

Instant Motivation

Victoria Belue Schaefer



The Secrets to Tap into Your Unlimited Resource
of Pure Power to Make All Your Dreams Come True

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by
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Acknowledgments

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It's true that we are a reflection of the people who surround us. I am profoundly grateful and blessed to be in the company of these amazing souls.

*For Kevin, Cyle Elizabeth and John,
My constant love.*

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Introduction

I have been outrageously fortunate. In addition to being surrounded by the love of family and great friends, I have also met some amazing people who have become my mentors. I have learned so much from them and acquired many answers to some perplexing questions. I realized along the way however that all the knowledge in the world was worth nothing if I didn't apply it. Simply stated, if I wasn't motivated enough to apply all the knowledge I had learned, I would essentially be wasting it. It was at this point that I turned to what I have instinctively created and honed over my lifetime – foolproof ways to motivate myself.

I realized I wasn't alone in the need for motivation. As I looked around and took stock of my friends and family, I saw that they too often lacked the motivation to make a lot of their dreams come true – dreams that would be incredibly beneficial to everyone if manifest. There were no other barriers for them, or me, preventing us from achieving what we wanted and living at our highest potential. The light turned on in that heretofore darkened corner of my mind. That was the moment I decided to write this book. Out of necessity, I have had to motivate myself all my life, whether it was getting through college, getting my first big job, working and being the mother of two little kids or being a small business owner. Life demanded that I push forward with my goals.

Another fortunate gift I have been given is the ability to conceptualize, organize and produce. In order to accomplish all that I needed to, I had to find ways to motivate myself when I really didn't want to do anything, or when I thought I couldn't do anything. Being a creative person, I get bored easily and old methods of motivating myself would only work for so long. Therefore I was continually creating new ways to get excited about the things I had to do. Over the years I have come up with dozens of ways to motivate myself.

There is a entire cottage industry of speakers whose sole purpose is to motivate you. I have heard what a few of them have to say, and some of it is really good advice and inspiring. However, I have come to understand that the only person who can truly motivate you is you. That fired up motivational speaker isn't going to be beside you in those moments when you know you need to be doing something but just can't drag yourself to do it. By reading this book, you will learn all the tricks that I have cultivated over the past four decades. And I must say, they are really effective. I have learned how to save time, money and sanity with these techniques.

The greatest ideas in the world are worthless unless acted upon. Let's get started.

Chapter 1: Emotion in Motion

What's Going On?

What is motivation? Simply put, motivation is acting in an effort to achieve a desired goal. We decide either consciously or unconsciously to achieve something and then act on it. It is how we get things done. Conscious motivation, however, is not how most of us operate on a daily basis. Most of the time when we get motivated to do something, we don't even realize it because it wasn't a conscious thought. It came to us subconsciously, and it was spurred by emotion which was triggered by one of our senses. It is a chain reaction that happens in a split second. For example, we are motivated to eat specific food when we smell a delicious aroma wafting from the kitchen. We can be motivated to go dancing if we see someone on television dancing the way we like or perhaps the way we want to. We might touch something that reminds us of warm sand on a beach and before you consciously realize it, you are browsing Caribbean vacation destinations online.

More often than not, our emotional state dictates our direction and level of motivation. It is a good or bad day based on how we feel. How we feel is frequently derived from a completely unconscious source. Becoming aware of this fact can be life-changing. Something as simple as waking up on a Saturday morning to a neighbor's lawn mower when sleeping in was on your agenda can start your day on a sour note. Do you realize the rest of your day will have a negative tone until you are motivated in a different direction? Indeed, anger is one of the most powerful motivators in the world and we see it played out daily in the news.

This book is about consciously motivating yourself, but to understand how to do that, we need to recognize how we are motivated unconsciously by other people, events and a multitude of other things. We are subject to our environment and the people in it. We are adrift in a sea of unconscious motivation that surrounds us. Any hope of being conscious about anything is lost until we recognize what has happened. On the other hand, if you recognize that you don't have any motivation, or an undesired kind of motivation and you blame it on the noisy lawn mower setting you off in the wrong direction, you know that you can change that feeling and become instantly motivated. You can reclaim your power and pump motivation back into your life in the blink of an eye. Not only is it easy, but it feels great.

Feelings are, by nature, completely subjective and can be totally irrational yet quite powerful and valid to the owner of them. Emotion is in the driver's seat for most of the things that motivate us. Emotions can inflate your desire, thus motivate you, in an instant. These are the things we do on impulse. Think about the last time you did something on impulse. What was it? Did you do it because you really *felt* like doing it? Was there any sound logic involved in the decision making process? More than likely there wasn't much thought given to it. Instead, your feelings took control and you acted.

Shopping creates a lot of emotion for some people. It has been proven in scientific studies that a shopper's heart rate will actually increase when they find something they really like. Our emotions are suddenly in motion when this happens. Countless spontaneous purchases are made this way. Perhaps that is why it is called retail therapy. We get that adrenaline charge, our heart rates

increase, our blood is pumping and we feel good.

No one knows this better than the self-made millionaires and billionaires. One morning I was watching television and I saw Warren Buffett, the legendary stock investor and billionaire who, even in his eighties is still as sharp as a tack, call into CNBC's Squawk Box to speak to another business legend, Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, who was co-hosting the show. Jack asks Warren if he remembers how, when he was a very young man, he sold all the purple shoes that the shoe store he was working for couldn't sell. Warren laughed and said he asked his boss to pay him a higher commission. His boss agreed, so five cents commission was paid to Warren for each pair of women's black shoes he sold, but twenty-five cents for each pair of purple shoes he sold. Warren says he was more motivated to sell the purple ones therefore he told his women customers that men will notice them from farther away if they were wearing purple shoes than if they were wearing plain black ones. "I was able to have more drive and incentive," Warren Buffett explains. Furthermore, the women were motivated by the desire to attract men. This is a wonderful story that perfectly illustrates conscious motivation by both Warren Buffett as the salesman and his women customers who were caught up in the emotion of shopping.

There have been savvy salesmen around the world for centuries who understand how emotional shopping can be. When a shopper sees something they like, not only does their heart beat faster but their eyes involuntarily dilate due to the increased blood flow. Some cultures are more aware of this than others, and in those cultures people negotiating a deal will actually wear sunglasses sometimes so that the other person can't see that tiny reaction in their eyes. It is also why some professional poker players wear sunglasses. When they get a good hand their eyes can uncontrollably dilate sending a distinct message to their opponent.

These are just a couple of examples of how feelings affect us physically and motivate us. Of course the opposite is true when our emotional state deflates us. Then we are also motivated but usually to do things that are not so good for us. The classic example is turning to food for comfort when we are unhappy or upset. Our emotions are in the driver's seat propelling us to eat the entire pint of Ben and Jerry's Cherry Garcia in one sitting. Does it sound like I am speaking from personal experience? It should because I have done this, more than once.

When strong emotions are involved, everybody back up, it could get ugly. We basically feel out of control when we are unmotivated and by doing something compulsive, like overeating, we misguidedly feel in control again. It is very difficult to recognize the root cause of out of control behavior, especially when you are in the throes of it, but by doing things like reading this book you will now know and be able to recall it the next time it begins to happen. None of us are perfect, so the chances that you and I will lapse back into compulsive behavior sparked by depressed emotions and flat lining motivation are great. All we can do is our best to remember what got us there in the first place. If we can stop having even that last bite of Cherry Garcia from the almost empty carton, or not buy that last item that we really don't need, then we have regained control and our motivation begins to climb back into positive territory.

The first thing you must understand about making the unlimited power of motivation work for you is that emotion rules the roost. Most of us work from a completely unconscious standpoint

when it comes to motivation until we understand what is happening and why. It is like my mother used to say, “You don’t know until you know. And once you know you can’t unknow.” What she meant is that you can’t beat yourself up about doing something reckless or unwise if you didn’t know any better. But once you do know, like right now, you can’t fall back on the excuse that you didn’t know. So maybe this is one of those *aha* moments for you. It was for me when I figured it out.

Emotions are wonderful things to experience. Those feelings of love, joy and excitement are not to be missed in life. Indeed, some would argue it is the *raison d’etre* of living, yet they do go hand-in-hand with their emotional counterparts. The argument has been made so many times that you can’t know love without knowing fear. Without fear you would not understand love. So it goes with any other emotion or feeling you can name. It must have a polar opposite in order to exist. There is nothing new to this idea here except to add that all of these emotions and feelings create a level of motivation within us – whether positive or negative, constructive or destructive – and it is how we consciously recognize the impact of these emotions and how we choose to put them to work for us that takes us to the next level.

What is the next level? It would be living at your highest potential using all of the considerable tools you have at your disposal. Emotions would certainly have to be at the top of your list of power players to call on. Some would argue they are more motivated by logic than emotion. In other words, they are ruled more by their head than their heart. I can understand this line of thinking. I have, most of the time, regarded myself as making decisions based on what my head said over my heart when the two were at odds. That means that right next to emotions on your list of go-to tools for optimal living is rational thinking. Yet in a head-to-head match of reason versus emotion, I daresay that emotion would win in those split second decisions most of the time – even for hard core rational thinkers. Why? I believe it is because of the way we are geared. We all have a heart in the magical sense of the word. Therefore, we have to recognize the powerful role emotions play in our lives and how to put that enormous energy to work to motivate us in achieving our goals.

Think of your goals. Everyone has them. Some people are extremely aware of theirs and work toward them every day, making lists, scheduling appointments, setting deadlines. Others aren’t sure what their goals really are at the moment. For those of you in the latter category, I want you to know that we all are there at some point in our lives. We have all experienced the thoughts that you just don’t seem to be headed in any particular direction or feel motivated to do any one thing.

I have one question for you in that boat: What do you love more than anything else right now? Whatever answer came to you first, without any forced thinking about it, is the direction you should begin exploring to find your next goal. Yes, it is that simple and here’s why. Goals that have the fire of passion behind them always succeed. I am sure there is some law of physics to back me up on this. (I am just not going to take the time to look it up.) When you put the full force of your energetic love and desire to work on a goal, it is going to be met. I have never seen it fail. That is why you hear these amazing stories of people who will see someone trapped under a car and they seemingly by a miraculous act lift the car up and rescue the person. This is a perfect ex-

ample of someone who is using the power of their conscious, focused attention (passion) coupled with their desire to attain otherwise impossible results. Some people might call it a miracle. I believe it's physical science in action.

The act of consciously and effectively motivating yourself is one of the most powerful tools at your disposal to achieve everything you have ever dreamed of and contribute to the world as well. Let this book guide you to put your own conscious creation in motion.

Begin to be now what you will be hereafter.

–William James

Is It Contagious?

Your emotions are more powerful than your logic most of the time, so you might as well use that existing power to your advantage. When you are in a very emotional place of being, you can accomplish things that you would never believe possible – this includes things that you end up regretting too so be careful. This also explains another real phenomena called emotional contagion. Researchers and psychologists have studied emotional contagion for decades. The results say that we are affected by the emotions of others. Furthermore, the scientific studies that have been undertaken prove it. We witness emotional contagion frequently. Think about national sporting events. My husband loves football and basketball, and we have been to many NFL and NBA games. The emotional contagion is so strong that even a mild fan, like myself, gets swept up in the energy. We were at a playoff game once and the excitement was so palpable that it felt like there was an electrical charge in the air. I understand that this energy can actually be measured.

Vividly I recall another event on the opposite end of this spectrum. On the tenth anniversary of the September 11th tragedy, I watched the televised memorial service at ground zero. The emotional contagion of grief was so strong that I sat in my house, seventeen hundred miles away, and cried over the loss of people I had never met. Just watching and listening to the family members and friends speaking of their loved ones moved me to tears. Passion is motivating; and enormous passion can sway the masses.

Do you recall a situation where your attitude shifted dramatically because of the crowd you were in? Have you ever walked into a place where the attitude was completely different from yours and before you knew it, you had embraced it? Some obvious examples that I can think of would be going to church, or going to a party. You may not be in the emotional state of either place until you walk in. Then, within a few minutes you are feeling the same way the rest of the group is. That is emotional contagion and it motivates you in a very powerful way. Marketers also use emotional contagion to motivate and manipulate us. A perfect example is a supermarket. Volumes of books have been written and years of research have gone into the best way to lure shoppers into buying the things the supermarkets want them to buy. There is actually a fascinating science behind it that I have read about. And it seems to work beautifully for the businesses. Subliminally we, the

shoppers, are being enticed on many levels and therefore motivated to buy the featured items.

Think about a sale that is advertised at one of your favorite stores. The sales price may not even be that tremendous but, depending on the marketing that has gone into it, you may be overwhelmingly motivated to be there at the store the minute the sale begins. And if there is a line or a crowd, well then everything is really cranked up to a higher gear. The power of a group emotion must never be underestimated. Civilizations have been toppled because of it. Wars and religious movements are absolute testaments to it. Once the juggernaut that is emotional contagion on a grand scale starts moving, it is almost impossible to stop. At the heart of it all though is individual motivation. Even though it could be sparked by a number of different things, once a person is cruising at their optimum power and confidence level they are undefeatable.

Some people are more powerful than others at relaying their emotions (verbally and non-verbally) thereby causing emotional contagion. We call these people charismatic. They do this consciously sometimes, yet more often than not the vast majority do it unconsciously. The effect is the same however. The receiver of the emotion adopts it as their own. We have all been exposed to this form of emotional contagion via a charismatic person.

The incredible life of Joan of Arc comes to mind as a perfect example to illustrate this point. Credited with saving France from complete obliteration as a country during the first half of the fifteenth century, Joan of Arc believed she was on a mission given to her by God. Motivated by what she called divine visions, this teenaged girl single-handedly rallied unmotivated French troops into an assault team that wiped out English forces in several battles reclaiming vital parts of France that still exist today. Joan of Arc, through her own inspiration, spread her potent emotional contagion to an entire army. By acting on her profound level of motivation, she changed the course of history.

Bringing it back to this century and down a notch (okay, dozens of notches), I give you a personal illustration. Now, more than ever, it is essential that I follow an exercise routine. There is no way to get around it. And believe me, I have tried. Therefore you will find me at the gym several times a week. I used to jump on the machines to lift, push and twist weights up, down and sideways in an effort to tone my muscles. After a while I became totally bored with the process and wasn't seeing much result for the effort. One day out of desperation to do something that would definitely burn some calories, I went to one of the kick boxing classes that was offered. I was probably twice as old as most of the other people in the room. Nevertheless, because I studied martial arts many years ago and, in fact, became a first degree black belt in Tae Kwon Doe way back when, I was able to perform the kicks and punches actually better than most of those fresh faces. The cardio work out was another matter, but I did finish the class without embarrassing myself and I did burn a bunch of fat grams.

Now I am attending these cardio kick boxing classes several times a week. Some days I feel stronger and more capable than others. Yet I notice that even on those days when I don't feel the big mojo pumping through my veins, when the carefully timed and edited music hits a certain point, about two-thirds of the way through the hour long session, when the drums begin a fast throbbing beat, the emotion in the room shifts from near exhaustion to diving even deeper within

ourselves to pull out more power. The emotional contagion of pumped up energy sweeps across the room like a tsunami, and it feels awesome. I can feel the jolt of motivation within me and I can see and hear it in others. I must admit, the result has been very good for my bottom line. When the energy spikes for all of us in the room, we stop feeling the pain and exhaustion and instead feel the exhilaration.

