

The Alchemy of Change

A Change in Direction Can Change Your Life

For Entrepreneurs, Professionals
and Business People

Chris Borrett



From the Series

The Pocket Alchemist

A Change in Direction Can Change Your Life: For Entrepreneurs, Professionals and Business People

Introduction

How many times have we all thought to change our life, our work or relationships and start afresh, but lack the follow-through, support or energy to do that?

Despite that, the change is just within our grasp! Even the most unrewarding and frustrating situations can be turned around with certain innovative methods and a slightly different approach.

Most people think that everything would be as they want, if only something external would change in their life; sometimes that is the case, but other times it is not. No matter how strange it is, if we have the courage to change ourselves first, then we will find that the external situation changes as a consequence of the first change. This is the whole alchemy of response-ability, where we respond to life as it presents itself to us and through the way we respond we create the life we want to live.

This approach enables a change in beliefs and personal power and one can either leap forward in life and work, or can find the life and work he or she loves. The strength of power is in the present and the present often demands action.

What action would you take if you thought you could not fail?

Chris

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About Chris Borrett

Chris graduated as a lawyer and conducted his own successful legal practices for many years. Subsequently he became familiar with the property market and traded extensively in properties, shares, and gained experience in a variety of commercial, residential and rural ventures

Later, he trained in the field of emotional intelligence, human potential and energy studying psychotherapy, bioenergetics, mindfulness, the human condition, and the various “success and health models.”

Chris gives seminars, courses and presentations and works with individuals, businesses and companies to help them make more money and get a life. He also assists start-up businesses, entrepreneurs and early innovators to get going with the encouragement and the down to earth principles they need to make it happen.

When he works as a Performance Coach and Trainer he also supports the culture of success, health and co-operation within each business or organisation. Anyone who has already achieved a high level of success and may have reached a turning point in their lives either professionally or personally can benefit from his pioneering and ground breaking methods.



Chapter 1

Luck, Opportunity, or Just Hard Work:

Experiencing an Extreme Low Just Prior to a Major Success

“The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time”. So said Thomas Edison and it is hard to disagree with him. Often we do give up just before success and I try to keep reminding myself of this fact time and time again. He said: “Our greatest weakness lies in giving up.”

Many times people go through the stages of experiencing an extreme low just prior to a major success. When we either start a new venture or want to expand an existing one, it is first important to establish the ‘Why’ as well as the ‘How.’ I’m writing this book to introduce an essential ingredient that I’ve found is shared by many successful people, property investors, women entrepreneurs, and business operators around the world and that is the *experiencing of an extreme low prior to a major success*.

This low, it seems, is needed to truly gain the mental strength to work through problems, whatever they are, firmly deciding never to return to feelings of despair. When things seem to be taking care of themselves, we can get away perhaps with taking things for granted as I did many times, however in the long-term, it will be *our skill and determination* rather than luck that sustains our progress.

Although it may not be necessary initially, to know why you want to be successful, apart from the obvious reasons, it soon becomes critical. Identifying a cause or vision that is enough of a priority (i.e., a ‘must’ rather than a ‘maybe’), is absolutely necessary as it will

provide the physical, mental and emotional reserves required not only to continue, but to persevere to the end and succeed. The first fundamental rule of success in any field is that your primary reason for starting the business, vocation, profession or venture in the first place, that is the 'WHY', is far more important than the wealth-creation strategy you employ to make money, that is the 'HOW'.

Have you identified a non-financial passion or reason for your journey to success through the undertaking that you have in mind? If not, when will you make it a priority to do so? Are you searching for a magical HOW, when in fact the real cause of your problem is that you haven't identified a compelling enough WHY? If survival alone is the compelling reason in the first place, then of course this is a worthy reason. As time goes by, the reason and the WHY will change in accordance with your vision, progress, action and the consequent results.

In my life, the primary reason for continuing has been my "mission statement," so to speak and that has been to try my best at something for as long as the intrinsic fulfilment is enough unto itself. Then I will address the issue of being successful and look to see if my strategies are paying off. But first is the passion and then are the strategies. If the passion is sufficiently strong, there is virtually nothing that can stop us, except perhaps calamities and tragedies.



Once We Get Rolling

Once we get rolling it will help if we know ourselves, our wants and our essential needs. Self-knowledge cuts through a lot of the mine fields we encounter on the way to having a successful business and life.

Recent USA survey collected data from 733 multi-millionaires about the reasons for their success. The top five answers were being honest with all people, being well disciplined, getting along with people, having a supportive spouse and working harder than others. I would add that a good relationship with friends can also work wonders. And once we become more aware of the things that drive us, we become more capable of answering the questions that often bother us such as:

- When is it beneficial to surrender to our emotions and when is it better to observe them from afar?
- When is it good to stay in a relationship and is it healthier to get out?
- When is it good to stay with something and when is it intelligent to seek new possibilities?
- Is it wise to analyse something too much, or is it more fruitful to just make a decision and do something?
- In what circumstances should we be outspoken and when should we back down?
- At what stage should we look at a new career and when should we stay and consolidate our position?
- When should we consider more physical activities and when should we seek intellectual or artistic stimulation?
- Is it possible to have security and spontaneity peacefully co-existing in our life?
- Can we lead our existing life, if we do not like our work?
- When is it essential to have a break?

It will help if we are prepared to look at the more hidden aspects of our personalities, otherwise the task of unravelling our hidden potential will be impossible. Most of us would like to go from point A to point B in some sort of improvement spiral, in business or in our life. That is, however, usually not possible, until we can unravel things that might be bothering us.

If we can observe our habits and qualities constructively and without judging them, it will be easier to watch them disappear. The more we fight some habit or quality in ourselves that we don't like, the more difficult it will be to let go of them. Ask any smoker! And even when we win over a bad habit through force rather than understanding, the mechanism that drove us to take up the habit in the first place will assert itself and it is very likely that we will slip back to it or take up some other habit that entails negative consequences.

This fact is well known to any person who has genuinely tried to give up some habit or compulsion about which they feel that it does not serve them anymore. It is also well known by behavioural psychologists who work with anxieties and addictions. With increased awareness of your own potentials and weaknesses, inert intelligence will increase and starts taking the upper hand. That results in clear awareness of opportunities and creative solutions, as well as knowing *what we want and what we are aiming for*.

Even Negativity Can be Positive

This may sound a little strange but I feel it's important to bring it up because we all can get negative, when the business or life challenges become too intense: The reason why people can be negative their whole life is only because they have NOT been absolutely total about their negativity.

The common way is to let in the occasional bouts of positivity, as the person might look stupid in their own eyes, if they continue harping over and over about the same thing and repeat their continual diatribe of negativity. What happens is that even the most hardened and negative person will occasionally be positive and Lo and Behold, in that moment everyone really, really warms to them.

Surprised? Well, not really, because no-one can be negative all the time, otherwise they will be not only outcast, they will be even hated by those they love. And that is the dilemma.

I had such an aunt who was constantly negative and saying nasty things. The funny thing was that I was still very fond of her because I could see through her and forgave that aspect of her that irritated the rest of the family. However, the problem was that she made a lifetime habit of being negative and saying nasty things that slowly, slowly many of her own family moved away from her. You may also know someone either close to you or elsewhere who is a real pain. The dialectics of life are such that the mind cannot be total, because when it is total about something the energy will move to its opposite, namely positivity.

Negativity and positivity move constantly into one another and if you become aware of it, then a revelation occurs and a change of heart is possible. If you are sick to death of your own constant negativity, try to be consciously and deliberately negative for a while, or whole 40 minutes, in the privacy of your own room. You may just think the worst negative things you can think of, or you can start screaming and shouting and saying all sorts of negative things. But remember one thing and that is, do NOT allow any positivity during that time. Best is to do this away from your family otherwise they may worry about your mental health.

