finance and information systems from the University of Georgia. Michael is a CFA Charterholder and member of the CFA Institute. He previously held a board position with the CFA Society of Atlanta and is currently a member of the CFA Society of Atlanta and the CFA Society of Jacksonville.

Today, he is an entrepreneur, author, speaker, and a prolific investor in companies, organizations, and funds with the intention to generate a measurable, beneficial social or environmental impact alongside a financial return.

He has dedicated his time to solving big problems through innovative solutions while guiding individuals to acquire the attitude to achieve their dreams.

Michael enjoys spending his time with his energetic sons in addition to volunteering with various local and international organizations, most recently as an International Disaster Response Team member, which allows him to travel the world helping those in need.