Emotion is in motion all around us, all the time. In fact best-selling author and speaker, Steve Siebold, says in his book, *How Rich People Think*, “When work gets tough and frustration builds, the average person seeks emotional refuge through socializing, hobbies and weekend escapes. When super-achievers experience the same frustration they dig in deeper and persist until they solve the problem, because they love the challenge. This internally driven, emotional motivation eventually makes them rich...” Furthermore, people who are driven by this emotional motivation tend to socialize together, when they do socialize. They are attracted by the emotional drive they sense in the other successful people.

I have heard it said that rich people hang out with other rich people because of the money. This may be true in some cases, but I would wager that is the exception rather than the rule. I believe it is because wealthy people who have earned their own money also have that emotional motivation Steve Siebold describes, and they want to be around other people who exhibit the same energy. It is very motivating to them. If you pay close attention you can observe how emotion will dictate motivation. It is one of those proverbial light bulb moments when you actually see this happen. I promise, you will never be the same when it comes to interacting with people.

I can't help but notice the effects emotion has on the people in a group. The charismatic people tend to be the ones who spew the most energy with the more subdued people absorbing it. I have watched the dynamics of a cocktail party change from a boring corporate affair to a lively social hour simply because one person, fearless and full of fun and energy, walked into the room. He infected the rest of us with his mirth and we were all the better for it. Try it for yourself, and enjoy the experience.

The key is to keep company only with people who uplift you, whose presence calls forth your best.

–Epictetus

May The Circle Be Unbroken

Did you know that when two people meet for a casual conversation – even for a couple of minutes – that one will begin to mimic the other? Pay attention some time to an encounter of two people. It will probably be very subtle but it really does happen. One person will begin to shift the way they are standing to resemble the stance of the other person. If they speak with different accents one will begin to take on the accent characteristics of the other. It could be the pace at which one is speaking, the volume, or the use of hand gestures that is adopted. I know from personal

experience that this happens.

I was raised in Texas but went to college in Louisiana – New Orleans specifically. Even though these are neighboring states, there is a world of difference between the cultures and the accents. Shortly after arriving at school and interacting with other students I found myself speaking with bits of the same accent they had. I was pronouncing my words and inflecting them the way the New Orleanians were. I adore the culture of New Orleans and Louisiana, and while adopting the accent of the area wasn't intentional on my part, when I realized it, I considered it a happy accident. It was only years later when I read about mimicry that I understood what had happened.

Most of the time mimicry is on a completely unconscious level, although there are some definite exceptions. There are slick sales techniques that teach how to gain someone's trust by mimicking them. The desired result is that you put the person at ease, they let their guard down, and then you close the deal. The fact is, when done well, this technique is extremely effective. In his bestselling book, *The Tipping Point*, author Malcolm Gladwell not only writes extensively about societal contagion but about mimicry. "When two people talk," Gladwell writes, "they don't just fall into physical and aural harmony. They also engage in what is called motor mimicry. If you show people pictures of a smiling face or a frowning face, they'll smile or frown back, although perhaps only in muscular changes so fleeting that they can only be captured with electronic sensors." With all this mimicking and emotional contagion going on, you can understand how easy it is to motivate and be motivated around others or in a group.

Some people have been physiologically proven to be better senders of emotion than others. When you are in the presence of these people it's difficult not to adopt their emotional state. These people excel in sales and public speaking. They would also serve well as teachers. You can bet that the high profile evangelist ministers on television are master senders. They have amassed incredibly loyal followers and are the undisputed leaders in their circle of friends and associates.

Studies have shown that not only do close friends act similarly but they tend to earn about the same amount of money. If you are seeking motivation in a specific area, let's say making more money, find someone whom you think has the income you desire. Become part of his circle of friends or associates and you will begin mimicking this group. Not only will you become more motivated but you will begin earning more money. The reverse also holds true. If you are hanging around with a group of people who aren't where you want to be financially, or spiritually, or in a physically fit way then you will have a hard time achieving your goals. It's the mimicry principle at work.

I'm not saying that you have to ditch that special group of friends you have had since seventh grade. What I am saying is that you need to begin associating with another group of people who embody what you want in life. Maybe it is a professional group that meets once a month. Their influence will move you in the direction you want to go. You can remain friends with your old group. In fact, a bonus result may be that you motivate your old friends who get inspired by you so that they make the changes they have been wanting. As you get results and see others motivated, you will become even more motivated. The circle is unbroken.

Really great people make you feel that you, too, can become great.

–Mark Twain

Baby You Can Drive My Car

Remember the first time you got into your new car? I do. I have had many new cars, or at least new to me. The electronics in it were usually alien technology at first glance. I had no idea what to do with the buttons and switches, the blinking lights and strange sounds. Slowly, and with some assistance from the car manuals, I became familiar with all the cool stuff my car could do. Then it became second nature to me; jump in, press the start button, turn on the radio and press a pre-set button on my radio to hear music, put the car in gear and I am on my way. The same system works with motivation. Once you learn how to control it, it becomes a vehicle for you to go anywhere you want.

Like cars, motivation can develop problems such as stagnation and it could sit for a while awaiting repairs. With motivation however, we are all our own mechanics. Intuitively we know what to do. It took me years to sort this all out. We are human and we go through those human cycles. The ebb and flow of life. Sometimes motivation comes bounding to us unbidden and swoops us up in its thrilling arms. It is the *je ne sais quoi* of life when this happens.

Did this unexpected gift arrive because of how the planets were lined up in the solar system? Could it be the combination of food we had for breakfast, or some form of subtle energy of which we have no clue? The simple answer is I don't know, but I have witnessed it happen in others and personally felt myself enter into these cycles of motivation. It's a delicious, giddy feeling that washes over you. You are compelled to begin something new or continue with it or best of all finish a project. And the finest part of all is that you do it with passion. You create without trying. Marvelous things flow from you effortlessly. It's like you have no other choice but to be doing this. It reminds me of lyrics from a blues classic by John Lee Hooker, "It's in him and it's got to come out. Boogie chillen'." Savor these times and remember them. They happen to all of us, but only occasionally, and they are certainly the exception more than the rule.

Staying motivated is an emotional adventure. Get ready for a wild ride that can go something like this: You feel frustration because you don't have any motivation. That can turn into determination to kick start the process. Anger usually quickly follows because it feels so hard at first; like starting to push a giant boulder up a hill. Then you experience surprise when you feel that delicious sensation of motivation kicking in. Now you are on the sublime elation part of the ride. Power and confidence are your companions as you hit the full force of your motivation. All your goals and more are accomplished. Wow! What a ride!

More often than not you really aren't motivated to do the project that you were so excited about six months ago that you haven't touched in five months. The passion has cooled. You became busy with another project that caught your attention. You know you need to finish this project. It's a great idea, and you really want to but you just let it slide. We all do this without exception.

The difference now is that you will learn through this book how to control your motivation. You are in the driver's seat and know how all the lights and buttons work. It's time to put yourself in gear and go!

People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing - that's why we recommend it daily.

-Zig Ziglar

I've Got the Music in Me

One of the most powerful motivators we can put to our use is music. It is also one of the most emotional. Music, like scent, is integrally tied to memory. Many of the things we like and dislike in life are directly related to a memory we have. When we experience something for the first time an imprint is made. According to Dr. Clotaire Rapaille in his informative and fascinating book, *The Culture Code*, these deep imprints begin at birth. "One of my discoveries was that in order to create the first imprint of a word – when you learn a word, whatever it is, "coffee," "love," "mother," there is always a first time. There's a first time to learn everything. The first time you understand, you imprint the meaning of this word; you create a mental connection that you're going to keep using the rest of your life. And to create this mental connection, you need some emotions. Without emotion, there is no production of neurotransmitters in the brain, and you don't create the connection. So actually every word has a mental highway. I call that a code, an unconscious code in the brain."

Think about one of your favorite songs. It's tied to a fond memory isn't it? You can remember a scene from your life that makes you happy and that song is related to it somehow. Now think of a song you really don't like. It is also tied to a memory, but one that isn't so pleasant. As Dr. Rapaille states, there is brain chemistry at work here in the form of neurotransmitters that are firing this way and that, very scientific, yet the result is profound emotion taking place in you.

Music is being used to motivate us every day and everywhere. Sometimes we aren't even aware of it. Commercials on television, radio and online use music to make us want to purchase their products or services. Some advertisers use the nostalgic route, again because we have memories attached to certain songs. Some songs are almost sure bets to evoke positive emotional responses in a large majority of people. (Think of the Star Spangled Banner, our national anthem, for example.) Other advertisers go for the newest, hottest music; it depends on the audience they are targeting. Some commercials will knock off a popular song to create the same emotional response that the original did. Other commercials will have a cover of a song (a popular song sung by someone other than the original artist) whose emotion they want to convey. This is such a powerful means of reaching their potential customer and most of it is subliminal and unavoidable by the intended target. The end result is that it works. The music emotionally connects with us and we notice what is being advertised. Will this lead to us purchasing the product or service? Many times it does and

that is why this method of advertising is so popular.

I once heard someone describe music as a spiritual vibration. I instantly knew what they meant, and I agree. Music touches our spirit in a way that nothing else does. It resonates deep within us. The notes themselves, the vibrations, hold a magic that transcends language and culture, time and space. Music has been explained in mathematical terms – quarters, sixteenths, meters and such – for well over two thousand years. The ancient Greeks declared that “all nature consists of harmony arising out of numbers.” Among them is the great scientist Pythagoras who is generally regarded as inventing the diatonic scale and describing music for the first time in mathematical terms. In this exquisite blending of science and art, we have one of the best motivators in our lives.

This fact did not go unnoticed by the ancient cultures. The Assyrian philosopher, Iamblichus describes with awe the magic of music as Pythagoras laid it out. “And there are certain melodies devised as remedies against the passions of the soul, and also against despondency and lamentation, which Pythagoras invented as things that afford the greatest assistance in these maladies. And again, he employed other melodies against rage and anger, and against every aberration of the soul. There is also another kind of modulation invented as a remedy against desires.” The science allows the art to be created, and we are motivated by the direction and source of the notes. Music from a lyre was considered to be of the highest order for communing with the gods and soul purification. Cymbals not so much. Students of Pythagoras were discouraged from using what he considered this ear defiling instrument.

The use of modulation of certain notes has been rediscovered by modern day research. Ancient cultures knew that 528 hertz is a frequency for healing and DNA cleansing. By listening to the tone for a prolonged amount of time you can adjust and realign your body’s chemistry toward a healthier state. Following the British Petroleum oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, a pair of researchers sent waves of 528 hertz into an area of water in the gulf. After several hours, the researchers claimed the area to be teeming with oxygen again and pollutant free. What does this have to do with motivation? Not only were these researchers consciously motivated to help clean the toxic water but they used one of the most fundamental and powerful tools of the universe – sound – the great motivator to do it.

When I write, I pop in my ear buds and often listen to Johann Sebastian Bach. His use of formal mathematical patterns in his musical scores results in some of the most sublime music my ears and brain has ever heard. Bach has been called a metaphysician because of his architectural assembly of music. Neurologists have stated our brains get stimulated in the most marvelous ways when listening to music of this sort. New neuro pathways are created, and the old ones get tweaked as I type along to the rhythms of J.S. Bach and some of his buddies like Mozart and Beethoven. Not only do I feel alert and creative, I feel emotionally and physically good listening to this kind of music. If you haven’t spent any time with this genre before or very much, give it a try when you are studying or creating. You will be amazed with the results. This is one of the great secrets of motivation.

Music is always motivating you, sometimes though it’s not in a positive or productive way. You

must pay attention to what stimulates you in a productive way and what takes you in the opposite direction. It's not only the music but also the lyrics that can be very unmotivating. Think about the words that you are listening to, are they encouraging you to move forward with spine-tingling desire to accomplish your goal, or are they making you want to go jump off a cliff? Seriously, listening to angst filled lyrics is not the way to get yourself through a project more than likely, unless it were a moody painting or something of that sort. In that case then, it may indeed help.

Some musicians and writers understand this concept instinctively. It's fascinating to me that as tastes in popular music change the great artists always pay homage, whether consciously or not, to the ancient universal sounds. Consider the ethereal chants of the medieval monks. High spiritual vibration in action there. Intuitively they found the way to give voice to the spirit of the Divine. The notes vibrate within us, speaking directly to our spiritual DNA. The notes connect with our core. Science meets spirituality, as it was meant to be. Pythagoras would have been proud.

Jumping ahead a few hundred years, think about the sublime orchestrations of the classical masters such as Mozart, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky to name a scant few. The immortal melodies they committed to paper were resonate too with our intrinsic understanding of vibrational harmony. Every generation since has been motivated and inspired by these masters and their contemporaries, and have paid homage to and borrowed from these geniuses.

One of my favorite songs by the Beatles is *A Day in the Life*. The lyrics were quirky and unprecedented for their time, "Woke up, fell out of bed, dragged a comb across my head." They described what could have been a day in the life of a lot of young adults at the time. "Found my way downstairs and drank a cup, and looking up, I noticed I was late." But being the amazing geniuses that they were, the lyrics were only a part of the incredible whole. Suddenly from the simple rock and roll song with the traditional assembly of guitars and drums springs a richly textured orchestrated symphony complete with French horns, violins, trombones, and yes, cymbals. Sorry Pythagoras. It was rock and roll taken to an unexpected and sublime level. No one had ever heard music like this before. It was a phenomenal success. John Lennon and Paul McCartney showed the world that they could create with the universe's orchestra, but on their own terms. From a motivation standpoint, the musical style they created is still being used, reinvented and evolved.

The recurring chords and instruments used are essentially the same as what was used more than two thousand years ago. Percussion, strings and drums. And the emotional result is still the same – motivating humans in one form or another. That's why music is vital to motion pictures. A great sound track can make an otherwise mediocre film into something great. Let's look at a couple of blockbusters, *The Big Chill* and *American Graffiti*. These are text book examples of a sound track enhancing a movie to a spectacular degree.

The music defined the era of these movies. *American Graffiti*, directed by George Lucas, opened to rave reviews in 1973. This coming of age story of a young man in the 1950's was an immediate hit. Nostalgia for that era swept the country due in large part to the movie's sound track. In 1973, the majority of movie goers had also come of age in the 1950's. They too had strong emotional ties to the songs *Rock Around the Clock*, *My Little Runaway* and *Sixteen Candles*. Audiences identified with the characters because of their own personal relationships to the music.

The *Big Chill* directed by Lawrence Kasdan was released ten years later in 1983. With a collection of mainly Motown songs from the 1960's like *I Heard It Through the Grapevine*, *My Girl* and *What's Going On*, another generation was defined through this music. *The Big Chill* was a blockbuster hit and two separate albums of the movie's sound track were released based on popular demand. Both filmmakers understood the value of tapping into the emotional connection they knew audiences would have with the music. It underscored the plots and added exclamation points to the visual flashbacks. In addition, a new generation was being introduced to the music in a very positive way. It's no surprise that films began regularly using previously recorded hits to imbue their powerful emotional stamp.

If you want to be motivated, if you want to go from zero to sixty in the blink of an eye, turn on one of your favorite songs with a medium to fast tempo. Your heart, brain and feet will be moving instantly. The power of emotion should never be underestimated.