Imagine all the things that have gone wrong with your life, times when you thought life wasn't worth living, times when someone close to you died, times whenever you were sick of living, the times when someone left you for another and so on. Bring the negativity to its

extreme and cry, weep, scream, shout and swear. But remember one thing: don't allow any happiness.

You will find it very difficult to be negative for longer time. But if you try for 40 minutes, sudden jump out of this negativity will turn on the lights and you will find "yes" to life. In the beginning it will be weird but soon you will get the hang of it. You can even put some music on that you love and jump, sing or dance for 20 minutes.

I describe these things, because you only have to experiment, which I am sure you will do one day, when things get too much. The proof is in the experience and not in the reading. Starting a business, or venture, or even starting a new job, or work, often requires of us an enormous change and brings challenge. It is easy to give up unless we have some inner resources. And working on our negativity is one way how to tap into these inner resources of inner strength and power.

How to Deal with Strong Emotional Reactions

George Gurdjieff, an Armenian Mystic, recounted about his childhood that when his father was dying he said to him: "I have nothing to leave you except one piece of advice." Gurdjieff used to tell this story to his students and recounted that this advice was given to him on his father's deathbed and made an incredible impact on him, as it would on any small boy. His father said to him that: "Maybe this advice can be of some benefit to you, but I don't expect you to understand it now, you are far too young."

His father said to him to remember only one thing and that is if you feel angry, then wait for twenty-four hours. Then do whatsoever you want to do, but the important thing is categorically and absolutely to wait twenty-four hours. He went on to say: "If somebody

insults you, you tell him, 'I will get back to you tomorrow. Please give me a little time to think over it and then I will respond.'

It is not easy to understand this advice, unless you have consciously experienced it for yourself. If you wait twenty four hours you will not be angry anymore and your response will be much clearer, cleaner, precise and without emotional charge. If someone has insulted you and you wait for twenty four hours, you will see that after even a few minutes you are not angry, but cooler, more calm and collected. You may also realize that the person who insulted you perhaps was right up to some degree, or if they were wrong, you might find out how to respond in a constructive way, rather than the initial impulsive and most likely destructive way.

If we learn this kind of behaviour, we will be clearer in our business dealings and more compassionate in our daily interactions. Even with people who misunderstand you out of envy, jealousy or ignorance and perhaps say unkind things, if you wait twenty four hours you will have begun a very intelligent journey which will transform your life into one of greater clarity and purpose.

By and by, you will become aware of the tremendous impact of this small exercise, as you become more capable by practice. It is not easy as we react mostly out of unconsciousness, however, if you persevere the clouds disappear and you will soon see the sky. If you are aware enough to wait for a few hours, or better still, twenty four hours, you will never be the same person and your life will have changed for the better-guaranteed!

In business and in life you will find this lesson so invaluable that you will wonder, why perhaps you had not thought about it before. But remember, catch yourself in the act, otherwise it is too late and the horse has bolted.

When it Comes to Work, Do You Believe in Luck?

*"I'm a great believer in luck and I find that
the harder I work, the more I have of it."*

Thomas Jefferson

Although that is true on one level, I prefer to use the analogy of the person who just keeps jumping up in the air joyfully and happily and when an opportunity presents itself, he/she can jump on an opportunity more easily and effortlessly. But different strokes for different folks of course and women too are different. Whether you are self employed or work for someone, but still you have dreams that one day something else is possible, do not ever despair. There are many great people in history that left their mark on the world and who changed horses in mid stream.

Thomas Jefferson was a farmer who trained as a lawyer, made significant contributions as a political theorist and became a President. Martin Luther King was a Baptist minister and left his mark as a civil rights leader. Vincent Van Gough studied for the ministry and became the artist everyone admires. Gandhi trained as a lawyer and became a spiritual leader. I suppose anything is possible.

The quickest route is for people to take the jump immediately, forgetting any considerations about whether they will succeed or not. In fact, failure should never be considered. There are many such people; you meet them every day without knowing. They know that this method is not for the faint hearted and as we humans are really sympathetic to our fellow men and women, they would never advocate this up front unless someone begs for their advice. And even then they would give it reluctantly.

Anyone who works for themselves realises this. For this approach to have the slightest hope of success, a highly practical minded strategy should be employed. Some people do have a very practical approach to career, work and creativity, but lack the systems to continue. Then it is best to outsource or find a partner with the requisite skills.

Are You Thinking of Changing Your Life?

If you're thinking of changing career, profession, or you have decided to start out all over, it is possible that full time learning is required. If a person has resources to last a year or so and can devote all his or her time and energy to the pursuit of getting it as right as they can, that is excellent, however, no guarantee is possible.

At least there are systems, procedure and methods that can be implemented and the knowledge necessary digested, so that action can be taken once they hit the ground. The person who engages in this endeavour needs to have patience, because the transition from knowledge to a practical application of this knowledge takes time. For example a friend of mine has been studying the share markets for three years and also has been mentored by some great share traders. As anyone who knows the share market can tell you, this is a tricky business. The experts say that once you have developed your system, if you begin to trade and have retained your capital over a period of three years, you're on the way to success. You can have short term success but, for long term success and for a full time career where your passion is involved and risk is accepted, a deep set of skills is required. Less time is needed for real estate but similar nerves are required for full time trading.

Another way to leave your job is to find an interim job situation and do a part time training. The interim job will give you an income, perhaps at a lesser wage and enable you to do a part time training in your chosen business career. This is just cash flowing your project, until you feel ready to start your business. Or you can work in a related business and get

your practical training and knowledge, or you can work in a different field altogether and develop the skills needed elsewhere.

Staying Where You Are

If you decide to stay where you are, you can engage in a part time training, while staying at your present job. Alternatively, you can start part time work at home, whilst staying at your job until you feel confident that you can make a living out of your desired career. This could be the case where you can work as an entrepreneur from home, freelance writer, artist, blogger, internet marketer or whatever.

Then there could be the avenue of part time training and part time work but these options best suit someone with fewer responsibilities. But it will suit someone who wants to move quickly. They will need to start the business from their home, be able to do the training at night and perform their ordinary routine at their current job.

Carl Jung said that: “Nothing has a stronger influence psychologically on the environment and especially on the children than the unlived life of their parents.” If we can remember that, then everything is possible. What is the point of someone becoming a lawyer, if it was not their dream? This was my case, as I did it out of love for my father, but not for myself. So it wasn’t any wonder that after eight years of practicing as a lawyer and running my own legal practices, I got sick of it. The important thing to remember is: ‘Whose Dream Is It?’

In these times, it is important to instil into the minds of the young the notion that anything can be achieved. Often, the common cry of the youth is that they feel an inability to make any constructive difference at all, to be heard or to achieve goals that would make a difference to them and to the world.

The only way is to give them good role models without forcing anything on them; if you are the parent then you are the role model, or at least the most important one at the moment. If they understand there are options, choices and challenges rather than problems, obstacles and limitations then the risks and work involved for them will be worth it.



Making Goals Achievable

We often make goals for any reason at all, sometimes for good reasons and other times for none. When making goals it is a good idea to at least make them achievable by breaking down that long list you have been chewing over.

A famous North Pole Adventurer once said that he tried to make it to the next ice outcrop a few metres ahead of him. This way, he said, he had some chance of lasting the distance; not only that, it gave him a sufficient number of small victories to motivate and energise him.

Look at that list of goals you have tucked away and break the list down into small and achievable chunks. This is the easiest way to start again with a really good chance that you can get through the list. If you feel stuck, ask someone for a fresh perspective, as often these problems that look surmountable are just disguising an easy solution.

The word, "problem," itself is a bit daunting, so take the fear and charge out of it by asking someone else's opinion. You just may be surprised. Remember Einstein's famous saying: "A problem can never be solved on the same level as it was created." When we are confronted with what sometimes seem insurmountable problems try and look at them as opportunities to do things differently to how you have dealt with them before. The old ways will not work if you have done them many times without expected effect. It is comfortable to keep doing the same things over and over again, but you will see soon enough that a totally different approach is needed and although it feels a bit unnerving at first, soon you will find that a fresh breeze has entered into your life, as you rise to the challenge.

