SKILLS | LEADERSHIP PERSONAL GROWTH | VISION

Being The Best You Can Be

One of the most unique and powerful gifts we all have is the ability to better ourselves every day, in every way.

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Take a moment to imagine where our society would be, if we (people and businesses) allowed ourselves to believe we have no need for improvement. If we settled for “good enough,” instead of reaching for excellence. If in the afterglow of great success, we adopted an attitude of “We’ve arrived!” and neglected to ask, “How can we improve and reach the next level?”

One of the most unique and powerful gifts we all have is the ability to better ourselves every day, in every way.

It is the ultimate opportunity to have the emotional, intellectual and physical faculties to identify and execute change. And it pays huge dividends, in both our personal and professional lives.

We can study a little every day, either by reading, listening to or watching something that will support us to make shifts in how we take care of ourselves and our future. Even the smallest steps can quickly compound into vast improvements in:

- Who we are * How we act * How we react
- How we attract

The Japanese call it Kaizen... or “constant improvement.”

Let’s look at some areas of our lives where small daily improvements can add up to make huge differences over time:

YOUR HEALTH

What could be more important? Take care of your body; it is the only one you get. It could last well past 100 years of vitality and wellness. Here are a few things we can do every day:

- Make one better decision about what you eat. Drop the sugar or salt you usually add to your food. Enjoy one less beer, or one more helping of fiber or greens. Move away from white flour. Stop buying the things at the grocery store that do not support your health. If they are not in the kitchen, you are not as likely to eat them. Rethink how you look at food: from a source of pleasure, to a source of necessary fuel. Food is fuel. Bad fuel causes engine failure. Good fuel wins races.

- Drink more water. Put a gallon of water in the refrigerator and make it your goal to consume it every day.

- Add one more physical activity. Walk the stairs instead of taking the elevator. Walk to the mailbox. Hire a personal trainer. Stretch. Do something fun and physical every day.

- Take time to relax... even 20 minutes a day can make a difference. Give yourself permission to lie in the hammock or take a quiet bath.

YOUR WEALTH

This is your ticket to freedom, fun, adventure and contribution. Anyone can become wealthy. The level *you* need for freedom is different from others. Find your number. How much in assets and income do you want in order to live life to the fullest? Then do the following every day:

Add value to YOU as a professional. It does not matter if you are a chicken chopper or a rocket scientist... add value to your income-earning self. Learn something new that has value to your clients or employer. Add a new skill. Develop a new distinction. Form a new habit. Offer more of your professional self than you have before. You will earn more every year.

Save more. Save more of what you spend money on now. Look for ways to get the same value for less money. Buy a three-year-old car versus brand new. Eat out once less each month. Exchange full cable services for the basic. Anyone can figure out how to save $100 a month off just his

or her existing expenses. One hundred dollars saved and invested over 30 years equals hundreds of thousands in wealth. Just $100 a month!

Invest more in appreciating assets, and less in depreciating assets. Appreciating assets include real estate, home improvements, your professional value, stocks and bonds. Depreciating assets include autos, entertainment, gifts and impulse purchases. Just by shifting a few hundred dollars you will add hundreds of thousands to your net worth.

Build a royalty residual income. Even when built part time, this residual income adds significant wealth. Five hundred dollars a month in residual income is, in itself, "worth" $50,000. The added $500 a month you invest in real estate or stocks can be worth hundreds of thousands over time. Residual income can come from a solid Network Marketing business, an online business, or writing a book about something for which you have a passion.

HOW YOU ACT

Are you kind? Are you compassionate? Are you generous? Do you give credit to others? Do you speak encouraging words? Do you speak about people's strengths to others? Do you work enthusiastically? Do you do what you say you will do? Do you tell your truth when it could be a contribution? Do you listen to empower others?

How you and I act creates our value in the world... to the people around us like family, friends, coworkers and clients.