Music has always been a matter of Energy to me, a question of Fuel. Sentimental people call it Inspiration, but what they really mean is Fuel. I have always needed Fuel. I am a serious consumer. On some nights I still believe that a car with the gas needle on empty can run about fifty more miles if you have the right music very loud on the radio.

—Hunter S. Thompson

Instant Motivation Action Steps:

- 1) Recognize how much emotion plays into your motivation.
- 2) Recognize how you are manipulated by the emotions of others.
- 3) Associate socially and professionally with people of the same emotional level or those whose level you aspire to.
- 4) Recognize group mimicry and notice if you are motivated by it.
- 5) Recognize which music motivates you. Does different music motivate you in different ways?

Chapter 2: One Small Step for Man

I'm Writing This To You In Reverse

Leonardo Da Vinci was one of the greatest figures of the Renaissance era; some would argue of all humankind. I would be in that camp. When I think of masterful, creative genius, he is at the top of the list. DaVinci's ground breaking achievements in art, medicine and engineering leave most of us wondering, how did he have time to do all that? My guess is that he was highly motivated on a daily basis. I believe all of us have the potential to be creative masterful geniuses, but if we don't apply it and communicate it in tangible form to share with the world, then no one knows.

All of my life I have thought of ways to motivate myself and others. Not every technique works for every person, and these are guidelines for you to embellish and interpret as you choose. This is the starting point. I am certain there is a bit of DaVinci in all of us. He was a genius at not only coming up with the ideas, and writing them down in his diaries – usually in reverse – but then having the immediate and sustained motivation to execute them into sublime works of art and inventions never imagined before.

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.

–Agatha Christie

Start Me Up

Some days I wake up ready to go with a to-do list that I am truly excited about. Days like these I move from one project to the next with enthusiasm and joy. I get a lot accomplished and I feel great. Then there are those other mornings when I get up, make coffee and sit at my computer staring at random bits of news and entertainment that crosses my cyber path. I notice that an hour has passed and I haven't even checked my work email or glanced at my to-do list. I feel stuck in neutral, frustrated and don't know what to do next so I return to browsing digital fluff. If you have days that start like this sometimes – or often – then I have some solutions for you.

Stand up. Seriously. From wherever you are sitting right now, whether you are in bed ready to turn off the light, or you're in a coffee shop, or on the subway or even in a space ship, stand up. Now, walk in a different direction from what you normally would from this spot. We all have our routines, and I am asking you to physically walk into a space you don't normally occupy. How does it feel? Scary? Uncomfortable? Exhilarating? All of these feelings have motivation behind them. Congratulations, you have just pushed that huge boulder of inertia into action.

Take another step in an unfamiliar direction. Turn around and look at where you were. You realize you are in a different place now, right? Physically and mentally you have changed positions. You were motivated to take those few steps. What was it that motivated you? Was it the desire to change your circumstances? Was it your curiosity to see what would happen if you followed my silly sounding suggestion? It could be that something clicked inside your mind that

said, “Yes, it is as simple as standing up and taking a few steps in a new direction. Yes, this is what I want for my life.” The fact is you motivated yourself.

The moment you feel that spark, return to your desk or easel or kitchen counter or wherever you want to work and immediately begin what you were previously stalled on. By doing something different, even on that minor scale, you made your brain pivot and reassess where you are. Instinctively our first thoughts are about what we desire. If you act, in that moment, you will recapture your motivation. Waiting even a minute or two can cause you to lose the momentum. Think about the word *momentum*. The root is the word *moment* and refers to the present, not the future.

Leap, and the net will appear.

–John Burroughs

Bake The Cake You Want To Eat

There are as many opinions about Martha Stewart as there are cookie recipes from the epicurean empress. I respect her enormously. After her fall from being the guru of “it’s a good thing,” to a spending five months in a West Virginia federal prison after being convicted of lying about a stock trade, Martha reignited her passion a thousand-fold when she was released in 2005. That same year, she published a book, *The Martha Rules*, designed to inspire and guide small business owners toward success.

I read the book, found it truly helpful, and adopted one important point in particular from that day forward. Martha Stewart said to always bake the cake you want to eat. What this means is, don’t waste your time creating something you don’t love. Sure, we frequently find ourselves having to work on projects we aren’t in love with. That isn’t what I’m referring to in this case. What I want you to understand here is that when you have the opportunity to create something – anything you want – create something you love, not something you think someone else will love or buy. When you lock your creative muse in the closet and try to out-smart or out-think her, what you inevitably end up with is a half-hearted attempt that looks like just that. Rarely are projects like this successful. They only serve to suck your precious time. Furthermore, your motivation won’t be sustained for the project causing it to be even more mired in mediocrity.

Success is virtually guaranteed when you are motivated by your heart to create something. Passion is the secret ingredient that makes all of the best recipes in life work. Of course, there are times when you may be executing someone else’s idea for a project. Under those circumstances provide your best work with your greatest intentions. That in itself is a sincere form of passion and can bring fantastic results. When you have free reign, go for your passion. Pick up that paint brush, sit down in front of the computer or whatever you need to do to express your passion.

Grab a piece of paper or open up a blank page on your computer. Now, without thinking about

it – it’s essential you don’t think about it – write down all the things you love doing. Just start writing. It may be one thing or a dozen things. The number of things you write down doesn’t matter. What does matter is how quickly you write them down. Once you pause in your writing from the initial spurt, then stop. No more writing. You are done. Don’t go back, edit or erase. Just take a look at it. Here is your passion.

Great dancers are not great because of their techniques, they’re great because of their passion.

–Martha Graham

Don’t Wait, Order Now

When inspiration hits you, act on it. Don’t wait. That’s what my friend, Dr. Joe Vitale, always says. He knows what he talking about. As a best selling author of books like *The Attractor Factor* and *Zero Limits* and who has also starred in the viral blockbuster masterpiece, *The Secret*, and other films, and as a prolific creator of DVDs and CDs, I have seen him go from a deep appreciation of the guitar, and saxophone which he didn’t play at all to writing, producing and performing on six CDs during the course of three years. And his music is great!

Joe intertwines spirituality and marketing into something I call practical metaphysics. It is a fabulous approach to creating your passion, and Joe readily shares some of his tips. “When I get an idea for a book or a product, there’s a rush of excitement that comes with it. I start acting right away, to ride the wave of that energy. Sooner or later when I have to get some sleep or do something else, I do. When I return to the project, I just pause and imagine what it was like when the initial idea hit me. That remembering causes me to rekindle the flame of passion. I then start writing and working again. In short, I keep the momentum going by recalling the inspiration that started it all.”

We have all had those moments when we were caught up in doing something. We don’t notice the passing of time or hear anything that might normally distract us. We are absorbed. We are motivated. And we accomplish a great amount in a short span of time. Usually what absorbs us isn’t work but something we are passionate about – cooking, playing a video game, reading a great book – the list is endless. We wanted to engage in it right away. We couldn’t wait to dive in. It’s called being inspired and has been translated to me to literally mean be ‘in spirit.’ Have you heard the old saying, “When the spirit moves you?” Same thing. Since we are all souls having an Earthly experience in our transport vehicles called bodies, our true nature revolves around spirit. It is therefore no wonder that when something inspires us we become absorbed by it.

Writing inspires me. Since I was a child, the art and craft of putting words together to exactly convey my thoughts has inspired me. I knew I was a writer when I was a small child. Summertime for me meant almost daily walks to my public library. I knew the children’s section by

heart and could have found my favorite books while blindfolded. There were two rows of fiction and an almost full row of nonfiction that were all mine. (Or at least I imagined they were.) I would carry home an armful of books and sit in the tree in my front yard in the hollowed space that seemed perfectly carved by nature as a reading seat.

After several hours on an adventure in one of my books, I would feel inspired to write. I wrote for fun to entertain myself, and sometimes for family and friends. I would create my own characters and have them take the most amazing journeys and meet the most interesting people. Sometimes I would be in my tree all day. Only when the sun began setting would I reluctantly climb down.

If you watch children at play, you can see what inspires them. Quite often what they enjoyed doing then is what they will be passionate about as adults. My daughter always loved to play dress-up, but she put her own twist on it. She was never content to simply choose clothing to wear, she always wanted to modify them or wear them in different ways. The result was always creative, original and fashionable. Today as a beautiful young woman she has created her own line of intimate apparel with a playful note added to the mix. She was inspired as a child and spent lots of time expanding on that motivation. It has definitely paid off for her.

He who hesitates is lost.

–Proverb

Making A List and Checking It Twice

Sometimes a lack of motivation is the result of simply not knowing what to do next. Do you just feel overwhelmed by all the things – large and small – you have to do? You know it's a lot and it all seems so jumbled, huge and scary that you decide to ignore it all and do nothing. This is so common that I would call it the norm for most people. Thankfully the solution is very simple. Make a list. Pick up a pen and begin writing – right now. Write it all down. The big stuff and the little. One of my lists actually had, back-to-back, “categorize tax return receipts” followed by “empty cat litter.” It's all important and has to be done. Remember to determine what must be accomplished that day. Be thoughtful and don't overwhelm yourself with a list that is as long as your arm.

Work on your list for at least five minutes yet no more than fifteen. Now take a break. Grab something refreshing to drink. Come back to your list and look at it. What's the first thing that catches your eye? That's probably the task that is nagging you the most and the biggest culprit of stealing your motivation. I would recommend doing this task first. Use one of the tips from this book to instantly motivate yourself for the job, and get to it. However, if you still just can't dive in, then do the next best thing, prioritize your list. There is stuff that needs to be done today that can't wait until tomorrow. Obviously those are the top items on your list. Let's face it, putting these sorts of things off that you know you must do become energy suckers. Whether you

realize it or not, the stress of not doing these things stays with you. It weighs you down. It goes to bed with you. It's the first thing you either consciously or unconsciously think about when you get up. It's really not worth all the stress it causes you. Make the determination right now that you will take care of those energy suckers and feel the relief. Trust me, you will feel it.

Some days for me I do the quick and easy things on my list first. Other days I first choose the things that I can do sitting at my desk. There are those occasions when I decide to do the oldest things on my list. You know, those things that keep moving from yesterday's list to today's list, over and over. This particular choice makes the next step especially sweet – when I can put that simple yet powerful check mark beside the task. Whew! I finally did it! Now why, I think to myself, did it take me so long to do something that really wasn't a big deal to do?

This is when your motivation usually kicks into a higher gear. You set your sights on another job on your list. Without thinking about ways to stall, you launch into it and before you know it, it's done too. Another practice I have learned to employ is to agree/promise/threaten myself that I won't watch television, take a personal phone call, go online for anything not directly related to my tasks until I complete a certain number of them.

If you decide your list is too overwhelming, it may be time to eliminate things. Remember that you can delegate some things to family members, and maybe friends, co-workers or someone who works for you. And the truth is, if a task has gone undone for weeks, or even months, you might be able to cross it off your list forever. It depends on what it is. Doing your tax return is not something you can eliminate, but washing the car is. Marking things off your to-do list is a great motivator in itself and could very well get you back on track.

Don't forget to give yourself lots of props along the way for doing such a great job. You deserve a pat on the back, even if it's from your own self. This empowers your motivation even more. Making a daily list of things to do is one of the most effective ways to get motivated. I have discovered that most people really aren't lazy or unmotivated. They just don't know what to do and when. Try making a list and checking it twice to send your motivation through the roof.

The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones.
–Chinese Proverb

See Me. Hear Me. Touch Me.

When Joe Vitale, told me years ago that he was going to be featured in a movie called *The Secret* which explained how each of us can employ the Law of Attraction to create all the things we wanted in our lives, I didn't know what he was talking about. I had never heard of the Law of Attraction. My first thought was it had something to do with an online dating service. Seriously. Instead what I learned from watching this amazing viral blockbuster was how extraordinarily powerful our thoughts and feelings are. I learned how we create even when we don't

realize we are creating. And, here's the most astonishing part, we are creating constantly. If you think about this, you can realize the double-edged sword that's present in this scenario. If we are unconsciously creating all the time, then all of our thoughts are contributing to what we manifest in physical form; the good and the not so good. According to the Law of Attraction, we bring it all to us through our thoughts and feelings.

The concept of having all this power within each one of us is daunting, to say the least. It instilled a great sense of responsibility in me when I understood what was happening. After watching *The Secret*, I began applying it in my daily life. I tried to be very mindful of what I was thinking and putting out there. I must say that what I focused on attracting, I did indeed attract.

To really test the Law of Attraction I decided to focus all my energy on manifesting a certain amount of money coming to me in the form of a check. Each day I would meditate at about the same time and at the end of the meditation I would focus on seeing the check in great detail written out to me. In my mind's eye I could see the check written out with my name as the recipient, I saw the amount written in numerical form as well as in words. I saw a signature at the bottom and a date at the top. I noticed the color of the check and I could even smell the ink and the paper it was printed on. (As I said, I spent a lot of time and energy on this to test it out.) Within six months, no joke, I had a check in my hands for almost that exact amount. You can do this too. I recommend watching *The Secret* if you never have. I also highly recommend reading some of Dr. Joe Vitale's books on the subject. The steps involved in manifesting what you desire are some of the same steps for getting and staying motivated.

The Law of Attraction talks about seeing, hearing and feeling the results you want. Motivation works the same way. Take another look at your to do list. Pick something on the list. Now visualize what it will look like to have that task completed. Is a room painted? Is a dog washed? Are tax receipts organized? What does it look like? What do you hear when the task is completed? Is the accountant saying thank you? What does it smell like? Fresh paint? If this seems a bit ridiculous to you, I am here to emphatically tell you it's not. Once you begin putting all of your senses into motion you will get motivated. You can't help it. The task suddenly seems within reach.

When you see it, hear it and touch it you have taken something abstract and made it much more concrete. Your extraordinarily powerful ability to create is consciously set into motion. Be confident that what you are imagining will manifest, then turn it loose into the hands of the universe to create. If you follow these steps, you will get what you desire. Remember the old saying, "be careful what you wish for," because you can unconsciously wish for something you don't want and that too will manifest. The concept of good or bad doesn't register with the universe. It only knows that its powerful energy has been directed toward something specific, kind of like a car's headlights. It will manifest whatever you focus on. This is one of the most effective and powerful motivational tools that you will ever employ. Use it wisely.

Having a goal is essential in manifesting what you want. If you simply want to be rich or happy, you are not being specific enough to manifest it. That is why you must see your target firmly

in your mind. Smell it. Taste it. Hear it. That is how you powerfully set your sights and get what you want. I have said many times that most people simply don't know what they want. Despite this fact, we are all still creating constantly, and what we are creating is what we are focused on. If your thoughts are fear based, you are attracting the things that scare you. Even though you may be thinking, I don't want this, you are nevertheless thinking about that thing which scares you. That will bring that thing closer to you because it is your focus.

If you don't want poverty, then think about abundance. See yourself as making more money than you could ever spend. Think about what you would spend the money on. A new house? Walk through your dream home in your mind. Wander from room to room looking at the details. What is the architectural style of the house? What color is it? How does it smell inside? Touch the furniture. How does it feel? By doing this, you have focused on abundance rather than poverty. Furthermore, you are motivating yourself to do what it takes to manifest this? Now, place your goal lovingly into the arms of the Universe and don't stress over how you are going to create this. Instead, what I always say is, "I create this or something better."