Your Talent Can Lie in Your Enjoyment!

There are many different ways to find out what particular talents you may have, by observing the importance of enjoyment in the work you choose to do.

When you are looking for your talents, look for:

- What you enjoy doing
- What you enjoy thinking about
- What you enjoy learning about
- What you enjoy as a process
- What you enjoy sharing
- What you enjoy talking about
- What you enjoy writing about

If you enjoy doing something, the enjoyment could be related to your talent, especially if you can lose yourself in it while you're doing it. If you are not thinking of the reward when you have finished the task, if the process of doing it and the enjoyment derived from it is sufficient unto itself, then this is a *very good beginning*.

Asking similar questions is essential for self-feedback. Do the talent and the experience of the job or work take you deeper into yourself and are you naturally good at it? What do you most enjoy doing? It is inevitable that in areas where you have real talent, you will develop quickly and learn rapidly. If you find yourself always interested in things in which you are talented and are never getting bored with its content, you are probably on the right path.

As talent will seek expression, it is natural to want to find ways which make it possible to express more fully your talents in society and the world. You will naturally seek out allies, networks and friends to make this possible. It can also be done in a way where others benefit as much as you do. If you are a loner then the last sentence will not apply to you.

When you pursue your talent, you're happier, stronger, more resilient and creative. Problems become more like challenges.

Chapter 2

A Second Chance: What If You Gave Life Everything?

What I have found and others too, is that we *do* like an approach different from our own, whether it applies to a business product, service, marketing ideas or just our own brand of philosophy and life approach. It seems that anyone who presents a different slant on things or even one that flies in the face of our own precious set of rules of engagement, striking at the very heart of our ideals, can change our lives forever and for the best.

Many of us do have a whole set of preconceived ideas about marriage, success, money, relationships, honesty - particularly the one where you don't tell the truth for fear of hurting someone, a career for life, cars, material possessions, music, art, poetry, indulgence, selfishness, spirituality, worldliness and so on. Without knowing it or not, we have gained them from people around us, through one of the modern day "success tools" known as modelling. It is a good enough method to use providing you have the role models to call upon; if not then books, tapes or inspirational messages can sometimes spur us on to action.

However, this is good as far as it goes because we must not to imitate the role model too closely, lest we lose ourselves. In reality the idea of role modelling is good if we model the idea or business model, not the person. A good role model can inspire us not to give up and a good mentor can support our dreams. However, imitation can cause a distress, because in a way it is not being true to yourself. You are NOT that person and never will be. People will be attracted to you, not to carbon copy of someone else.

Whilst the pursuit of excellence in the material world is vastly different from imitating some lofty figure, the form of success coaching or role modelling I am talking about is known better as Success Conditioning. Being yet another conditioning, it still takes us from our essence. It's good as far as it goes but do not use it as a permanent rule or course of action. This will only detract from you, your message, product, services or life approach.

Having said that, this style of coaching or mentoring can be helpful in the beginning and can often go on for months and years, but sooner or later you will need to develop your own personal style. Once you have really decided to embark upon a successful life or career in whatever form this takes, the best thing to do is to realise that the pursuit of your dream is for you to accomplish and no one else. When we understand this, we will have a power source inside that galvanises us into action. There is NO-ONE ELSE who can do it for us.

The Difference between Encouragement and Advice

If someone says that you can succeed, it is because he or she has succeeded and knows what it takes. Paradoxically, the problem is that most of us have authority issues and we will simply react to anything, which smells like authority and therefore we totally miss the point. Why it becomes a problem is that unless we have overcome our tendency to overreact to authority figures, we may just throw out the baby with the bathwater, when someone actually gives us good suggestions and encouragement. In our overreaction, we may overlook the pearls of wisdom being shared or imparted.

We can really benefit, if we understand the distinction between encouragement or support and advice. Whoever gives advice usually has some particular investment in you taking their advice. The investment will vary in accordance with the particular person, their habit patterns, chief pre-occupations, childhood conditioning, and social behaviour. Therefore

sometimes it is not always so easy to see whether a person has your interests at heart. For this you need very discerning eyes.



I would like now to do a small exercise. Write down the names of three people who inspire and encourage you, without wanting anything in return and three people for whom there is some investment in their advice. This is very important, because it is not always the case that if someone is paid, they do not have your best interests at heart. Nor is it always the case that someone who does something for nothing is always purely motivated by unselfishness, loving and altruistic tendencies.

Encouraging people, no investment	People with investment in their advice
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

The truly successful human beings in any walk of life have always demanded of themselves more than anyone else would ever have demanded. There is a very good reason for this, and that is that the people who have never demanded anything much of you have NEVER ever demanded anything much of themselves.

What will your life be if you continue as before? Write down all the things you associate with your life. What could your life be like if you gave it everything? Write down your wish list:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Success Leaves Footprints, Failure Leaves Clues

Rita Mae Brown once said: "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results."

When we look back on our lives, even recently, we can see where either our emotions have got the better of us, or our mind has distorted reality to suit itself. In reviewing the past we can easily tell where something went wrong and if we are perceptive enough, we will not repeat the same mistake again.

Sadly and mostly, we are not perceptive enough and fall into the same traps as everybody else. This may not sound like much of a revelation, but the truth is that our minds are similar and only differ insofar as the way we protect and defend ourselves. This habit is known to psychologists and others as our *defence mechanisms* that we developed during early and later life.

Did you know that we have about 60,000 to 70,000 thoughts every day and about 70% of those thoughts are repetitive?

What I am driving at is that we can do things differently and achieve a life worth living if we can see where we went wrong. In this way our past failures leave clues and from these clues we can see where we went wrong. One habit most humans have is the tendency to expect that both, the best things in life AND the worst things in life, will continue.

In being human, we all have the tendency, out of survival and the need to belong, to follow the crowd and even those like myself, who will tend to do the opposite of the crowd, must be careful that we are not reacting rather than responding.

Although we can always model the best when it comes to the matters of survival, business and career, we should never forget ourselves and our uniqueness because this is where we stand out from the rest.

Steve Jobs, a Second Chance, Creativity and Success

Steve Jobs said that being fired from Apple in the early days was the best thing that happened to him. He could not see it at the time but he did say that the burden of success was lifted from him and the lightness of being returned as he now had the luxury of starting out all over again.

How many of us have been lucky enough to start all over again? My experience is that this starting over again many times nourishes our sense of adventure and discovery, helps our intimacy, friendships and family. It even contributes to our material welfare as we find increasing significance in whatever work we do, not just in the reward at the end. We have nothing to lose.

Recently, I read something else what he said, which rings true to me and maybe to you too. The last time he was ill he said that almost everything, all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure, all these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. If you have been close to death, either your own or of a significant other, you will know this statement to be true.

Steve Jobs went on to say: "Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart."

Certainly starting out all over gets your creative juices working at warp speed and where survival is a question to be considered, which it is for most of us, it makes you all the more inventive, creative, adventurous and possibly successful. After all, necessity is the mother of invention.

If we really understood that we have nothing to lose, what is it we would do without wasting another moment? Would we still want success at all costs, would creativity be enough unto itself, would we be more careful in our relationships, would we be more aware and considerate in our actions? And would we take more care about our health, emotional, physical and mental?

What Beliefs Block a Successful Life?

When we are at a certain point in life, we may feel that we need to re-assess our priorities and shift gears in our work, relationships, or careers. If this is the case, it is often useful to look at our unconscious beliefs to find what is preventing us from proceeding further.

However, as these beliefs are unconscious, it is not always so easy to detect them, obviously! Without bringing them to the surface it is impossible to advance. Fortunately there are ways to do this and they help towards making conscious the hidden agendas under which we are operating.