> **When we act with excellence, speak with excellence, listen with excellence, and behave as excellent as we can in the moment, we are valued, we are attractive, we are trusted and we are loved.**

Do these things every day to improve how you act:

- Make a commitment to say something kind every day... then increase it to every hour.
- Make the same commitment to do something kind every day. "Pay it forward."

- Make the same commitment to listen to someone... really listen to what they are saying, what they are not saying, what they really want to say, and how they feel. Listen to someone at a therapeutic level once a day.
- Audit your conversations. Develop the habit of asking yourself after each statement, “What was my motive in saying what I said and how I said it? Was it to contribute to the person, or to make myself look good?” Then ask yourself how you feel about someone who speaks to make themselves look good, more important than you, or more “right” than you.
- Make a bold request every day that will improve a relationship, business productivity, or will improve another person. For example, make a bold request that a friend or loved one stop speaking negatively about him or herself – battering their own poor self esteem. Or make a request that your spouse do something that you know will improve your love and relationship. When bold requests are made out of the context of support and improvement, they are often the tipping point that leads a person to act with excellence.

HOW YOU REACT

If actions are those things we think about (however briefly) before doing them, then reactions are those things we do without thinking. They are our built-in boomerang, over which we may feel we have no control or personal responsibility. Most people react in negative and destructive ways.

We can develop new “reactions” by developing new interpretations and habits.

Here are some examples:

When someone speaks down to you, what do you think and how do you feel about it?What is your reaction? Do you feel they think you are smaller and less than them? Do you think they may be right? Do you react with anger and retaliation, or do you shut down? How would it change your reaction if, when someone spoke down to you, you “interpreted” that they, themselves, feel small and could really use a lift. This new interpretation gives you a perfect opportunity to engage in improving how you act (See steps 1-5 above).

When someone is late, do you think they disrespected you? How do you retaliate? What if instead, you interpreted their lateness as due to a life in overwhelm, a sick child, or someone being late for them? Do you see how that changes your reaction and gives another opportunity for steps 1-5 above?

When someone in authority tells you “no” or tells you to do something versus asking, how do you react? What if you interpreted that this leader is working on their path of developing compassionate leadership; that they have more responsibilities than they can handle and they need support? Again, see steps 1-5 above.

HOW YOU ATTRACT

Attraction is that mysterious energy that brings us a lucky outcome... the client or order we needed just in time; the idea that breaks the log jam and propels us into massive productivity; or the person that just popped into our life and filled a void, either romantically or personally. We all know people who seem to hit the jackpots of life, over and over again. We all know people who seem to always land on their feet and are always running with the wind towards their goals.

The lucky ones are those who were gifted by their parents with belief in themselves, such that they see every opportunity as a probability and inevitability. Everything can get done and should get done. No obstacle is too high or too wide. They deserve – not from an egotistical viewpoint, but from a spiritual abundance viewpoint – everything they choose to earn. They are the lucky ones. They are the one percent. About one out of 100 of us had parents lucky or wise enough to pass that gift on.
Now For the Rest of Us…

> **There is a path, proven a billion times, which will bring any of us the luck in life we so richly deserve. It is a simple path of vision and self motivation.**

It goes like this…

AUTHENTIC CORE VALUES

We each have a set of “rules” that makes us uniquely who we are. These rules define what is most important to us in life... what gives us life. To us, these rules are as essential as air and water. We must have them to be all we can be. Values are just labels for these rules... labels of the things we hold dear to us. There are no limits to the labels you can place on what you consider to be your authentic core values. Here are just a few examples:

Love Fun… Adventure… Family… Spirituality… Leadership… Success… Discovery… Friendship… Excellence… Abundance… Honesty… Creativity...

The first step in the path, is to learn through self-discovery, self-listening and asking the right questions.

What are your authentic core values? You will want to list them, keep them visually present, and refer to them as often as possible.