What happens next is that subconsciously you begin taking the necessary steps to manifest your goal. You have freed yourself from the constraints of worrying about how you are going to create this and opened yourself up to simply create. Trust your natural ability. It knows what to do. Too often we get caught up in the mechanics of how to make something work and we lose our goal. By trusting your natural ability and letting it flow through you, everything you desire will manifest. It is the law of physics, which I will discuss in more detail later in this book.

If you can dream it, you can do it.

–Walt Disney

You've Got To Get in the Game

To get and stay motivated sometimes you have to make a game out of it. If you are a competitive person, you probably understand how this works already. My husband is one of those competitive types. He loves racing his bicycle. Even though he is more than half way through his forties, he is still very physically fit and loves to compete against racers in their twenties and thirties. During races he's certainly motivated by the thought of how much he wants to win the race, yet there are hours and hours of training and riding that go into becoming a successful bicycle racer. I asked him what motivates him to keep going. He says it's the thrill of the race; feeling the excitement of being in the race. While he's training and on long rides he plays a game with himself. We live in Austin, Texas. There is a huge bicycling community here, therefore any day that Kevin is out riding, chances are very good that he will come across many other riders. He will spot a rider a good distance ahead of him and begin "chasing the rabbit" until he catches and passes him. Kevin find this very motivating. This technique works really well because it demands his full focus for a limited amount of time with his desired pay off not

too far away.

I think this is a great motivation game to play and I do something similar at home. I am committed to being on my treadmill no later than eight o'clock on weekday mornings. This is perfect for me because I want at least thirty minutes on it. I am also committed to watching the start of CNBC's Squawk on the Street. I get my financial and news updates, think about what is on my schedule for the day and have a good workout. It's what works for me. So my game is that if I can get on the treadmill before eight o'clock, I'm getting bonus time in for my workout. I'm burning more calories! I have also added the self competition of running all the way up to the ringing of the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange and sometimes the entire segment after the bell ringing and up to the first commercial break. If I do all that, I have had a great workout and I feel terrific. I get motivated by the thought of knowing that I will feel great if I do this. It's like CNBC's Mad Money host Jim Cramer says, "you need to get in the game." Indeed, and you will be happier and healthier for it.

Realistically though, some days I don't feel like even looking at my treadmill, let alone jumping into a thirty minute sprint. I have another game for days like those. I tell myself I'm just going to walk for five minutes. That's all I have to do, I tell myself. Go put on your running shoes and just walk for five minutes, I say in my head. It's such a measly amount that I can't say no. So I get on the treadmill and begin walking. It always feels good. Walking, even slowly, gets oxygenated blood pumping through my body. Almost without exception, the sluggish feeling I had and the reason why I didn't want to walk disappears. I start feeling good.

Here is where my self-game continues: I tell myself, this feels great. Give it another five minutes and increase the speed just a bit. Before I know it, I have engaged in a decent workout. Even on days when I feel motivated, I still play a game with myself on the treadmill. I will push myself to keep running just thirty seconds longer – that's all – or just another tenth of a mile. By giving yourself very small goals that are easy to reach and then adding another small goal when you reach one, you are building toward the accomplishment of a big task and pushing yourself to new standards. This is so valuable to us on a personal best level. We feel great when we know that we have pushed ourselves successfully beyond our limits and created new boundaries that we are proud to have. I know how good it makes me feel, and the energy of this confidence is perceptible to others. If the biggest competitor in your life is you, then these self-games will be a major benefit to you.

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.

-William James

Sir, We Have A Problem

Does this sound familiar to you? Something breaks, or isn't working properly, and you decide to fix it. Then you end up spending much more time trying to fix it than you had ever planned.

Whether it is a software program, the kitchen garbage disposal or my weight gloves, I hesitantly admit that I have spent an inordinate amount of time trying, and sometimes fixing, these things. While frustrating, projects like this can also be very motivating. It's woman versus machine, for me. This thing isn't going to beat me and in the process I am focusing and accomplishing something I want.

Here is a perfect example: In my effort to accomplish more than one thing at a time, I am always thinking of ways to double up on my tasks. While I am on my treadmill in the morning, I wear two-pound weights that are neatly sewn into fingerless gloves that I then secure around my wrists with Velcro straps. Marvelous invention except that my hands become sweaty as I punch away while walking, and the gloves begin to slip back and forth across my knuckles. After a few minutes of this, it becomes painful and I know the skin is being methodically scrubbed to a critical point.

Motivated to solve this problem because I need that upper arm workout, I begin punching a bit differently. What this does, I notice, is activates some extra muscles in my arms. Yes! And because it is a new punch for me, I am focused on the motion and not thinking about the exercising itself. The result is I have solved the problem of repeatedly scraping my knuckles, added some more calorie burning and muscle activity.

What is a problem that has been nagging you? It may not be as immediately noticeable as your knuckles being scraped, but I bet there is something that you would like to solve. Decide that you want to deal with it once and for all. Start working on it, and if you are like me, you will be absorbed by it in a matter of moments, determined to fix it. Turn adversity into opportunity and be motivated by it. The victory feels amazing.

A disclaimer must be interjected here. Sometimes motivation is a process. While the spark is instant, often you must take some steps to get to the spark. Don't be discouraged. The more you practice this skill of taking control of your conscious thoughts and steering yourself toward what you want, the easier and faster it becomes. It is like anything that requires practice – the trombone, cooking, driving a race car – you must do it frequently and with the intent of mastery. Those required steps become second nature and evolve rapidly with tenacious practice. At some point, you don't even notice them and the motivation happens on your command. Until that point however, know that you must do the necessary things that lead you to the threshold of motivation. There is no cheating on this one.

The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.

–Thomas Paine

Sign Up for Our Rewards Program

Rewards programs are a fabulous idea. The credit cards I choose to have are based on the rewards they offer me; miles for one and cash back for the other. Motivation benefits from the

same rewards system. When I have one thing, or several things, that need to be accomplished, and when I get motivated and do them, I reward myself at the end. Sometimes just accomplishing the job is reward enough, especially if it's something that I have either put off for a while or something really big that took a lot of time and effort.

We are deserving of rewards when we set out to do something and actually do it. It motivates us to do the next thing on our list. Furthermore, rewards can be anything you choose, dessert twice in one day, watching a movie in the afternoon, going shopping, maybe all of these.

While a reward isn't necessary for everything you do, it can truly motivate you when you need it. Like tasks, the rewards can be large or small. It all depends on what excites you when you think about it. An example for me was when I noticed an email one morning from Neiman-Marcus Last Call for thirty-five percent off my entire purchase, that day only. Being a weekday, I had a list of things to do that really needed to be done that day so I decided I would reward myself with shopping after I finished my list. Can I tell you how fast I did it? Record time. I was motivated. I did not want someone else picking up the perfect dress that was meant for me – at thirty-five percent off.

When my two children were young it would often be difficult to get them motivated to get ready for bed. There was much involved, a bath, teeth brushing and tidying up their room. My solution was the one who accomplished these tasks first would get to take our cat, Cinnamon, to bed with them. This created great motivation every single time. Now some could argue that I was bribing my kids, and I would disagree. It was a healthy competition that taught them some excellent habits that they still carry forth today.

Decide at the beginning what your reward will be. It will keep motivating you as you go forward with the task. And hey, if the reward is something like dessert, maybe you won't even want it by the time you are ready to have it. Double bonus! Everyone likes to cross the finish line and feel like they have won. Getting motivated and accomplishing what you need to do makes you feel like a winner. You deserve your prize for a job well done.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought.

–Buddha

Instant Motivation Action Steps:

- 1) Recognize that ideas are not worth much without the execution.
- 2) When unmotivated, literally stand up and walk in a different direction from what you normally would. You will feel a tingling of motivation at the newnewss. At that moment, eturn to what you needed to be doing.
- 3) Create only things you are passionate about.
- 4) When motivated, or re-motivated, act immediately. Waiting even one minute can cause you to lose the spark.

- 5) Make a list. Prioritize it with things that must be accomplished that day. Write it all out so you can see it. Keep it short for that day. Try not to overwhelm yourself.
- 6) If your list is too overwhelming, decide if you need to eliminate some things. Choose carefully but do it. Elimination can mean delegation to someone else.
- 7) See, hear, taste, feel in your mind the result you want. You will be instantly motivated to act when you reach a certain level of intensity with this practice.
- 8) Create a vision board or erasable white board. Write or draw things on it that motivate you. Keep it where you can see it while you work. You can also have a cork board where you pin photos and articles that inspire and motivate you.
- 9) Create a game in your mind that motivates you to accomplish something.
- 10) Give yourself a small goal. When you reach it, add another small goal. They will add up to big results.
- 11) Turn adversity into victory by tapping into your intellectual warrior nature. Attack a task. As you proceed to get it done, you become motivated by the results and it speeds you toward your goal even faster.
- 12) Reward yourself for completing a task. Decide in advance what the reward will be. This is a very powerful motivator.

Chapter 3: Let Me Stand Next To Your Fire

Now That I've Got It, What Do I do With It?

Motivating yourself is not usually an easy or pleasant process but once you have kicked it into gear (hopefully with my help) you might ask yourself, okay now what do I do with all this motivation and energy? When you reach that rarified air of knowing you have motivation flowing through veins and your lungs it's time to take action. Motivation and inspiration are two sides of the same coin.

Inspiration, is derived from Old French and means "in spirit and breathe in." It is the creative sibling of motivation. Sometimes when you get motivated you get creatively motivated. If you are motivated and receiving creative inspiration then you are dwelling in a sublime place indeed. The great artists and inventors are in this place when they do their best work. Michaelangelo took on the daunting task of painting the Sistine Chapel while being suspended in air lying on his back on a hard wooden platform. My guess is that he had to be not only motivated but incredibly inspired while creating what would turn out to be one of the greatest works of art in all humankind.

I wonder what motivated Albert Einstein to work tirelessly on his theories of physics after putting in a full day as a patent clerk. What was it that compelled Ludwig van Beethoven to keep writing music even though he had become deaf? It must have been inspiration with a hefty dose of motivation creating a burning desire to express their thoughts. And aren't we glad they did?

I believe it is within each one of us to do the same. We all have a unique gift to give in this life and if we don't express it then it simply won't be expressed. When that magic moment occurs and you realize that motivation is at its peak for you, act on it. Stay with the moment. Whatever you are motivated to do, do it (as long as it isn't harmful to anyone, of course). The energy of the universe is at your fingertips. Don't be afraid. You won't fail. Furthermore, if you can consciously acknowledge what this motivation feels like, you can recreate it whenever you want. Think about what created the spark in the first place and put yourself back into those conditions, under those circumstances. This will take some practice yet this is one of the best motivational tools in your box. Grab the moment and take the action you are compelled to take. Your own masterpiece or scientific breakthrough is just waiting to be released by you.

When the solution is simple, God is answering.

—Albert Einstein

Yeah Baby, She's Got It

I mentioned earlier in this book how someone feeling a strong emotion can walk into a room and instantly change the dynamic. Emotions in motion are a powerful thing. If you are filled with motivation, you convey the energy of motivation, and people will pick up on it. Furthermore, they will be subconsciously drawn to you. It reminds of one of my favorite songs from

the 1960's, *Venus*, by the one-hit wonder band The Shocking Blue. The song has been covered several times since then, and you've probably heard it before. The lyric that fits so perfectly here to illustrate my point is, "Yeah baby, she's got it!" You know when someone has "got it." The energy, I mean. You feel it and you want it. Everyone does. Most people would shrug their shoulders and say, "Yeah, she's got it, but I don't and I won't ever have it." They go on with their lives feeling unspecial and uninspired. The truth is, and you know it too now, we've all "got it." And we can turn it on like a light bulb and use it for our specific needs.

There needs to be a word of caution here about people I call energy vampires. We have all been exposed to them and have maybe even been one ourselves unconsciously at times. Energy vampires are people who recognize your motivation or high energy level and crave it for themselves. They try to drain it from you by standing close and interacting with you. Although there are the really scary ones who are conscious and educated about this technique and can actually drain you from long distances.

The metaphysical energy drain works in a very scientific way and has been described by many credentialed doctors and scientists. These accounts and studies are fascinating to read and easy to find on the internet. What the results of their studies show, among other things, is that whenever two people or more engage in a conversation there is a natural exchange and mingling of energy. Our minds are one-hundred percent energy. Sure we have a nice physical brain that some call our minds, but that's merely the housing for the power plant inside. It's important to note that a person's emotional state will dictate the power of the electric charge they emit. If you have a strong feeling of love, for example, it is actually measurable on a meter.

Without going into much technical detail here since complete studies are readily available online, our brains send a signal to our hearts when we experience a strong emotion. Our hearts produce one of the strongest electromagnetic fields of the body which is measurable. These energy emissions are picked up by equipment seeking to measure it as well as people who are standing close by. I further submit that they can be recognized by people who are sensitively tuned into the human body's energy frequency and who could be at a distance away from the subject.

Energy healing is a science that has existed as long as humans have existed. Whether used on a conscious or subconscious level, energy has always been used to heal. Sometimes it is called reiki, therapeutic touch or prayer, yet, no matter the title, healers have tapped into this constant and unlimited source of universal power to help their patients for thousands of years. Furthermore, it is not necessary that an energy healer be in the same room or even the same city for the process to work effectively.

For energy healing it is necessary to tune into the patient's energy frequency – much like tuning into a specific radio station. One of the first things an energy healer begins a session with is intention. The scientific studies on the transfer of energy in these healing modalities mention the necessity of intention too. This is where science and spirit meet in a natural alliance with the perfect creation.

Okay, you might be saying to yourself right now, I believe this. Certainly with science back-

ing up these claims, I buy into the whole energy healing situation, but what does that have to do with motivation? Everything, is the simple answer because motivation is energy in action. Motivation comes from your intention to do whatever you choose – wash the dog, build a house, create an art masterpiece. You fund that intention with energy. It all ties together in such a beautiful connecting cosmic web of perfection, the science and the spirit.

Another important aspect to consider with all of this is that most people are completely unaware that this constant transfer of energy is happening. We all know when we are attracted to someone. We can immediately identify that marvelous feeling within us. Of course there are as many definitions of what attracts one person to another as there are people on this planet. The energy exchange happens when two people come into contact with each other. Some call it chemistry, and in broad terms, I think it is about energetic frequencies aligning much like tuning forks. There is the romantic part of energy transfer which feels so good, and then there is what we are concerned with here which is the draining of energy, specifically motivation.

You can be motivated to do something and walk up to a friend who is feeling very unmotivated and, if you aren't careful, can have all your motivation drained by your friend. Negative energy can easily trump weak positive energy. Unless you are vibrating with motivation at an exceptional rate, the heavier, stickier negative energy will attach to you and you will lose your motivation. An energy vampire friend has just sucked you dry without him or you even knowing it.

When this happens in the future, it is best for you to leave their presence immediately. First, of course, you must recognize what is going on. As you become skilled at shifting your energy at will to motivate yourself, you will also become aware of when your energy shifts without your command. Again, this can be because someone is either consciously or unconsciously pulling it from you. Without causing any hurtful feelings or an awkward situation, excuse yourself and leave. I have done this many times, and even take it a step further by regrouping with a few moments of checking in with myself to regain my balance and energy level.