One way is to ask yourself questions about how to bring a clarity, regarding these hidden beliefs. Ask yourself the questions below:

1. What would a person need to believe about himself or herself to value someone else's ideas or values above his or her own?

2. What would a person need to believe to do something for which they did not have a 100% 'yes'?
3. What would a person need to believe to feel she or he was not able to support herself or himself financially?
4. What would a person need to do to up-skill to something in which they felt inadequate?
5. What would a person need to believe to stay in a relationship they felt was not serving them?
6. What would a person need to believe to put the values of their parents above their own?
7. Why would a person believe they were too unintelligent to succeed in life?
8. Why would a person believe that they would never get what they really want in life?

Working from Home

If we are working from home, we can lose sight of the goals we have set for ourselves. There are a few pitfalls to working from home and primarily *discipline* or the lack of it underpins most of them. It is imperative to firstly look at what resources you have before you begin and to see if you have sufficient back up or capital to minimise the risk factor. Without some measure of security, it is not so easy to confidently and constructively market yourself, your product or your services.

When you are working from home it is sensible to have a separate working space, otherwise the survival issues that go with it can impinge on your personal life at the expense of your relationships, health and overall balance. Scheduling your work time therefore is crucial to maintaining a certain balanced lifestyle. Try and keep to whatever timetable enables you to perform to your satisfaction.

When working from home, it is easy to become isolated from the rest of the world and for this reason it is important to join appropriate associations relevant to your particular industry. If people don't know who you are or what you do, there is no way they will want to do business with you. Networking is a major asset and one incredible avenue for support. Remember to strengthen and maintain your networks and persist till it works, rather than giving up prematurely, as it is easy to lose persistence when things do not seem to be going smoothly.

Even though working from home provides a great deal of flexibility, it pays to keep in mind the fact that your image is still important. Whether you choose to dress for work, keep certain office hours, or tailor your work to your particular lifestyle, a definite continuity and discipline in your work and dress will keep you on track.

We often forget to really enjoy the work we have chosen and pursuit of success and recognition can come at a great cost. Somewhere along the way we lose sight of the fact that the designated profession or work was to give us more freedom, happiness or a sense of fulfilment.



Acting As If: A Technique as Old as Aristotle

Although Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC) was a Greek philosopher and was responsible for black and white style of thinking, towards the end of his life he turned towards the more mystical side of life and became interested in the teachings of Diogenes, a Greek Mystic, (c. 412- c. 323 B.C) Yes, there were such people like that in those times.

Aristotle used a technique that calls you to be the person that you want to be now. The technique particularly says that you can be that person *now*, not in the future. When we create an ideal, we are bound for trouble, as the ideal is in the future and our reality is here in the present. This dichotomy creates a split.

It is a pity he only realised just before he died that philosophy only takes you so far; what is needed after that is awareness. If you act as if you are the person you want to be and act like that right now, then the split disappears. Simple, right?

Well, not really, but you can try it. Many people do it in business, but forget to do it in life. If we remind ourselves of our dream and vision it will be easier and far less stressful to move towards the goal as if it were right under our noses right now. In fact it is!

However, it seems as if it was in the future, because of our linear concept of time. Sometimes you know that when you act in a certain way, the outcome is going to be very predictable; but you act that way anyhow. You know deep in your heart what the consequences will be, but you choose to act in a certain way despite the alarm bells ringing like crazy. That is how we create the future, right then and there.

At a certain time we took a lot from the Greek civilization, particularly from their train of thought, logic and philosophy. The resultant effect was the opposing contradiction of black and white dyadic thinking, good and evil, life and death, moral and immoral, the past and

the future. We began to take the worst from Aristotle and his lineage and ignored the best of that era. The best, of course, was in the idea that all things between heaven and earth are not always black and white, nor is life necessarily heading towards a specific goal; and if it is we know that goal full well.

The harmony of the opposites was ignored and many societies have paid a heavy price especially in the fields of business, creativity, new endeavours, and visionary and innovative ideas. There is a middle ground and we all need to find that middle ground. Once found, we can focus on what it is we really want to.

The Attitude is Everything: What Do You Do To Get Out Of a Rut?

A good friend of mine recently asked me: "How do you get out of a rut?" How do I keep going on with work, keeping my enthusiasm, passion burning and all the rest of it? But the real question is what happens when we feel so low we think it's not worth the effort, that it's all too hard?

I remember once upon a time, a long time ago waking up tired, unmotivated, lacking passion, thinking there must be some other work to do. I'm sure many of you will recognise these feelings from your past work experience and perhaps you have such thoughts even now.

Well, the feelings can last a few hours, a few days or a few years. Some people, unfortunately, can feel like that about their work a whole lifetime. The truth is that, the reason why I felt that my work had no meaning was because it had NO meaning and I had to be ruthlessly honest with myself. And that is not always easy. The fact is that if you feel that your work has no meaning, it is most probably because the *work itself* really has no meaning.

Meaning, passion and the purpose that *comes with work* comes from within us, not from outside sources. It is difficult to capture it, you can only create it. The moment you stop creating it, it is gone. That's why sometimes when we have completed a project, we feel elated on the one hand and then let down. The energy we were pouring into that project now has nowhere to go and it turns back on ourselves. After the highs come the lows. And they hit hard.

There are many things we can do to get out of a rut, from first recognising that we are in one, doing something that creates an exciting charge, completing something we have been putting off, to changing our energy. The one I favour is changing my energy. It overrides ALL the others, because it relies on me and not on any external force or factors that may or may not be within my control. There are many different methods and techniques to change one's energy from active meditations (which I recommend highly) to vigorous exercise followed by simply sitting silently; anything active, like dancing, singing, walking, laughing, shouting or jumping up and down (somewhere isolated so they don't lock you up) also works well, as the energy that gets trapped in the mind can be transformed this way.

We have become so hung up in our heads that we need to bring the energy back down into our bodies so that we feel human again. Something as simple as feeling each foot touching the ground and taking notice of this activity is especially powerful, as the process of 'watching' brings you back into the moment, away from all the distractions the mind is presenting you.

Negative attitudes negate life; they are good for dying, but not good for living or loving. Life needs positive attitudes and feeds on them because they make you not only happy but they also make you creative. In the presence of trouble and there are troubles in life, only the *positive mind grows wings*, others buy crutches. Grow wings and do not buy crutches.

Persistence: A Two Stage Process

Once you have the right attitude, you will need a great deal of persistence. The first stage is to see yourself differently than you have done so far. First, see yourself as a Mistress (or Master) of Determination and Persistence and second decide at your core never to give up until you have accomplished what it is you want. Contemplate these 10 following points:

1. Repeating Efforts. Sometimes we give up before we succeed and wonder why we did not achieve the desired result. Think of four ways you can continue making the task more adventurous, exciting and less boring. Is there something you need to systematise or make simpler?
2. Are you repeating things and not getting results? Then change strategies. Think of new strategies that might work if you change your entire outlook.
3. Look to see who gets better results than you. Model the best people, but don't forget yourself.
4. List as many ways as you can dream of to change the way you are doing things.
5. Look at either your competition or your peers in the same field or even another industry and see where what they are doing could be emulated in any way.
6. List as many ways as you can imagine to change the way you are doing things.
7. Maintain positivity. Where are you letting yourself down?
8. Return to the Vision. Where did you forget your vision and what you wanted to achieve?
9. Reward yourself when you achieve something, howsoever small. Write down a few things you would give yourself if you succeed.
- 10.

Chapter 3

Marketing Made Easier: Make Your Business a Hybrid One

(Ignore this chapter at your peril)

Whether you are running an online business or an offline business, at some stage you will need to become a little computer literate.

If you are steeped in the online world it is wise to take heed of a few irrefutable facts of life. There is something about the online world that will set many people up for a fall if they are not careful.