IMPOSED VALUES

We each also have a set of "rules" or imposed values. These are rules to live by handed down by authority figures in our lives, usually during our formative years (ages 1-5). Imposed values are *not* our authentic rules, but usually our parents’ rules; either authentic for them, or imposed by their parents (our grandparents). Here are some examples:

Hard Work… Education… Responsibility… Cleanliness… Success… Family… Leadership… Spirituality… Security… Acceptance… Safety...

As you will notice, imposed values can also be authentic core values. What is authentic for one person, may be imposed for another. And just because your parents “insisted” that you live by a rule, does not mean it is not authentic for you. Identifying what is authentic for you is something only you can discover for yourself.

To capitalize on the laws of attraction, you will want to move away from living your life by any imposed rules. For when we live by imposed rules,

you and I are always in conflict, always fighting, always resisting... and this is not the energy that attracts anything good.

> **Learn your imposed values, write them down and create a life plan to move away from them. This is not easy, nor will it usually happen quickly. And, it must happen for the real power you possess in your life to show up for you.**

GIFTS

Each of us has also been fortunate to be given gifts. Gifts are those attributes that come naturally to us, and which contribute to other people. Gifts are not truly gifts if they cannot be contributed to the benefit of others. Examples of gifts are:

Love… Friendship… Leadership… Creativity… Safety… Joy… Listening… Honesty… Fun...

Learn your gift (or gifts) and again, write them down and keep them close to your daily living.

> **Once you know who you are (authentic values and gifts) you are ready to imagine what you want to do with your life, what you want to have in your life and, most importantly, who you want to be.**

This is as simple as writing a story... a story of how your life would be, could be and will be, if you could have it all.

Writing this story is like writing the screenplay of your life. It can be one page long or 100 pages long. It does not really matter, because for those diligent and deserving souls who get this far in knowing themselves, the rest is easy. The rest, as they say, is almost out of your hands.

WRITE YOUR STORY
As you write it, embrace the authentic YOU that has been uncovered. Write it with all the imagination of Walt Disney and then...

Learn to Believe It!
Most people in the world “believe” that beliefs are inherited, or are solely based on what has already occurred in one’s life. The truth is that all beliefs are learned, and most become self-fulfilling prophecies... meaning they became the truth because someone believed in them enough to make them true.

There are three ways to learn to believe. Either by studying evidence of the intended belief, believing what an authority figure tells us, or just imagining it (affirming it) over and over and over again.

Most of what you and I believe today - about life, people, religion and even about politics - we learned from the repeated affirmations by those whom we trust.

> **We can have the same imprinting process on ourselves, by imagining and affirming our own story. When you have done this so often that you are starting to believe your imagined story, you will have created a vision.**

By definition, a vision is a story we fully believe, and which we expect to materialize. Visions, by definition, are inevitable. A vision attracts its components to it, like a magnet. A vision creates the motivation to bring it about. Motivation is that mysterious, powerful concoction of enthusiasm, courage, physical energy and creativity that makes things happen. Visions are lucky. Visionaries are the luckiest.

Find the true-blue you. Write the story of your future abundance. Learn to believe it is true for you. And then, all you have to do is hold on to being the best you can be.

Richard Brooke made his first million before the age of 30, advancing to the top sales-leader position in a $60 million Network Marketing organization made up of more than 200,000 sales people. At age 31, he became the Executive Vice President of that company.

Through Richard's coaching, writings and seminars thousands of leaders have discovered new distinctions in listening, leadership, courage, relationships, team spirit and big-time fun. He is the author of *Mailbox Money, Mach II Starring You* and co-author of *The New Entrepreneurs: Business Visionaries for the 21st Century*.

Richard continues to play full out from his home on the lake in the resort community of Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, and a horse ranch in the California foothills. He enjoys Harleys, golf, water sports, scuba-diving, skiing, snowmobiling, helicopter flying, a good game of poker and a real Cuban cigar.

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