There are lots of people who also recognize energy vampires and quickly move away from them. I have witnessed this in action. Those aware of the assault tend to be highly motivated and successful people. Most of the vampires are completely unaware of what they are doing and are instead just playing out self-defeating beliefs they have had since childhood. Some of these vampires, however, are well aware of what they are doing and will pursue you. It sounds like something out of a horror movie, and in metaphysical terms, it is. These conscious energy vampires tend to be envious people who, for whatever reason, can't manifest their own motivation and want to drain you of yours. They seek to steal your motivation to make themselves feel better. You must avoid these people. Thankfully, they are fairly easy to spot with their negative, heavy energy. Just like energy healers, cultivated energy vampires can actually tap into your frequency from a distance with the intent on sucking energy from you. These creatures are few and far between but they can be a serious problem if they latch onto you. My best advice is to become aware of them and avoid them altogether.

Being in a motivated state is marvelous and amazing things come from this place. Other peo-

ple sense your energy and want it. Maybe you can help them with your own suggestions about how you tap into your unlimited source of power. Share the wealth.

Energy and persistence conquer all things.

–Benjamin Franklin

Ladies and Gentlemen, We've Reached Cruising Altitude

The dilemma I had when I first began tapping into motivation at will was there were so many things that I wanted to do, I didn't know what to do first. I remember being almost giddy with excitement over how great I felt. If love is the drug, then motivation is an ice-cold martini on a hot summer day out by a beautiful pool. It is intoxicating. When I become really motivated I have to rein myself in a bit and decide what I will focus on. Yes, I want to write but I also want to choose new colors for my bedroom and clean my outdoor grill. I tell myself that I have to make a decision, and I have to make it right now. Okay. Writing wins. I will think about new bedroom colors and clean my nasty grill later.

Reaching this cruising altitude can be overwhelming from an energy standpoint as well. Your motivation is sparking in all directions, so once you choose your focus, let's say writing, then you need to quickly organize what you are working on. I remember thinking that those outlines that we always had to create in high school English class and turn in before we began writing our term papers was lame. What was the point? You just sat down and wrote the paper, right? Well, now I not only understand the reason behind those outlines, I employ them a lot. (However, I still refuse to use those nerdy note cards.)

Writing long pieces, like this book, demands that you organize your thoughts into chapters and sub-chapters. So the first thing I do when I begin writing a new book is to let my motivation run wild for a few minutes writing down everything that I want to cover. This lasts as long as my adrenaline is pumping and I feel inspired. The moment it starts to lag, I begin organizing my notes into broad chapters. I end up changing them several times along the way and refining them, but this is a great way to start.

No matter what you choose to work on once the motivation starts to flow, it is always a good idea to organize it before you get too far in the process. This may seem like it's stifling your creative muse but really it's helping her continue in the direction you want to go. Have you ever been knee deep in motivation working on something that totally engrossed you only to come back the next day or so and wonder how all of the pieces fit together? This used to happen to me a lot. It's a frustrating and uninspiring predicament. After years of repeating this silly scenario, I finally figured out the solution. This works for anything, not just writing.

The next vital step is to carve out a time and space to work uninterrupted. Dr. Brian Little, a Cambridge University professor, research psychologist and motivational psychology expert says, "Your environment can either enhance or detract your motivation. Move if you aren't

motivated.” To truly flesh out a work of art or science, you must spend time developing it. That means you must create an inspirational working environment and have it ready for when the spark is struck. You must also reserve a block of hours, hopefully the same time each day, where you can focus on your project. For me, that place is my home and the time is when no one else is there during the day.

I tell my family and friends that I am writing at the beginning of the day and they know not to call, text or come by unless it is really important. I create an isolated, sensual environment that encourages my creativity and focus. I light a fragrant candle that invigorates me, usually a lemon or lemongrass scent and play music that is instrumental only. For me it is usually J.S. Bach, but lately I have found Ravi Shankar’s sitar music to be incredibly stimulating to my motivated senses. The result is I smell motivation and hear it. Now I brew a cup of green tea and I am ready to get to work.

It isn’t necessary for you to follow exactly what I do. Find something that works for you. If, however, you find that you are listening to the music more than working, then you may be distracted. The music is meant to be a sensual enhancement and nothing more for this purpose. That is why I don’t listen to any music that has someone singing. I will catch myself listening to the words and not working.

The same caution can be given to whatever you are drinking. It should enhance your mood of work, focus and creativity, not distract from it. I remember having a glass or two of wine one evening with a friend and then coming home and trying write. Impossible. My focus lasted about two minutes and what I did write was average at best. Furthermore, I cannot drink anything with a lot of sugar while writing. I get too stimulated then experience a big crash that makes me want to take a nap. Find what works for you. If you can work at your project for the entire time you have dedicated to it, with a few breaks, then you have found a winning combination. Whatever you do, don’t give up. If it motivated you in the beginning, chances are it is worthy of developing. Once the idea is born, it is only a matter of dedicating the time to bring it to fruition.

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.

–Aristotle

The Universe Loves Speed

I am not certain where the phrase “go with the flow” originated. Maybe it has something to do with the direction a river or stream of water flows. That sounds logical to me but it could have come from anywhere. What I do know is that when motivation hits you that is the best time to dive into it and “go with the flow.” The universe loves speed and if you are motivated and jump right into what has inspired you, the energy of the universe will synchronize with you and make the results happen faster and with outstanding quality. If you wait, you run the risk of losing the

momentum and inspiration. You get distracted by something else. Suddenly your great idea is a fuzzy notion that doesn't seem all that worthwhile after all. Meanwhile, someone else in the universe has subconsciously picked up on your idea and is running with it realizing how fantastic it is and how lucky they are to have it suddenly pop into their head. Does this really happen? All the time.

Have you ever had an idea that you didn't act on and then a year or so later you see or hear about your idea being produced by someone else? We have all had that happen to us. How can that be? The answer is simple. We are all connected through the collective unconscious. Because thoughts are things, as well as energy, when we have a thought it is transmitted just like a radio or television wave and can be picked up by anyone who is on our same frequency at that moment. Some people are more sensitive to this than others.

Genuine psychics and mediums consciously tune into other people's thoughts all the time. They can pick up on other frequencies as well, and not just here on the physical plane. They were probably sensitive to those frequencies since childhood and learned how to develop the skill. For the rest of us, we are picking up other people's thoughts all the time too, but we don't realize it. It can come forth to us as a brilliant idea out of the blue. (Please note, most people who call themselves psychics and mediums are not. They are frauds of the worst degree who pander to the frail emotions of people who are usually dealing with grief and loss. However, there are, and I have met, some gifted people who can indeed tune in to this etheric frequency.)

Thought forms are usually very subtle energy and most of us filter them out as background noise. We have so many other larger forms of energy in our faces constantly that these fragile little pulses are lost to us almost instantly. That being said however, there are moments, when you are in the shower or meditating or doing any number of simple activities where your mind is stiller than usual, when an idea will suddenly pop into your head. You don't know where it came from, but it's a really good idea. Most of us marvel at the cool notion and then stack it in our mental closet of cool ideas and never act on it. There are those, thankfully, who do act on their sudden inspirations and produce life changing results.

One of the greatest inventors of our age was Steve Jobs. He single-handedly changed the way we communicate. His inspiration and motivation equalled that of a thousand people combined. What do you think he did when he felt an idea spark in his mind? My guess is that he began working on it immediately by making notes and drawings. I bet he was very disciplined about spending time fleshing out his ideas. Whether he was instantly motivated or had to kick start it to reignite his passion, he did it and he changed the world. You and I are no different from Steve Jobs. We are made of the same cosmic stuff he was. The difference comes in the way we handle it. Do you recognize the great ideas that pop into your head every day? If you do, then do you act on them right away? That is the way you change the world. Just ask Steve.

There are some easy and practical ways to act on your ideas immediately. I employ several on a daily basis. One is an invention by Mr. Jobs – my iPhone with its Sticky Notes application. I have my mobile phone with me all the time so whenever I have an idea, or for that matter hear a song or meet someone, I will type a note to myself on my note pad. This is so easy.

Later when I am home and wanting that information or want to work on my idea, it's just an arm's length away. If it is a long form idea then I use another app on my iPhone that records my voice memos for up to thirty seconds. I just hit record and begin talking. The idea spills out and usually lots of details too. It is fabulous because when I play it back later I can hear the energy and enthusiasm in my voice and I get excited about it all over again. If I am not where I can type or speak my idea, I will think about it over and over for a couple of minutes so it becomes ingrained in my mind. Now the seed is firmly planted. When I have time later in the day I can make my notes or drawings.

When you take action once motivated, the action produces the momentum of more action. Inertia becomes your friend. It feels great to keep the pace going. You feel almost lost without the action and focus of your project. This does indeed happen, and it is a wonderful place to be. I think of a couple of the masters of productivity, Da Vinci and Jobs, and daydream that they possessed motivation twenty-four hours a day. In reality I'm sure they had slow, unmotivated days just like the rest of us, but I bet they were few in number. What did they do to tap into this sublime power source? I know one thing for sure, they acted on their motivation.

How soon 'not now' becomes 'never'.

—Martin Luther

Instant Motivation Action Steps:

- 1) Consciously acknowledge to yourself what motivation feels like when motivated so you can recreate that feeling or thought the next time you want to be motivated.
- 2) Beware of energy vampires. When you notice a shift of your energy in a direction you don't want, remove yourself immediately from that person and situation.
- 3) When you become highly motivated you may feel like you want to do several things at once. You must choose one task and focus on it until it is either complete or far enough along that you can be satisfied with your progress.
- 4) Carve out a time and place for uninterrupted work. Create an environment that stimulates as many senses as possible.
- 5) Recognize the great ideas that pop into your head, then act immediately on them. Make notes if you don't have time or the place for extended work.

Chapter 4: The Law Of Distraction

The Distractor Factor

Like most things in this universe, we humans experience ebbs and flows in our natural rhythms. We are awake, then we sleep. Optimally, we do this in a smooth rhythm. The pattern rests our bodies and minds, allows us to dream and recharge our human battery system. It works beautifully. Our natural motivation works on the same ebb and flow principle. Sometimes we are filled with motivation. Think about when we start an exciting new project. We can't wait to jump into it. Most of us begin with great enthusiasm and are carried along by momentum for a while. A classic example are people, and I have to include myself in this group, who have joined a fitness club right after Christmas. I have read how membership to these clubs jumps each January. The workout rooms are crowded with new members determined to shed their newly acquired holiday pounds. The first few weeks these folks are filled with motivation – their goal firmly in sight. Results may be a little slow at first, but they begin to see a difference in their weight or muscle tone. Somewhere around the four or fifth week, the frequency of visits begins to taper off, and by early spring people are once again going to the gym only randomly. Their motivation is an at ebb.

Distractions also occur naturally. Our brains are constantly processing thoughts. This barrage is always testing our ability to stay focused on our task at hand. Usually we lose the battle and our minds latch onto one of the random thoughts that pops into our heads, and we are suddenly off the rails. It takes a conscious effort to reconnect to the task and the thoughts surrounding it.

We waste an enormous amount of time by piddling. The internet is one of the biggest piddling playgrounds ever invented. While it can give us enormous amounts of knowledge, we can also very easily get lost in the wasteland of trivia and mindless material that sucks our time like a black hole. Furthermore, this happens in the blink of an eye. Does this happen to you? You go online with a specific purpose in mind, let's say finding a date that someone was born, you type the keywords into your search engine and suddenly you are faced with fifty-thousand matches, some that don't even answer your question exactly but catch your eye. You click on one and that leads you to another web page, and another, and before you realize it, you have spent twenty minutes reading about some random bit of information that isn't even close to why you went online to begin with. It happens to us all the time.

The best way to deal with piddling and get back on track is to make yourself aware of the tendency from the start. If that doesn't work, then try to catch yourself early on in the piddling process and stop yourself immediately. Refocus on why you want the specific piece of information – to complete a term paper, maybe – and feel the sense of relief that is just around the corner for you by getting back on track. That is self motivation.

As a society, we are programmed to focus exclusively on a task for only a short amount of time. The advent of surfing the internet has proven to shorten that focused time even more. Studies show that when browsing on the internet, we will stay on most websites for about twenty seconds before moving on. We are losing our ability to focus for more than a couple of minutes on anything. Distractions have become the norm. While our abundance of technology is wonderful on the one hand, it has become a social virus on the other. Researchers say that on average it takes

longer to turn a table at a restaurant because diners are focused on their mobile devices for the first few minutes after being seated. Whether checking in on Facebook, Twitter or taking a selfie, people don't even pick up their menus for up to ten minutes.

We can't solely blame our mobile devices however, humans have always been easily programmed and distracted. Television had to be credited, or blamed, decades ago, for dictating the length of our attention spans with its commercial breaks approximately every ten minutes. Still today, if you are watching channels with advertising, whether in real time or something recorded, commercial breaks do just that – they break your concentration on what you are watching. The same thing is true if you are watching something online. I believe it isn't healthy or productive for us to live in these almost constant states of distraction. Thankfully, there are many things we can do about it.

Do you want to know who you are? Don't ask. Act! Action will delineate and define you.
–Thomas Jefferson

Getting Over the Hump

When we successfully push up the incline and across the top to then begin coasting easily downhill is called getting over the hump. Whether this is actually what we are doing or just a metaphor, it is truly a great feeling when it happens. Everyone deals with getting over the hump every day. Some humps are small, others are huge. Some we barely notice, others bring us to a full stop. When you encounter a hump that has caused you to stumble or stop, begin considering your options to remotivate.

One of the biggest secrets I have learned in life is that we always have lots of options. On the initial glance it may appear that there is no option, or that you only have one, but if you look closer I guarantee that you will find more. This realization didn't come to me until later in life and it arrived in a most unusual way. I loved playing the board game Scrabble as a child. Since I have always been a writer, I suppose the love of that game is a no-brainer for me. When I discovered the iPhone app version, Words With Friends, I was immediately hooked. Several of my opponents are really good players who challenge my skill in every game. After I mastered the basic concept, I began to see and understand the higher strategy levels. It was here that I recognized that each turn offered a multitude of options. There was usually an obvious choice, but if I looked deeper and longer at the screen, I would find many more options, some being even better than the obvious choice. It was a real zen lesson for me when I realized the universal application of this. Trust me when I tell you that I apply this lesson all the time. The results are fantastic.

When I have to remotivate to get over the hump I think about some of my options and then I think about how I am feeling at the moment. The quickest way for me to remotivate is to marry the most compatible option to my mood. For example, let's say I am cleaning my house. I realize I am stalling on cleaning my bathrooms – my least favorite rooms to clean. I am thinking

about completely abandoning the project until later, but I really need to do it now is the nagging thought coming from the responsible part of my psyche. So my first glance options are either clean all three bathrooms or don't. Thinking about it a bit deeper, I realize I can clean just the downstairs bathroom now, and do the upstairs the next day, or I could clean just the sinks, floors and mirrors in all three bathrooms now and leave the rest for tomorrow. There are probably ten more options along these lines if I spent a few minutes thinking about it. Next, I do a quick scan of my emotional state to see how I feel. My heart isn't into cleaning bathrooms and I am on the verge of blowing it off entirely. Okay, the best pairing for this situation is to clean the sinks, floors and mirrors in all three bathrooms now which will only take me a few minutes and will satisfy my need to get the job at least partially done and for me not to feel lazy or guilty about abandoning the chore. The next day I will use another motivation technique to tackle the toilets, tubs and showers, or hire a maid.