With everything just a mouse away, or within the click of the cursor, or the flick of your wrist, it is easy to assume that the results can be that quick as well. While this may be true for some, if they are particularly skilled at marketing online, most of us are more at home with direct contact with people.

Although many people are not so good relating with other people and think that it may be easier to make money online; the truth is that with to-days' web functionality and auto-posting features as good as they are, the internet does not automatically produce money at the click of the cursor, even though it is easy to spend money at the click of the cursor.

Apart from the mystery of the universe and the complexities of the human mind, the internet is also a very complicated and interconnected world. Unless your business model is set up exclusively for online functionality and delivery and your core business is in this set up, you would do better to make your business a *hybrid* one.

It is obvious we all need to take advantage of the internet and the layers and functions it offers, but more importantly, the offline connections and networking is where the action is. Ignore this at your peril.

Using Leverage in Business

One of the definitions of leverage is the '*Ability to influence a system, or an environment, in a way that it multiplies the outcome of one's efforts, without a corresponding increase in the consumption of resources.*'

In other words, leverage is an advantageous condition of having a relatively small *amount of cost yield* compared to a relatively *high* level of *returns*. Thus, 'doing a *lot* with a *little*.' You may also remember from school, when we studied the order of levers, that there was a mechanical advantage or power gained by using a lever.

With regard to people at large, such as the masses, it could be defined as 'the power or ability to act or to influence people, events and decisions; for example, 'being the only industry in town gave the company considerable leverage in its union negotiations.'

In business, particularly in real estate, leverage is 'the use of a small initial investment, credit, or borrowed funds to gain a very high return in relation to one's investment, to control a much larger investment, or to reduce one's own liability for any loss.'

We all use leverage in different ways; on web forums we send out some message to a large number of people such as they do in direct marketing, but we certainly do not get a 4% response as used to be calculated in that form of advertising or marketing.

We use YouTube, Blogs, Email advertising, Press Releases, social correspondence, forums, chat rooms, viral marketing, Google, Twitter and you name it. There must be hundreds of different ways we benefit from leverage, and surely word of mouth or 'viral,' as it is known, is one of the best ways.

Marketing Your Ideas

During the course of a lifetime we have many ideas and thoughts and how particularly we would like to express ourselves in the world and in our immediate community and environment.

Some of these ideas, we think, will produce money and a livelihood and other ideas are simply more personal, out of which we expect nothing in the sense of monetary outcome; but both are valid.

If, however you have an idea which you feel could be financially beneficial to you and your family, friends and larger community, global or otherwise, the best thing is to *get the idea out there*. If you think your idea is such a winner, try and sell it! However, you will probably find that you won't get much for it.

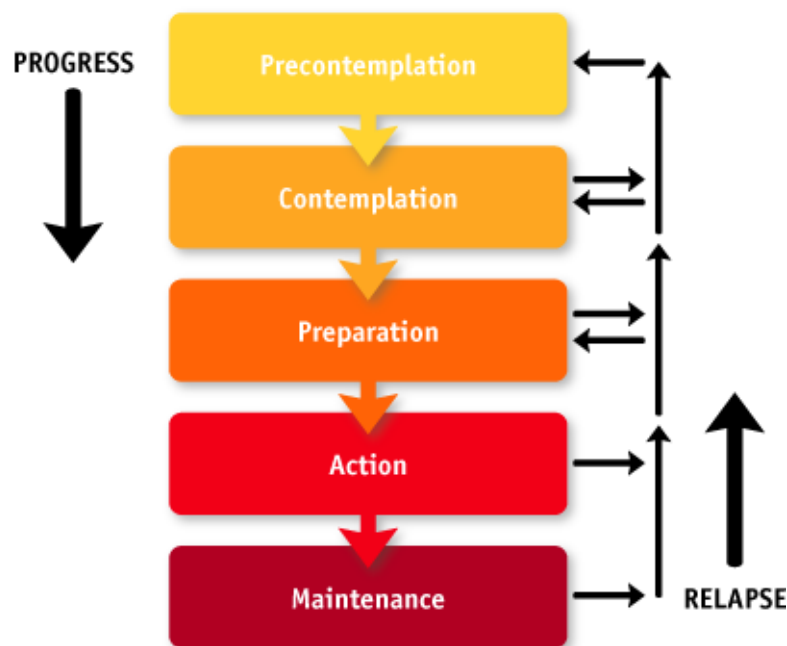
The truth is that you will have to do some work and either make it, produce it, manufacture it, create it, and start a process whereby you can sell it. Otherwise it is just a pipe dream and most dreams have gone down the drain, because the tendency to give up is strong, when our passion is felt to be unappreciated, rejected, or even ridiculed.

The thing with ideas is that they are a small fragments of the whole process that is required to get people interested enough to buy whatever you are selling, products, information or

services. We all fall into the trap of saying that we don't have enough time, but if we would cut out a few hours of TV, movies, socialising or just plain wasting of time, we would find that there is indeed more than enough time.

The thing is that when we make a strong stand for something, we can make enemies. But be sure that if you do NOT make a few enemies from time to time, you are NOT pushing hard enough and your ideas are mediocre. Not that in themselves the ideas are mediocre, but that you have not illustrated how your ideas can add real value to a person's life.

So then, what was it you wanted to do if you believed you could not fail?



Is Your Market Pitch Easy to Understand?

The task is to take a business card and write your idea on the back of it. Hand it to someone you don't know and ask them if they grasp clearly what you do. Others call it the elevator pitch method, or some such phrase.

It is not so easy to do, because we are usually so close to ourselves and what we do, to have a real clarity about our work, life and situation.

There is a saying in web design that in this age of Twitter and short messaging, you should be able to communicate what you do in twelve syllables or a few short words on your home page. For example 'buying luxury real estate for busy executives,' or 'personal training sessions in the privacy of your own home,' or 'cheap travel made fun,' which could apply to Jetstar in Australia or Virgin anywhere.

The point is that you are looking for what is called a *generic positioning statement*. You have to ask others, whether they can understand your particular message. The fact that you can understand your message does not mean that others can.

The other thing to remember is whether your offer is easy to differentiate. Your specialty may be your point of difference, so what precisely is your specialty, or point of difference? For example, I would say that my generic positioning is 'to help people leverage their ability and talent to get the life they need or want.' The question to ask is: Is your pitch working for you now?

Why Focusing on What is "Wrong" is Dangerous

Science is invaluable as far as enhancing the lives of the human beings that inhabit the planet; however, once we get past survival issues we need to look for other ways that fulfil us.

What the fathers of strengths psychology learned inside the Gallup organisation was that if you focus on your strengths every day and not your weaknesses, without question you were three times more likely to have an excellent quality of life.

It is even more interesting when we understand that all we have to do is bring in more awareness, more light, laughter and positivity, and the darkness withers away. That is, if we want less greed, we need to be more sharing; if we want more love, we need to be more loving; if we want less anger, we need to be more compassionate.

If we continually put our attention on what is wrong with ourselves and everybody else, constantly worrying about our weaknesses, then of course it is no wonder that we get reflected back to us the very things, upon which we're placing our attention. Paying attention to our core strengths every day will ensure a much more exciting and enjoyable way to operate in our career and at work than constantly focusing on our weaknesses.

These findings were arrived at through more than 50 years of research into human thought and action and if we need to be convinced then the proof is there. This research illustrates that the method of focusing on strengths, not weaknesses, can also be applied to children as well to boost their self-esteem or even your own. And for us adults, if we can block out a few hours every day where we can do the things that our strengths call for, our day and our connections will be enlivened.