By exploring my options and choosing one, I have pushed myself up the dreaded hill and have gotten over the hump. Remember, your imagination always makes it worse than the task is in reality. You can spend more time and energy trying to avoid the job than it would take to actually do it. Options can help you realize faster and less painful ways of doing a task. Think about something you have been putting off. Now think of at least five options to accomplish the task. Having fun and getting creative while thinking this through will make the whole project easier. Of course, being silly and coming up with outrageous options will make it less tedious for you, and you could actually spark a fabulous idea that will really work. Believe me, if I can have fun and be creative when thinking about cleaning my bathrooms then I know you can do the same with your tasks.

*If the wind will not serve,
take to the oars.
Destitutus ventis, remos adhibe
–Latin Proverb*

It Was Like Marilyn Monroe Walked into the Room:

I have already written about the necessity and efficiency of making a list. The organization and prioritization of tasks makes order out of chaos creating much less frustration for you. So, you have made your list and launched with gusto into the first task of the day. Everything feels great; you are focused, even interested in what you are doing. The phone rings or someone comes to your door and suddenly everything changes. Suddenly some major distractions have been thrown into your day. Chaos flies in the face of focus. What do you do now?

There are many different ways to handle distractions. The problem is most people concede and allow them to completely throw them off track for the rest of the day, week, year or even for life. I have seen lifetime goals dropped because of trivial distractions. I refuse to be a member of that

party, and so do you, or you wouldn't be reading this book right now.

I worked as a writer and producer for a television network affiliate in Dallas when my children were very young. My days were extremely long and constantly busy. They were also filled with distractions. My job away from home required that I juggle several projects at different stages of completion at once. Add to this the fact that I worked with multiple co-workers and clients on these projects, and you have distractions taking me off task on a frequent basis. When I returned home it was always with great joy to see my sweet babies and to get things like dinner and homework started. As all parents know, there are constant distractions during this part of the day.

Over the course of many years, friends would comment and ask me how I stayed so calm when things would seem to be melting down around me. "Irritatingly calm," is how one friend put it when she was quizzing me trying to pry out my secrets. I have to admit that I wasn't always so calm in the face of chaos and distraction. It took a good deal of conscious thought about how to handle those situations when they arose, and then practice when the reins flew from my hands.

When something unexpected happens and I get called away from my task, I am mindful of remaining centered about it all. Getting upset or frustrated won't help. It will only cause more distraction and delay. Therefore, I resign myself to handle the distraction with a positive attitude. My goal is to deal with it as quickly and efficiently as possible and return to my task. Sometimes this happens but sometimes it doesn't. It is the way things go and you must learn to be flexible when you are taken off task. It is very frustrating to be engrossed in what you are doing and have what I call a Marilyn Monroe distraction hit you. This means some big curves have been thrown into your plan that will certainly detour you. If you can't return to the task within a reasonable time that day then write it down as your first project for the next day.

Knowing is not enough; we must apply.

Willing is not enough; we must do.

–Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

With the Flip of a Switch

One of the biggest obstacles to remotivation following a distraction is to find your flow again. You want to be able to psychically flip a switch to be back in the mindset you were when you got distracted. So much easier said than done – until you know the secret. When you want to get back into the emotional and mental place where you felt inspired about the project, revisit the feelings you had that made you want to do it in the first place. Then you will become re-inspired.

The word inspired comes from the phrase "being in spirit," which is in fact the same thing as being motivated. If we recreate the feelings we had about the task, thinking about the task and getting re-inspired, it will be like flipping a switch to be motivated once again to that task. Not every project you work on is inspiring to you. There are those mundane things like cleaning the bathroom that you aren't jumping for joy over the thought of returning to, but there are ways to

motivate you to move back into that emotional space as well. We will cover those too, but right now realize that you can flip that remotivation switch every time you need to. Weave a positive emotion into your project, remember why you wanted to do it in the first place, and suddenly you have the power of a thousand volts at your fingertips.

They can because they think they can.

–Virgil

Welcome to the Block Party

We all have times when we can't write even though we need to be, or we can't draw even though we have a deadline, or times when we need to be doing something but we just can't think of what to do. It's called a block. As a writer, I know about it all too well. Writer's block has been immortalized by many legendary authors, Truman Capote who wrote *In Cold Blood*, Ralph Ellison, author of *Invisible Man* and Virginia Woolf who wrote many classics such as *Orlando* and *To the Lighthouse*.

The question that must be asked when you face a mental block is: Is it truly a block, or am I procrastinating? You must be completely honest with yourself to discover the answer. Blocks differ from procrastination in a big way. Procrastination is you finding excuses for not finishing, or maybe even beginning, a project. The delay tactics become a project in and of themselves. Quite frankly, procrastinating is exhausting because you still have the mental weight of the undone project sagging like an old, lumpy sofa in the back of your mind. Furthermore, the truth is that the burden of thinking about it, or trying to ignore it, is more tiresome than actually doing the project. Procrastination is related to perfectionism, which I discuss also in this chapter. The treatment for procrastinating, in my opinion, is the same as for writer's block. However, I believe procrastination has deeper roots than a simple case of getting stuck mentally for a short period of time. By calling yourself out on what is happening – that you are trying to trick yourself with distractions to delay a project for an extended length of time – you will be better able to deal effectively with it. We can all change our behavior patterns. We just need to choose to do so. Yes, it is that simple, but it requires courage and determination. The result is life changing though and allows you to live blissfully at your highest potential.

Blocks and episodes of procrastination happens to all of us. When it does, it means it's time to take a break, but a break with a purpose. Go do something completely different, yet plant that tiny little seed in your brain that you want your subconscious to work out the problem and remove the block so you can get back to work. Do you think it really works that way? Well, yes, it does. Your subconscious mind will do what you tell it to. If you tell it to worry about the fact that you have writer's block, then it will do that. But if you tell it to solve the problem, it will do that instead. Go for a walk, or go pull weeds in your garden. Try it. It will work.

If the block remains after ten or twenty minutes, don't worry about it. Give it some more time,

and really don't think about it consciously. Sometimes you need to call it a day and let the block dissolve overnight. Trust that it will, and it will. If it is a particularly difficult block, I will think about what comes next after the block, often that loosens up the mental log jam and allows me to fill in the space between what I have done and what I know is coming up.

Never give up on your project because you have a block. Tell yourself that you are going to remove it or move beyond it. Sometimes setting a goal bigger than the one you have is what it takes to solve the problem because then your mind begins working on the new goal and the solution for the old block falls into place.

When you are dealing with procrastination, you must go through the same steps mentioned for blocks but with an important amendment; you must set a time that you will begin working on the project again. Make a commitment to yourself, an unbreakable vow, that you will return to work or begin work on the task no more than twenty-four hours from that moment. Write down your commitment, or tell a family member or friend so that you now are accountable to do it. Post it on Facebook or tweet it. The fear of humiliating yourself if you don't do it will probably be greater than your reason for delay. Definitely it's a cheap trick, but hey, you have been tricking yourself already with numerous delay tactics. This will work. Then, after you have completed your task, or at least made major headway on it, you can put some serious thought into why you were procrastinating in the first place. Banishment from your creative kingdom is in order for this deadly thief.

One way to keep momentum going is to have constantly greater goals.

—Michael Korda

Get Out of Your Rut

Have you ever had a thought play over and over in your head? If it's not an inspired, motivational thought then it is one of the most insidious sappers of your time and energy. In its most extreme form it can be called an obsession and, depending on what the thought is, it can be horrendously destructive to you and others. More commonly though the repetitive thoughts you have are what I call mind ruts.

Think of a narrow dirt road out in the country. A soaking rain has just ended and a car drives down the road creating a track in the fresh mud. The car returns and drives down the road a while later, its wheels run over the same track making it a bit deeper. Each time that car drives on that road, it becomes easier and easier to just drive in the same track. Unfortunately it is also creating a rut that eventually becomes a hazard to drive in because it will become deep and narrow. We have thoughts that do the same thing. What is one of your mind ruts? We all have them. They develop unconsciously and can stay with us for years – decades, even our whole lives sometimes. They can become serious blocks for us keeping us from moving forward toward our goals.

The good news is now that you have called it out into the clear light of day, it won't be unconscious anymore. Every time you have this repetitive thought it will now also have another thought that accompanies it – mind rut. The next step is to smooth out that rut so that it disappears forever. First, you must decide if this mind rut is something that needs to be acted on. Ask yourself if it is something that would be useful to you, or that you know you need to do. If so, then decide, right now, when you are going to act on it. Maybe write it on your to-do list, and do it. If the thought is just an energy sucker that serves you no purpose then decide, right now, to stop it. Every time that mental dust bunny pops into your mind see it laying in the furrow of a rutted road and being smoothed over with fresh dirt until it vanishes. It will disappear from your thoughts altogether, hopefully sooner rather than later. That all depends on how diligent you are about catching yourself with the thought and how quickly you mentally cover it up.

My husband and I have a dear friend who is a veterinarian. His specialty is reptiles. When someone has a sick turtle or snake, he is the guy to go see. He also breeds many rare and unusual kinds of turtles. If you go to his house, his acre-sized lot is filled with large pens and small structures all for these critters. I often tell him that he is truly lucky to have met his wife – a lovely woman who accepts his quirky hobby. One day he called my husband to say that someone had dropped off a twenty-year-old, eighty-pound Sulcata tortoise at his office. It needed a good home. Before we knew it, he had talked us into adopting this gigantic beast who turned out to be quite friendly and whom we named Donatello.

One of the things that Donatello loves to do most is walk around our yard, in one specific path. He treks the perimeter of our yard back and forth many, many times a day. You may not think a one-hundred-pound tortoise can walk fast but they can, and they get stuck in their own patterns of habit that they refuse to alter. The result is a completely bare pathway hugging our fence line around the entire yard. One year we put a small raised tomato garden in a sunny spot against the fence. My husband, Kevin, spent a lot of time building the bed and filling it with organic soil, and I carefully selected a marvelous variety of tomatoes – heirloom, beef steak, yellow pear – and planted them. We began watering them every day anxiously awaiting their yummy bounty. One day soon after the planting I notice Donatello on his daily march. Rather than going around the raised box which was only a foot or two out of his way, and would have been infinitely easier than the alternative, he chose which was to hoist himself, struggling every step, over the wooden timber frame and into the tomato garden straight across to the other side and out of the box. He did this over and over, never wavering. Talk about a rut! Our tomato plants in his path were decimated.

As I sat on my patio watching this spectacle for a few minutes I realized that Donatello's nature was all about mind ruts. Maybe it's his survival instinct, I honestly don't know, but his entire purpose in life during those hours was focused on doing the same thing over and over again with unyielding determination. I began thinking about Dr. Clotaire Rapaille and his revolutionary theory about what he calls the reptilian part of our brains (the state of our brains when we are born where we are concerned only with survival). If he is correct, and I do believe he is, we not terribly unlike my giant tortoise. We too get thoughts in our heads which we repeat over and

over. Instinctively, referring back to our reptilian brain, we cling to set patterns whether they benefit us or not. Sometimes we even experience pain with these set patterns but we choose, mostly unconscious, to continue repeating them simply because we are familiar with them and can predict rather accurately what the outcome will be. I guess that means that we aren't so different from my tortoise. However, and it is a big however, we as humans have the conscious part of our brain, the cortex, to provide us with logic and the ability to reason. We can decide to go around the tomato garden because our logical mind tells us it is easier than going through it. The same principle holds true for any mind rut that we have. You can simply choose to change it.

Think about your mind ruts. What thoughts occur repeatedly that serve no beneficial purpose for you? We all have them. Some are very old, some are new. They often revolve around unresolved issues and beliefs in your life – maybe something big like making more money, or maybe something small like doing a chore around your house. The size of the mind rut doesn't matter at all. They are all equal in our reptilian brains. What does matter is that when you decide to remove the mind rut from your conscious and subconscious mind, it will happen. There are a few tricks that will help you do this.

To eliminate a mind rut you must first recognize it. What is it specifically? Saying it out loud will help you identify it precisely. Now you have brought this rut from your unconscious mind to your conscious mind. By speaking it you will be aware that it is a mind rut the next time you think it. When you realize that you have just had that rut pop up in your thoughts again try to stop at that moment and say to yourself, out loud if possible, “this is a mind rut that is slowing me down and I will not have this thought again.” Say something that works for you. If you do this enough that mind rut will disappear because your subconscious mind will do what you tell it to. It has to. Before long, that mind rut will be gone. Now you need to replace it with something you do want.

Our subconscious mind is basically set up to do whatever we tell it to, and we are telling it what to do all the time. The problem for most of us is that we aren't aware of what we are telling our subconscious mind to do. That explains why some of our biggest fears manifest. Subconsciously we create mind ruts centering on things we don't want to happen. By having repeated thoughts about, let's say, losing your job or gaining unwanted weight or never meeting the right person, you are powerfully driving these messages into your subconscious mind. The result is your subconscious mind goes to work, not understanding your conscious mind's concept of good or bad, right or wrong, to create what you are driving into it, job loss, weight gain, not meeting the right person. It really does work that way. Instead of creating the negative ruts, create empowering thoughts that motivate you and your subconscious toward what you do want, a secure job, healthy weight and a loving relationship. Remove the mind rut fear thoughts and change your life. In the process your motivation will increase exponentially.

Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.

The Boxing Mirror

I tend to be a perfectionist. It can be a wonderful gift but also a terrible curse. Reworking ideas and copy I have written usually yields better results yet involves a lot of time and thought. I have been guilty of working and reworking to the point of destroying the original great concept. This would create enormous frustration for me which sometimes resulted me using what I call the boxing mirror. While I didn't actually look into a mirror, I would chastise myself for pulverizing my work with my perfection. It took me a while but I did learn how, once the spark had been captured, to go back and hone it to polished perfection without altering it beyond recognition.

Perfectionism has another big consequence I discovered. When I decide to do something but first have to prepare to do it. For example, I love to write in the early morning. When I am up and ready to go, a freshly made latté by my side with the sun just getting ready to show its pale orange glow on the horizon in the distance outside my window, I feel enormously inspired and excited to begin. But first, before I sit down, I want to make my writing experience perfect. Turn on some music. Several steps involved there – turn on iPad and choose Pandora, select the channel that I want, turn on the Jawbone which needs to be plugged in because its battery needs recharging. Now, let the dogs out so they don't distract me. Wait, they need water. Okay, fill their water bowl. Turn off the kitchen light so I don't have a glare on my screen. Do you see where I'm going with this? Instead of writing, I'm preparing to write but no words have been written. Ten minutes have passed and now I'm distracted by the five small things I saw that need my attention; take last night's recyclables out to the recycle bin, load the few dishes in the sink into the dishwasher, rinse the coffee pot so it doesn't smell like stale coffee. My excitement and inspiration is fading as quickly as the nighttime sky into the dawn. It makes me frustrated when this happens. Suddenly my intense motivation has subsided into something else on my list to do. The spark has fizzled. Has this ever happened to you?