The Six Lenses Through Which Buyers Judge You

Banwari Mittal of Northern Kentucky University has identified six lenses, through which buyers judge us. They are:

1. Our *bodies*, which of course include teeth, smile, physicality, fitness, weight, shape etc.
2. Our *values* and *character*, which again is based more on perception than actuality, but if there is congruence, we usually get the picture.
3. Our *competence* and *success*, which also includes our perceived level of intelligence, social empathy, what we have achieved and perhaps what we have accumulated.
4. Our *social roles* and how active we are in the community, how we behave with friends, family and the broader community, how we approach business and leisure and whether we have a good balance or have gotten way too serious about the whole work thing.
5. Our *personality traits*, how we behave generally speaking, making allowances of course for personality differences, whether we can apologise, whether we behave in a superior manner and treat people like fools, or whether we are genuinely interested in individuals, not just humanity, which is NOT the same thing at all.
6. Our *possessions*, which would have to include knowledge that of course is worth something in the marketplace, but not much elsewhere. Wisdom is something different and is not a possession, at least as far as I am aware.

The interesting thing in all this is that people only judge us according to their own values. For example, if someone values intellectual stamina instead of for example, a fast car, then that will be the standard by which he judges you. If someone on the other hand thinks that unless you have travelled far and wide, you are an idiot, then that will be the standard by which they will judge you.

All up, if you are trying to appeal to your buyer you will have to know the lens through which they judge you. If they are family orientated and you are a bachelor, then you will have to observe certain rules. After all it is a game we're playing. You always know that it is a game when there are rules involved.

The Capacity to Work Within Volatility

It is not that times have always been easy, far from it. Working in the marketplace has always been a challenge and still is a challenge, as things never ever go according to our tiny plans. However, it does seem that we do need to have some idea of where we are heading, at least in the material world.

If we are capable of working within volatility in the marketplace and can recognise that life itself is volatile, then perhaps we will be equipped to deal with the coming years. Over past years I recall hearing from people, who should know something about world affairs that things will be tough this coming year for many. But if we are used to certain volatility in our own lives, then it may be easier for us, especially if we remember that life is so alive, so vibrant and nature so volatile.

If our minds are burdened by memories of the past, or our ideas about the future, we will never be able to seize the opportunities often presented by a crisis or a challenge.

Beginning to live a life with more awareness, we may be able to 'live in our flame' as the saying goes. If we drop our worry about the future, life becomes more a joy and less a concern and we may be even able to help those others less fortunate than ourselves.

On the other hand, if our life has always been predictable then life can dish up real problems. Responding to our most immediate needs with real action will disperse worry and eliminate concern. After all worry is just the postponement of action, is it not?

What action do we need to take this year and will we be able to work within volatility?
I am sure we can.



Chapter 4

The Journey One Step at a Time: Starting a New Venture

There are few things to remember that may not be so obvious at first glance, when starting out a new business or venture. Even if you are an experienced professional starting a new venture different from the one in which you're experienced, the following things will also be helpful to recall.

Because of the way we often perceive others and their success, it is often common to want success and to think that it requires only a few essential ingredients to fulfil our dreams. Actually, the whole process of success and expansion requires an understanding from us that: Expansion and success themselves are in the service of life. So, if our inner movement of thinking and feeling is towards more work, more balance, more harmony, more peace, more relaxation, or more exercise, then it is easier to gain the success that is the natural birthright of every human being.

On the other hand there are many that think success and fulfilment can come to us with less work, less thought, less peace, less exercise and less planning. For them, the inner movement is obviously towards less. And less they will get! However, it is to everyone's benefit to look at success and fulfilment through knowing that *the law of success* brings things together, because it is in the service of life. Wherever a business serves life, it is successful. What a nice thing that is to remember, is it not?

Once we get over the often common and ingrained idea that having money and being successful is somehow not good and is against all moral and decent values, the sooner we

can hold our heads up high and feel as if we can stand on our own two feet and even give others a helping hand. That is really nice feeling.

All we have to do is to look very directly and honestly at our lives and see that we have mostly been given a fixed pattern, or plan, to live by. It is not our own plan, although we perceive it that way. Once we see that, we can move forward fast and swiftly and without any uncertainty whatsoever. We have a vision and we know how to act on it. With this renewed energy we are hard to stop.

It is said that a *vision without action* is as useless as *action without a vision*. We can see it so often, when people start a venture haphazardly or begin a new challenge. The question is: How to create a vision and how to implement the necessary action? What I have found and others too, is that we do like an approach different from our own, whether it applies to a business product, service or marketing ideas.

It seems that anyone who presents a different slant on things, or even one that flies in the face of our own precious set of rules of engagement, striking at the very heart of our ideals, can change our lives forever and for the best. This is true, because many of us do have a whole set of preconceived ideas about marriage, success, money, relationships, honesty - particularly the one where you don't tell the truth for fear of hurting someone - a career for life, cars, material possessions, music, art, poetry, indulgence, selfishness, spirituality, worldliness and the list goes on.

If we can embrace a new vision of the world that is perhaps at odds with our own vision, we can sometimes learn an entirely new, different and creative way to re-examine our lives, our values and our priorities. Therefore, when you get confronted by a new paradigm or set of values contrary to your pre-existing set of values, don't be too much in a hurry to dismiss this new information. It may just send you in an entirely new and exciting direction.

Having a Role Model

One of the modern day 'success tools' is known as role modelling. It is a good enough method to use providing you have the role models to call upon; if not then books, tapes or inspirational messages can sometimes spur us on to action.

However this is good as far as it goes because we must not imitate the role model too closely, lest we lose ourselves. In reality the idea of role modelling is good if we model the idea or business model, not the person. A good role model can inspire us not to give up and a good mentor can support our dreams. However, one of the single most causes of suffering is to imitate anyone, because this in a way not being true to yourself. You are NOT that person and never will be. People will be attracted to you, not to some carbon copy of someone else.

Whilst the pursuit of excellence in the material world is vastly different from imitating some lofty figure, the form of success coaching or role modelling I am talking about is known better as Success Conditioning. Being yet another conditioning, it still takes us from our essence. It's good as far as it goes but do not use it as a permanent rule or course of action. This will only detract from you, your message, product or services.

The down side to role modelling is that you will lose yourself in the imitation of your role models; you will wonder why things are not really working out for you the way you expected, or the way things have worked out for your role model and it is even possible that you lose momentum regarding your original intentions.

Having said that, this style of coaching or mentoring can be helpful in the beginning and can often go on for years but sooner or later you will need to develop your own personal style. Once you have really decided to embark upon a successful life, or career, in whatever form

this signifies for you, the best thing to do is to realise that the pursuit of your dream is for *you* to accomplish and no one else.

When we understand this, we will have a power source inside, which galvanises us into action. There is NO-ONE ELSE who can do it for us.

The truly successful human beings in any walk of life have always demanded of themselves more than anyone else would ever have demanded. If this is really the case, then if those same people demand a lot from you, it makes sense that they can see something in you of which you may not be aware. Therefore, it might well be worth doing what they demand of you because the people who have never demanded anything much of you have NEVER ever demanded anything much of themselves.

How to Make a Decision and Stick to It

If you have trouble with making a decision and sticking to it, like most of us, there are a few things you can do. But first I would like to establish two different types of discipline.

One type could be described in terms of the sort you may find in the army, where blind obedience is encouraged for the purpose of the men carrying out their duties. There is a good reason for that, of course, and that is to safe guard the men in times where action, but not thinking, is required.

The other type of discipline is the one created inside and that discipline has a dignity and one to which we can relate. After all, it was our decision and it required our discipline and no-one else even needs to know about it although that also can help to keep us accountable. For example there is a discipline required for doing a fast. Whether or not you go on the

fast is not of much consequence, what is important is that you stick to the decision. From doing that, we crystallize our centre and develop inner discipline.

Isn't it great when we decide to do something important for ourselves and we stay with the decision even if it means nothing to anyone else? Basically, the idea is to exercise the inner firmness and resolve that keeps us from deviating and holds us true to the direction we want for our family, our loved ones and ourselves.

Anything can be used to strengthen our will. For example driving down the road and only looking at the road and nothing else, not being distracted by billboards, advertisements or other diversions. Alternatively, you can look at your watch hand and see how long you can do that without thinking of anything else; just focus on the second hand going around and around. The minute you think of something else you lost awareness and resolve and need to start again.