I have a solution for you, and me. Sit down and begin writing. Or whatever it is that you were inspired to do. And don't beat yourself up for being a perfectionist. If you lost the inspiration or become inspired by something else, then go with it. The original inspiration will return to you at some point because if you felt passionate about it then that passion lingers still in your soul. The secret is to put yourself physically into the space you originally intended. Sit down in front of your computer and begin typing. If it isn't what you felt like typing fifteen minutes earlier, it's okay. If you begin the physical action, your inspiration and motivation will return. The same thing goes for whatever task you had set out to do. Go pick up the paintbrush and begin painting. It works every time.

Perfectionist syndrome, as I call it, is the ability to refine, edit and polish an idea or project. I am grateful to have it because it allows me to take something to a higher level. It's why I am

able to write this book with so many details and suggestions about how to get motivated. But I also know it must be controlled. My husband is a perfectionist about many things too. He believes he is the only person in the world who can paint a room the correct way. He is not a painter by profession, yet when a room in our home needs to be painted he absolutely will not hire a professional painter because he is convinced that he can do a better job. The reality is, he does a brilliant job. The room always looks great. The problem is that it takes him three times as long as someone else to do the job and he always gets frustrated along the way – the paint isn't rolling on as it should, the brush for the trim is too wide, the blue tape isn't sticking as well as it used to. I understand and appreciate where my husband's head is at this point. He wants the job to be perfect. Unfortunately, rather than enjoying the inspiration of painting a room in our home which we will enjoy for years, he is caught up in the picky details of perfectionist syndrome. Snap out of it, is what I say to him, myself and you. If we can recognize what is happening in those moments and just simply stop and redirect our focus to what inspired us in the first place, and the details be damned for the moment, then we will return to the bliss and magic of creation – the reason why we are doing this in the first place.

The one thing you don't want to happen is to begin beating yourself up about your derailment. If you walk up to the boxing mirror and begin punching yourself, criticizing the fact that you let yourself come off the tracks, you have taken your inspiration, your project and yourself into destructive territory that you need to learn to avoid. As a perfectionist, you criticize your actions a lot. I know. How can I make this better? Why didn't I think of this before? What's wrong with me that I didn't see this before? If any of these questions sound familiar, I have some suggestions, based on my own perfectionist syndrome experience, to help you. First, congratulate yourself on being someone who wants to create something perfect. It's not going to happen, but it is a worthy pursuit, to a degree. Without the desire to make something perfect we would not have some of the great works of art we cherish today. Many years ago I read *Lust for Life*, a biography of Vincent van Gogh by Irving Stone. He describes how van Gogh would draw and paint the same subjects endlessly trying to capture the essence of their spirit in the moment. The mesmerizing sunflowers and starry night paintings that we adore today are a result of his obsession with perfection. Perfectionism relates directly to passion but as one of the two notices written on the doorway for the lucky few who would enter the ancient temple at Delphi stated, nothing in excess. The other notice was, know thyself. Therefore, I say that being a true perfectionist is knowing when to restrain your perfectionism. How about that? I call it coming full circle in the process. Just like in nature. And it allows you to let it go when it needs to be let go and to feel good about a job very well done. You don't need that boxing mirror. Move it to a different room, maybe one freshly painted by your husband, and use it to admire your great work.

I have one more piece of cautionary advice for you. Just as perfectionism can weigh you down, so can it's mischievous cousin, piddling. It is even more insidious than the former because you really are going off track here. There is a fine line between piddling and preparing to do your task. How can you tell the difference? Piddling is where you don't have a set beginning and end for a project with a specific goal in mind – let the dog out, take out the garbage,

get a cup of tea – that will create an environment allowing you to focus on your task. Piddling is where you aimlessly go from one small diversion to the next. Surfing on the internet is a great example of piddling. It scares me how much time is spent piddling in this way. Think of how much you could accomplish if you cut your piddling in half. That being said, at the end of a long, busy day a fair amount of piddling is in order to let your mind float around and not focus too much on anything in particular. However, some people have made an art of piddling it seems. I bet you can name a few right now. It's okay if you include yourself in that group. You don't have to claim it out loud. Just acknowledging it to yourself will allow you to recognize it the next time you begin doing it for any great length of time. You are now aware of it and you will never be unaware of it again. When you realize you are piddling, decide to get back on track. Do whatever it takes. Stand up and walk away from the computer is my best advice. Simple but quite effective. Clearly state to yourself what you are going to do that is goal oriented and put yourself in that place physically. If it means sitting down again at the computer, then be determined not to surf but do what you need to do. Say it out loud to yourself if you need to. That actually works. Begin doing it and the motivation will return.

I know why we piddle. It's because we aren't motivated to do what we know we either need or want to be doing. It seems like too much work to get started and it makes you feel tired to just think about it. Yet notice how your thoughts about what you need to do are the ones making you tired, not the actual activity. This was one of those light bulb moments for me that changed my way of perspective completely. I encourage you to begin just the first step of a task that has been nagging at you. Pull one thing out of that closet that you want to clean out. Just one. Your closet will look better. Do you feel like pulling one more thing out? My guess is that your passion will be sparked with very little effort and before you know it, you have a clean closet. Try not to get sidetracked by all the old memories you find. But hey, if you do, now you know how to get back on track.

Beating ourselves up emotionally is never the answer when we disappoint ourselves. I think most people do this and it's one habit that really needs to be broken. That doesn't mean we ignore responsibility for our actions. The best solution I have found to remedy this is in one of my most cherished books, *The Four Agreements*, by Don Miguel Ruiz. If you haven't read this short but amazingly powerful book, I encourage you to get your own copy today. One of the agreements you make with yourself is to always do your best. That way, no matter the outcome, you can be comforted with the knowledge that you did your best. You can turn loose of the tendency to want to beat yourself up about what you could have done better. That agreement along with the other three agreements – be impeccable with your word, don't make any assumptions, and never take anything personally – brought about a life enhancing shift for me years ago.

Distractions will always be part of our lives. It is how we handle them that determines if they become permanent detours to our dreams or become our tools to create more of what we love.

We are still masters of our fate.

We are still captains of our souls.

–*Winston Churchill*

Instant Motivation Action Steps:

- 1) When you get distracted, recognize it and consider your options to get remotivated. There are always several options if you look for them.
- 2) Think of at least five options.
- 3) Marry the most compatible option to your mood.
- 4) When you are distracted and can't return to your task that day, make it the first thing on your list the next day, if possible.
- 5) Mentally, and especially emotionally, recreate the feelings you had that inspired you in this project in the first place.
- 6) When you realize you have a mental or emotional block toward a project and no other re-boot works, go do something completely different. It's important to plant the seed in your mind to resolve the block.
- 7) If it's a persistent block, think about what comes next in the project. This will often serve to loosen the jam.
- 8) Blocks can be removed by physically pushing them out. Stand up and start moving rapidly saying an affirmation such as, "I have the perfect solution."
- 9) Mind ruts are a mental hazard. Deal with them by acting on the thought or clearing it from your mind.
- 10) Speak the mind rut out loud to bring it into your conscious mind. Then say out loud, "This mind rut is slowing me down, and I will not have this thought again." Repeat this every time the thought pops into your mind until it is gone.
- 11) Mentally see the mind rut thought laying in a furrowed rut in a road. Then see it being covered by fresh dirt until it disappears. Repeat this visualization until you don't have the thought any longer.
- 12) Replace your mind rut thought with a positive and productive thought.
- 13) Don't let Perfectionist Syndrome derail you. Set your intention to always do your best and let go of beating yourself up when something doesn't work out as planned.

Chapter 5: Let's Get Physical

Mr. Newton Explains It All

When I was a child in school there was no subject more dry to me than science. Velocity, relativity and matter just didn't seem to – well, matter to me. This was stuff that old, grumpy looking men dealt with. Not me. Sure, I memorized what I was supposed to for tests, but I didn't find anything (ahem) relative in my life to these things. Ah, the arrogance of youth. Little did I understand that absolutely everything I did, every day, related to this dusty topic. As I began to consider all the tricks I use to motivate myself, I realized that I employed Sir Issac Newton's marvelous first law of physics the most: A body in motion stays at that velocity unless it is acted upon by some external force. Once you get motivated you will stay motivated until something takes you off track.

We already know that motivation is contagious. We have seen how people are motivated by emotion, and the emotions of other people. You have no doubt heard the phrase, "getting swept up in the moment." It describes emotional contagion perfectly. There is also an unconscious, science-based element at work too. It has been researched and documented extensively. A frequently used term for it is social mimicry, and it works something like this. When two people encounter each other and a conversation begins between them, within a few moments the majority of the time, and unconsciously, one begins to mimic the other. Sometimes it can be mutual, yet more often than not the dominant of the two will be mimicked by the other. Speech patterns, hand gestures, and body position, just to name a few things, will begin to be emulated by the less dominant person. Scientists tend to think this behavior stems back to an early survival instinct; like a flock of birds that simultaneously takes flight. The group instantly emulates the one who spotted the predator first. How we walk, talk and do everything else in life we mimicked from someone else. It is very much a part of our learning process, and again, most of it is unconscious.

There are countless defined groups of mimics in the world today. Examples of broad categories would include groups like political parties and religious organizations, then fragment into smaller groups of fans of sports teams, musicians and movies, for example. The categories and groups you can come up with are endless and may include millions of people or just a few. A group would be three or more, so you can see how the number of groups in the world could add up quickly. Furthermore, we are each members of many groups of mimics. Some of these groups we are aware that we have chosen, others we have no idea that we are members of. Some of them might even shock us. It is only when we become conscious of it that we can change it, if we choose.

Mimicry applies to motivation in some really important ways. You can motivate others by being motivated. Let's say you were sitting with a group of good friends one afternoon outside and you decide to put mimicry to the test. You stand up and begin doing a simple activity. How about throwing a ball for your dog to fetch? It's nothing strenuous because your dog is really well trained and brings the ball right back to you, every time. It won't be long before one of your friends stands up and walks over beside you. Another friend will be up on his feet before long too. And while they may not be doing exactly what you are, they will be mimicking you and getting motivated. Try this some time. You will be amazed at how this works. This is a subtle yet power-

ful form of persuasion, and when used by professionals – sales people or con artists, to name a couple – it will move you right into the palm of their hands. You have just put your motivation into their control.

Most of the time, however, mimicry is not played with such high stakes. Instead it is done to enjoy feeling a part of a group that you desire. If this group is one that you interact with on a consistent basis – family, friends, coworkers – then it may be considered a circle of influence for you. I first read about the circle of influence in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey in the early 1990's. He explained that by focusing your time and energy within this group you can effect change and thereby gain more power and respect. As I began to read more about the circles with whom people choose to associate themselves I began to find interesting studies showing that everyone within a small circle of about five earns relatively the same amount of money. Not only are these groups influential but they are clearly motivating. The mimicry is in action. From a motivation standpoint, if you want to gain more of it then find a group that motivates each other. The physical exchange of energy whether motivating for a better workout, more money, finding a life partner or countless other reasons, occurs and you are affected. Remember that there are multitudes of groups you can join to meet your specific needs, so if one doesn't give you the results you want, then try another and another. It's okay. Don't give up. One of my favorite quotes is by Eleanor Roosevelt who said, "Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm." You could try a group that meets in person or online. This is a great way to put the internet to work for you. Reach around the globe to find just the right motivational gathering for you.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed. It is the only thing that ever has.

–Margaret Mead

Time For The Spin Cycle

When you find something that motivates your mind as well as your body, you have found a treasure. For me, that treasure is a very simple movement that I do every day. One of my closest friends, Joni Patry, is a world renown Vedic astrologer. She has been reading client's charts for over thirty years and is so accurate sometimes it's scary. I was a complete non-believer in astrology until I got to know Joni. I can't tell you why it works, or how, but I can tell you that I have seen her predictions come true whether on a small personal matter or on the world stage. Even down to the exact day she predicted. Scary.

Once she sent me a book that she said helped her enormously with an overall sense of well being. It's called *Ancient Secret of the Fountain of Youth* by Peter Kelder and details ancient Tibetan rites of rejuvenating the mind, body and spirit. The first rite is the most important one and the simplest. It only requires you to spin clockwise twenty-one times each day. The result, accord-

ing to Tibetan monks and many Westerners who practice it, is that you clear and balance your chakras (or vortices, as the book refers to them). Chakras are energy centers located in our bodies. Yogis have practiced the care and maintenance of their chakras for thousands of years. When your chakras are healthy and functioning at their peak, you feel and perform well. We here in the west widely adopted this knowledge starting in the 1960's. Its fame spread in large part because of the Beatles and other superstar musicians and celebrities being introduced to it on their travels to India to meet the ascended yogis and learn their practices.

Trusting that my friend knew what she was talking about, I began spinning every day. It only takes a minute. I don't think it was the power of suggestion because I am skeptical about anything that claims to get results instantly, yet I have to admit that I did begin to have an increased sense of well being that has extended into me feeling like I have more energy and sleeping better at night.

By chance a few months after I had begun practicing this "first rite," as it is called, I saw a portion of a PBS show about the inspiring Sufi poet and philosopher, Rumi, who lived during the 13th century. I was stunned when the narrator mentioned that Rumi was diligent about walking around a mosque pillar on a daily basis, his hand lightly touching it as he traveled the circumference many times. He claimed that it was a way for him to stay centered while moving. The irony was inescapable, poetic and this man's truth. Rumi, in fact, inspired the whirling dervishes we have all seen endlessly spinning with that incredible dichotomy in motion of complete abandon yet total centeredness. I believe these sages, Rumi and the Tibetan monks, who span centuries and a vast expanse of miles had found what they were looking for in their quest for inspiration and motivation. While this may be far different from any motivation technique you could ever imagine – it certainly was for me – it works. Needless to say, I am still spinning today.

Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.

–Jim Rohn

Feng Shui Your Way

When I bought a home years ago I decided to call in a feng shui master before I did any decorating or furniture arranging. I wanted to understand where certain things should be placed to activate the subtle but very present chi (what the Chinese call energy) that meanders around every space.

Most Westerners today know about the principles of feng shui. Literally translated as 'wind water' from Chinese, this ancient practice connects people to their environment in the most beneficial (auspicious) way possible. Not only does every living thing emanate energy, but the space in between is filled with energy too. It can be a mind bending concept but when applied by a feng shui master the result is a space that radiates beneficial energy and can produce all sorts of incredible results. It is amazing the number of guests who come to my home and comment on how great it "feels." Most are completely unaware of the feng shui application. I have to agree with them,

my home does feel good.

Because of the terrific results I experienced when feng shui was applied in my home, when a group of investors in an online media project asked me to create a show, my first thought was about this ancient practice. *Feng Shui Your Way* can still be viewed today online. Not only are rooms in homes featured but we applied it to many other spaces that people use every day too; an office cubicle to improve creativity and productivity, a house that had been for sale for a long time to improve the chi flow and get it sold, and even a dentist's office to help patients feel more relaxed.