If we are determined to do something and do it, our energy within becomes stronger; we become more and more centred. We attain centeredness within ourselves and for the first time we are not floating accidentally in the river of life but have some say over our life. The point is that we can follow any experiment that will help us strengthen our will-power, but it is better to start with the smaller ones. If someone is asked to close his eyes for awhile and just sit there, he finds it hard to do. If she or he can't do that much, you can't expect much else from this person, apart from being a cog in a wheel.

It's not easy to start, but the feeling you get is well worthwhile. I have just started being coached by an eighteen year old Olympic swimmer and he is getting me to change all my swimming habits. To tell you the truth it is not so easy, but I am so determined that I will get it.

Recently he told me that I am 50% better in style and ease. I was not a bad swimmer at all, as learning to swim is compulsory in Australia, but I was a bit sloppy after years of surfing.

It is not at all important in the scheme of things, but to me, another old habit is being broken by my decision. And not only that, it feels great.

Cycles of Action

When you're starting out on any new venture it can be a scary thing so it is always good to have people on whom you can bounce off ideas.

One idea that has gained much relevance for any business person, career woman or entrepreneur is to look carefully at what are called *cycles of action*. Cycles of action are those things we postpone that we need to complete before we can move on to the next endeavour with a clean slate. It's a bit like being in a relationship about which you are not totally happy and instead of seeing the lesson in it for you, a decision is made to move on without cleaning it up.

Of course, the next relationship will be exactly the same as the one before, although it may take a little time for it to be obvious. Little bit like an illness that lies beneath the surface and shows itself after awhile.

What cycles of action have you accumulated and that may have been overlooked and need completing? This is vital to the success of any bold move, any new course of action and any worthwhile endeavour. The human mind loves to complete things; some say it is our monkey heritage, while others are not sure of the reason. But whatever the case, just like a monkey likes to complete an incomplete circle drawn in the sand, we also feel a real compulsion to finish off unfinished business.

Whilst there is unfinished business, or cycles of action that are incomplete, we will always feel as if there is something else that needs doing. Of course, there is and it is whatever is unfinished or unresolved in our lives.

Strangely, this figure correlates with what many seminar teachers, leaders, facilitators, coaches, mentors, Olympians, concert pianists and others know and that is that people give up after the initial burst of excitement, training, stimulus, group or workshop energy subsides. It seems as if without the group energy, many people cannot manage to sustain themselves on their own energy. Some people can sustain themselves and keep their energy levels high without any help from others and others are more group orientated and need the stimulus. Neither is better than the other, just different.

How to Increase the Likelihood of Success?

So how can we increase the likelihood that we will succeed at our life and at what we do and how we live, relate, love, laugh and die?

How long can you reasonably expect it to take, to achieve the life you would like? Ask yourself following questions that will help you to give yourself a feedback about your own expectations. How long can you reasonable expect to:

- Learn the art of relating?
- Make sufficient money to more than survive?
- Learn French or any other language?
- Learn to be a Master of the Internet?
- Experience a taste of meditation?
- Learn the secrets of marketing?

- Learn a martial art?
- Learn piano?
- Have your business running profitably?
- Make money off blogging?
- Paint?
- Write?
- Become a specialist or expert in your field?
- Learn the art of living- is it even possible?
- Can we learn the art of dying before we die?
- Learn how to move the market- not have the market move you?
(This is for the movers and shakers, not for us mere mortals.)
- Understand ourselves first and thereby understand others?

Is it really just a question of understanding that anything worth doing really does take time? What has been discovered by many highly skilled people is that for most endeavours it takes roughly the same time to become skilled. More to the point, it takes about:

- 1000 hours to become competent at any worthwhile task,
- 5000 hours to master any skill,
- 25,000 hours plus to become world class and then only if you're gifted or a prodigy.

Is it worth the effort? I think so because we all know the alternative. There is not one of us that has not wanted to give up, felt depressed, down in the dumps and downright miserable. But these negative feelings don't have to be with us for long, if we pick ourselves up, give someone a call, invite someone over for a cup of tea or a drink and share our challenges. Then it never seems so bad.

Focusing Attention

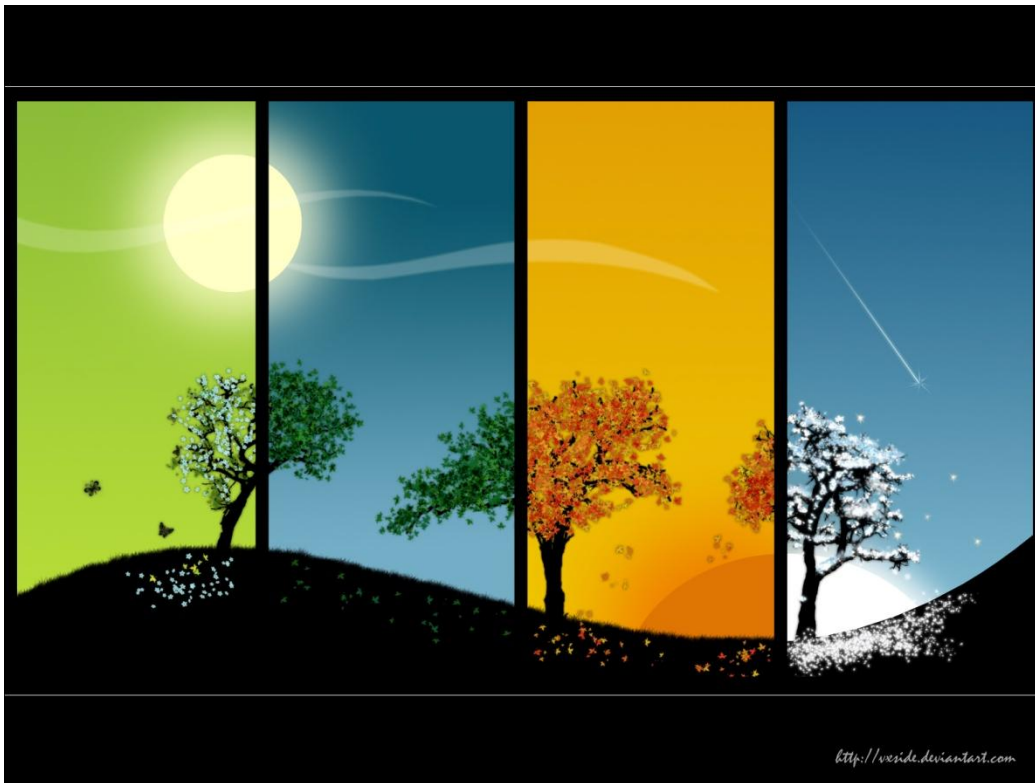
Along with focusing on our strengths, focusing on our attention has got a lot of publicity the last few years. Scientists and researchers in the field of neuroplasticity know well that the brain changes physically in response to experience. Consequently new skills can be accomplished, either related to the body motor ability or the mental variety.

This is good news for people who have changed professions, trades or careers and vocations number of times. It is well established that experience activates neural firing and leads to the production of protein which enables new connections to be made amongst neurons. Practically it means that brain is not a static thing, but it changes through the lifespan, depending on exposure to new tasks and activities. It also means that with a certain focus and a mindful and aware state, we can retrain ourselves for almost anything. (as against a state of concentration, which is not awareness).

Neuroplasticity, or the ability of the brain and nervous system to change structurally and functionally as a result of input from the environment, benefits from making connections in life, aerobic exercise, emotional arousal and novelty. And this neuroplasticity in turn opens our brains and our intuition to new possibilities. It also helps our emotional intelligence, as long as the connections are genuine and true, not just motivated by business and opportunity.

Who is so dead that they do not want new possibilities? Many people stick with one thing their whole life because of survival and in the process of it end up disappointed, sick and hopeless, their relationships often in tatters. A life of variety and novelty are not only beneficial for our emotional stability but important in creating a life that is satisfying for us.

The good news here is not to feel necessarily disappointed that you have started but never finished many things or that you have done many things and not achieved the level of success and accomplishment you wanted. Feel good that these things have got you to where you are now and you are much the wiser and with more grit and determination to finally walk your talk and show the world who you really are.



Chapter 5

A Light on the Path

Charisma

We all need a light on the path at some stage of our journey and it could be a charismatic person you have met or a role model whose qualities you admire.

Naturally if you begin the journey towards making a significant change in your life, at some point, others may also see you in that light, namely that of a charismatic person.

Many more people could have charisma, if they wanted and even those with charisma could have more of it. Our education is good up to the point of teaching us how to use our minds. Unfortunately, all this learning is through our education and it is only half the equation. In a sense it is wrong, because it teaches you only half of the process. It does not teach you how to stop our minds.

It is possible to switch off the mind so it can be fresh again and in this freshness it will be more relaxed, more silent and have a power not of the usual variety. It will also have a charismatic effect on others.

We have to learn to switch off our minds when we want; only then are we masters of our minds. We're not taught this. If we were, millions more could be charismatic and even those with charisma would have more of it. How many ways do you know to switch off the mind? Before we can say 'stop' to the mind and it obeys us, we will first need to develop a far more watchful approach to it. For example it helps a lot if we begin the knack of simply watching the thoughts as they pass across the screen of the mind.

At first, this may seem impossible to do without jumping on every thought and either condemning or appreciating the set of thoughts. However, after a little while, if we continue to watch the thought process, we will observe that in fact they begin to slow down and eventually we will catch the gap between the thoughts.

The day you can observe the gaps between the thoughts is the day when your observation is becoming clearer and you will discover that you are only the watcher of the thoughts. You will also discover that we are not the mind. Because the thoughts move so fast without our watchfulness, we think that there is such a thing as a material, concrete mind, but this is not so. Mind is an ongoing stream of thoughts and 'Watching' is the Master Key to becoming aware of it, disidentifying from it and using it as a resource to our advantage.

Accepting Fear

Can we accept *fear*? If we have it, why not simply accept that, 'right now I have fear?' If the fear is there and it often is, either conscious or unconscious, by accepting it, you will notice and feel that suddenly it has disappeared.

The secret is: With any problem acceptance helps it evaporate, or put it another way, a problem disappears if we can accept it. A problem grows if we fight with it. What we resist persists. Therefore it really doesn't matter from where it comes, but more important is how we are going to deal with it.

Fear is the mind itself and the mind is a coward. Sure, the mind is a good servant but as a master it is destructive and sucks our life blood; if we fight with fear as the mind wants to do we will never have peace. Once in awhile try accepting fear and see what happens?

Living for an Ideal

Do you live for an ideal? Most of us have and many of us still do, I am sure. It is an old habit and one we can all fall into if we are not vigilant. It is one thing to admire the qualities of someone else and another thing is to try to emulate them, however the resulting effects can be damaging to us.

The ideal is in the future and we are in the present. To desire to be with the ideal man or the ideal woman is natural; at least for everyone who still wants to be in a relationship. But we have all heard the story of the perfect man who was looking for the perfect women. It took him long time, but he finally found her. The problem was that she was also looking for the perfect man, and it wasn't him.

Desire for the ideal job, the ideal career or creative challenge is natural, but it is far healthier to first accept the spot where you are right this very minute. If we can do that, then something else may become possible. If we don't accept the current situation, we will probably sabotage any likelihood of success as we need to come to grips first with why we are in the situation in the first place.

Probably the most dangerous characteristic is to be shooting for an ideal of yourself that is not you at the present moment. What happens when we do that is projecting an image of ourselves onto a far away screen and to drive our whole ambition, personality, energy and guts into this image and to try and mould ourselves into a cardboard replica of ourselves, or some far-off ideal of the imaginary person we think we want to be.

This precludes us from living in the moment and from being natural human beings. There's nothing wrong with wanting to be better human beings but the vital ingredient for this

transformation is to really and truly accept who we are right now and to see with the most brutal honesty, what sort of person we have become.

With this accurate insight, without ANY negative judgement about ourselves, we just might become that person we want to become; BUT not before. The secret is to accept ourselves exactly as we are without judgement of any description, as the judgement prevents the transformation and will stop us seeing clearly what we need to see. What do you think?

Pleasing others is a Waste of Your Valuable Time

On the journey towards a good life for you and your family, many times you will be called to compromise your truth and yourself.

It helps, if we always search for the real and are not deceived by the society. Society is for the individual, not the other way around, but we have become so comfortable with the trappings of society that even the poorest of us can usually afford a relatively secure, safe and comfortable life.

Because of this we tend to forget that once in awhile our cosy world will crash, especially if we get sick, seriously ill, or one of our loved ones leaves us, or even worse, dies. Once you assert yourself and say what you feel strongly, some people will be angry with you because the moment you become more aware, you are no longer under their control.

Most people get hurt by criticism and flattered by compliments. However, we only get hurt and shattered, because society itself is shattered; it is a chaos and usually so are we. How can we expect to be anything other than a chaos if we accept all the stuff that society dishes

up and accept at face value compliments without asking whether they are real or not? We also accept at face value criticism, even when it is not real.

Mostly, if you move towards being a light unto yourself some people will leave you and others will remain, but irrespective of either, you will be free and that is more real.

Integrity

I have mentioned it before, but it is worth mentioning once more, because time and time again you will be tested. For example, it is recognised by a few very good business analysts and marketers par excellence that there are four main drives about which I have written before. They are the drive to acquire, the drive to defend, the drive to belong and the drive for knowledge, or to comprehend.

For myself I lean more to the drive to comprehend, understand and experience. However, when it comes to the market place, a job, a career, a vocation, profession or business, it is not so easy to formulate a plan. The reason is that the drives do not create the identity we are trying to uncover; rather the need for a congruent identity fuels the drives.

Putting it in clear English, people are naturally attracted to someone, or a group, with whom their values resonate and in whom they can sense certain integrity. This integrity is not so much in what they say or what products or services they sell, but in who they are, according to the observer's perception.

For me this criterion of being 'judged' based on what we are doing, is by far the one I prefer the most, if we have to judge at all. Although I cannot say that I have integrity, but someone

else can. It's obvious that if I say anything positive about myself at all, it smells of self interest and people do not like that at all; it is far better that someone says something positive about you, if they want.

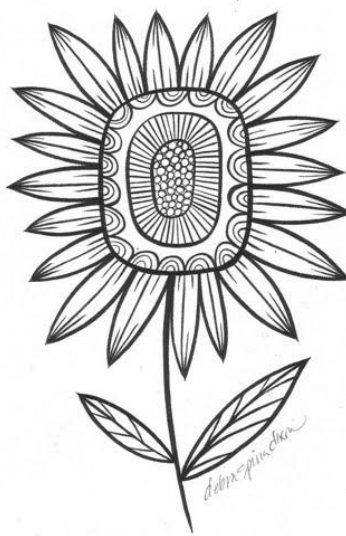
Integrity means an undivided nature, not a nature where you show your partner or friends a certain face and your work associates another. The plain fact is that we all have to work for this noble aim.

It is not sufficient to copy someone and think you have attained integrity purely by your outward observance of polite rituals or certain actions. It is an inner journey and one which no-one can do it for you. Once we start moving towards integrity, the journey is a little lighter and maybe even a bit easier.

I hope my ideas and thoughts make the way easier and the path less daunting. I wish you all the very best of luck and good fortune from the bottom of my heart.

Change is the only thing of which we can be certain.

Chris



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CONTACT

Chris Borrett

chrisborrett@bizleap.com.au

Mobile +61 (0) 410 473 068

www.bizleap.com.au