Do you ever feel ill at ease when you walk into a room? I'm not referring to the energy that the people in the room emanate. I mean the way the energy of the room itself feels. Some rooms feel inviting, others feel abandoned. You can walk into some rooms and feel motivated while other rooms leave you feeling depressed or anxious. Why is that? It's the energy within the room and it can make you feel like it does. Factors that affect the energy in a room and the way it flows are several; the arrangement of the furniture and art, the content of the works of art, the cleanliness of the room, the colors in the room, the energy of the people who mainly inhabit the room.

A room can have energy that is stuck. By that I mean the chi isn't flowing, or is barely moving. No one feels inspired in a such a place. A room can also feel sticky or sluggish. If you feel oppressed in a space, that is a sticky room. Its energy is attaching to you in a less than beneficial way. Feeling depressed or unhappy in a room means it has sluggish energy. On the acute end of the spectrum, a room that gives you a sense of terror or extreme unease contains negative energy and should be avoided completely until a trained feng shui master can clean it for you. Cleaning by a feng shui master isn't with a mop or broom. They use a bundle of dried sage still on their stems that has been lit to the point of producing smoke. They wave this sage bundle in every corner of the room or building to cleanse the spaces where energy stagnates. I have also seen them use salt for purification. You can truly feel a space change when it has been cleaned by feng shui techniques.

All of this relates directly to motivation because you can activate areas in your home, office, even your car to spur more productive energy flow. Have you ever described a place as feeling light or heavy? You are describing the way the energy in the room feels. We all pick up on it, and it affects our attitudes. There is residual energy from the people who have been in the room recently. However some sensitive people can pick up on energy that was left in places a long time ago. This is especially true if an event containing intense energy happened there. It leaves a mark, so to speak. That is why it's a great idea to have your home "cleaned" by a feng shui master before you move into it. They can also suggest the best placement for furniture, art and other objects in your home to create an optimum flow of chi (subtle energy that's always present in us and around us). This is based on their use of the bagua, or eight-sided map that specifies what elements, colors and shapes, among other things to use in each section. When energy is moving through your space in a healthy, vibrant way, you feel more motivated in everything you do. I can tell you without hesitation that it worked for me. If your home or work area doesn't feel motivating or inspiring to you, try this cleaning technique. There's nothing better than calling on ancient science to solve

your modern day dilemmas.

The expectations of life depend upon diligence; the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools.

–Confucius

Food for Thought

It is my guess that most of us don't consciously think about food when we think about how to get motivated. If we do, then chances are it's not the thoughts we need to have to take us to a truly motivated level. People use food for countless emotional reasons. When we are upset many of us turn to food to help us feel better. It's called "comfort food" for a reason. When we feel out of control we frequently turn to food. Loneliness, heartbreak and nervousness also bring on the desire for food comfort for many people. There is also the social element around food that is huge among humans. For millennia we have gathered together to enjoy a meal. It is part of religious rituals and societal customs. Feasting is a time-honored symbol of celebration that brings out special food and lots of it. All of this can create an unconscious addiction to certain types of food. While this is the dark side, food is also a tool that can be pulled from our bag of tricks to physically motivate us, if we know how.

Physiologically, in simple terms, our bodies use food as fuel. The choices we make at mealtime will determine how we feel for the next several hours. Sugar and carbohydrates, which convert to sugar, will inevitably make us feel tired within just a few minutes. I won't go into all the biochemistry involved, and you are probably familiar with the process to some degree already. If you want food to help you feel motivated, choose some protein. It converts to energy almost instantly and the effects last a long time. I absolutely employ protein when I want to motivate myself. Carbs in moderation can actually be used to create a state of focus, but be aware of that fine line between focus and a sugar or potato chip high. One will help you accomplish your tasks and the other will send you to the coach for a nap.

Green tea is another friend I frequently invite to my motivation party. Those miraculous leaves not only are caffeinated but they also have anti-oxidant properties. It livens up your brain while helping your cells fend off and even repair damage. There are lots of different kinds of green tea on the market. Some are more expensive than others, and some come blended with other kinds of teas and herbs like echinacea. I really don't have a suggestion on what kind to use because I am not a connoisseur on this. I tend to buy a medium-priced green tea figuring that I am getting good quality tea leaves. Green tea is basically a tool for me, and I happen to like the taste. Another green protein that I use to get motivated is edamame. Like green tea, it's an energy booster and also like green tea it has almost no calories. Edamame is good for our bodies and is versatile. You can pop frozen beans, shelled, into the microwave and have an energy surge underway in less than five minutes. I sprinkle a bit of sea salt on them and squeeze several drops of fresh lemon juice

and mix it all together. Yummy is the best word I can use to describe it. Sometimes I eat it with gari, which is thinly sliced pickled ginger. Tasty, and ginger naturally soothes upset stomachs.

One of the best things you can do is make note, either mentally or written down, of how specific foods affect you. All of us have sensitivity to certain foods. Even foods that are supposed to be good for us, can be harmful to you. Think about what you had for lunch. Did it make you feel energized, focused or lethargic? Your diet is your mind and body's fuel. Are you running on premium or substandard regular?

My friend, Nerissa Oden, has a wonderfully informative website called *FoodPowers.com*. I recommend a visit there. She explained to me how she discovered certain foods were causing her to be sick. This realization came after many trips to several doctors, none of whom could accurately diagnose what was ailing her. Not only were some of the foods she was eating making her feel physically bad, they were making her feel emotionally bad. Years after her discovery, Nerissa is now healthy and helping others figure out their own food sensitivities. She also has some simple and delicious recipes that offer alternatives for certain sensitivities. *Bread Free Bread* is her latest book.

When you think about the role food, and drink, plays in our lives, you can easily understand how what we consume has a huge effect on our level of motivation. While I do enjoy wine with dinner some nights and a hand-made cocktail when I am out with friends, I know that drinking alcohol and working never mixes well. As a writer, I never drink alcohol and try to work. The last time I tried that was many years ago and the result was marginal, at best. Alcohol is best consumed when you have finished working for the day and want to relax without needing to focus on any specific task. On the other end of this spectrum is coffee. I love my cup of coffee in the morning. I buy my favorite kind of French roast and grind the beans. I steam my milk and add just a touch of special vanilla syrup. Yet I only have one cup of coffee a day. (It is a large one though.) Drinking coffee throughout the day is not the way to stay motivated. In fact, what happens is that you will become over stimulated and lose your ability to focus. If you pay attention to what you eat and drink when you are wanting to get or stay motivated then you can use food to help you reach your goal.

You can tell a lot about a fellow's character by his way of eating jellybeans.

—Ronald Reagan

I come from a family where gravy is considered a beverage.

—Erma Bombeck

Once, during Prohibition, I was forced to live for days on nothing but food and water.

—W. C. Fields

Instant Motivation Action Steps:

- 1) Find someone whose motivation you admire. Ask them how they get motivated. Not only will their answers help you but being in close proximity to their energy field will help you too.
- 2) Tap into the ancient Sufi practice of spinning clockwise twenty-one times every day to create a sense of well being. The Sufis say to do it before eleven o'clock in the morning for best results.
- 3) Hire a feng shui master to analyze your home and office spaces. Improving the chi flow will improve your motivation. It will help countless aspects of your life mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically.
- 4) Eat high protein foods to get motivated; organic if possible – beans, nuts and lean meats are excellent choices.
- 5) Drink a quality green tea several times a day.

Chapter 6: I Live In My Own Mind

No Two Are Alike

I adore the song *I Live in My Own Mind* by Lyle Lovett. He certainly is an example of a motivated person. In reality, that's all we do is live in our own minds. What I think is completely unique to me, and the same goes for you. In fact, all the action we take in our lives begins with our thoughts.

Ground-breaking books in the area of personal mastery and creativity are *The Path of Least Resistance* by Robert Fritz and *The Fifth Discipline* by Peter Senge. Both authors also write about the inherent motivators in our lives; what makes us get out of bed in the morning. These motivators are like snowflakes, no two lists are the same. What gets me out of bed in the morning is different from you. We are compelled by these motivators. They drive us to succeed. When our goals align with our inherent motivators, we accomplish them much faster and easier.

What never fails to propel you into action? Is it providing for the well being of your loved ones? Is it finding a health or exercise routine that will make you feel better? Is it searching for answers to what your ultimate purpose is in this life? Spend some time with these thoughts. Make a list. See what you come up with. Some of the answers will surprise you. And if you look at them closely you will discover that each one is based in either love or fear. It really does boil down to that. This is the true essence of all our motivation. Every other desire stems from these two primordial parents.

This process will give you tremendous insight into your deep subconscious mind. Being able to work on that level is powerful. It will move you forward by light years in what you want to achieve.

The trick is in what one emphasizes. We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves strong. The amount of work is the same.

– Carlos Castaneda

Leaping Tall Buildings

One of my earliest memories of television from when I was quite young was watching *The Adventures of Superman*. This iconic television series starring George Reeves had a wonderful show introduction, which I bet you have seen, and which has stuck with me all these years. One of the lines of copy says, “Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound.” As super human as that sounds, you can do it too, just like Superman. Or at least you have to believe you can. That is what Olympic athletes do to achieve their goals. They believe they can do it and they stay focused with a tenacity that is super human. Make a plan, believe in yourself, visualize the results and stick to it.

Over the years of motivating myself and helping others get motivated, no challenge has been more difficult to overcome than believing in yourself. Having the confidence that you can do

whatever it is that you want is a fundamental factor to achieving it. The great thinkers and philosophers over the centuries understood this. Cornelius Agrippa said, “For you to desire a thing is to possess it already.” It is part of the whole Law of Attraction mechanism. If you desire it, the universe brings it to you. Unfortunately what happens more often than not is that we will have the desire thought followed closely behind by the insecure thought that we couldn’t possibly achieve what we just desired. Think about it. When you say you want something, is it a statement of confidence or is it couched in a disclaimer about how that could never really happen to you? Do you follow your wish with something like, “but those sorts of things never happen to me?” You have just told the universe to come to a screeching halt with the delivery of your desire.

While the Law of Attraction may seem too simplistic and easy to be true, I submit to you that is why it works. The universe, as we continually find out, is not complicated. It works on simple principles that, when understood, we slap ourselves on the side of the head and remark how elementary it is – and elegant. That is why when we apply the energy of the universe, of which our thoughts are composed, to state what we want, we get it. Remember, these are our conscious thoughts as well as our unconscious thoughts. I cannot emphasize this enough. If our belief system buried deep in our subconscious mind says that this won’t work, then it won’t.

There is another mental road block we create for ourselves, and it is a big one. Notice how your thoughts about what you need to do are the things making you tired, not the actual activity. Just the thought of having to sort through a pile of receipts for tax purposes makes me tired. Actually doing it is not really a big deal. Yes, it is boring. Yes, I would rather be outside in my garden. Yet, if I override that very powerful and easily conjured thought of dread that leaves me exhausted, I can motivate myself to accomplish a necessary task.

How do I overcome that thought which is actually a deeply rooted belief? I have to shift the automatic thought the moment it pops into my mind from one of dread and exhaustion to a thought that excites me, or at least doesn’t repulse me. If I stay with the example of sorting through tax receipts, when my initial thought of repulsion strikes, I consciously grab onto it and mentally say, “Hey, wait a minute! It’s not that big of a deal. I can have the television on while I do it, or I can be listening to some of my favorite music. And when I’m finished, I will have saved myself hundreds of dollars with tax deductions. With that money, I’m going to treat myself to a weekend in New Orleans. The sooner I start, the sooner I can go on my trip.” Bingo! Instant motivation. Suddenly, I am looking forward to this task. I have overridden a mind rut and motivated myself with a terrific reward.

Our beliefs override everything else in our conscious rational mind. That is why there are an abundance of clearing techniques available that are very effective. One of my favorites is called Ho’ Oponopono. It is an ancient Hawaiian technique that cleans our belief system. I highly recommend reading about it in the book *Zero Limits* by Dr. Joe Vitale and Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len. I practice this clearing method daily and I know it has helped me a lot. There is also EFT, Emotional Freedom Technique, which many people claim help them dissolve their fears and deep seated negative beliefs. There are many books and videos available on this method. While

skeptics may call this pseudo science, I offer that if it achieves the desired result, then who is to claim that it is not effective? Just like the energetic cleaning of feng shui, clearing your emotional space is vital. Dragging out all the emotional dust bunnies that have been collecting for a lifetime will lighten your energetic field to such a degree that you will be lighter and brighter. You will feel like a new person. Motivation will come to you quicker and easier.

Of course you can always turn to traditional ways of confronting your beliefs through counseling and work with an accredited therapist. Whatever you choose, I do recommend that you work on clearing away those powerful underlying beliefs that are holding you back so that you can get motivated and leap a tall building in a single bound – at least in your own mind.

Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right!

–Henry Ford

Throw Out the Bath Water, Not the Baby.

When I learned the origin of the term, “Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water,” I thought it was pretty disgusting. I share it with you only because there is a worthwhile lesson in it. A couple of generations ago when people only bathed on Saturday nights, to be clean for church on Sunday, and indoor plumbing was a luxury most could not afford, the family bath tub would be filled up by carrying buckets of water to it gradually raising the water level until it was deemed ready for bathing. Then the eldest member of the family would get in first, after he or she was finished the next oldest would climb in. (Remember that families were usually large a hundred years ago with the intent of providing a homemade workforce for the fields or whatever labor was needed.) This hierarchy would go on until it was finally the baby’s turn, and into the now undoubtedly murky water of this tub the baby would be plunged for his bath. With this disenchanting explanation of an old metaphor firmly in our minds, I would like to apply it to how this helps us get and stay motivated.

When you are inspired with a new idea it feels great. You can’t wait to get started on it and so you dive right in. At some point you may realize that something about your genius project isn’t working as you had hoped. It just isn’t coming together. It has become bogged down and you have lost all your motivation for it. You feel like abandoning it and moving on to something else. Sometimes this is the best approach, but sometimes it isn’t. Before you forfeit your inspired notion, or throw the baby out with the bath water, try pivoting.

Pivoting is something I learned from studying successful businesses after I became a small business owner. It is where you radically shift something in an existing business or model that keeps some essential elements in place and throws other, non-working elements out. Take for example Groupon. This business began as a collection site for political action groups. When one of the founders looked at it closer, he saw gigantic potential for some of the existing elements but with a completely different application. Groupon had the motivation to pivot into what

became a ground breaking and incredibly popular service offering huge discounts at local businesses to its subscribers. Airbnb began as way to find an inexpensive place to sleep while traveling, such as in a living room on an air mattress. YouTube is another great pivot. Did you know that it began life as a video dating website? Along the way, someone had the guts to radically alter it into the juggernaut it is today.

You can do the same thing with your ideas that are languishing because some aspect isn't quite right. Change the target market or the business model. Maybe the product isn't quite right but you know the market is. The idea came to you as inspiration and deserves a second, or third, look. Keep the essential idea or what is working and pivot the rest. Always pare down the excess. The result is you will be remotivated and could have the next billion dollar business. Then you can buy a new bath tub just for your baby.

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

–Charles Darwin

Rapid Focused Tasking (RFT)

I used to think I was a MAC master. Multiple Attention Capacity (or MAC), a term I created many years ago, was a necessity for me as a mother of two young, energetic children and a woman who also worked outside of the home. From the moment I woke up until the time I dropped off to sleep, I felt like I should be doing at least two things at once. If cooking dinner, I would be helping at least one child at the breakfast room table with homework. If waiting for my daughter during a ballet class, I would be rewriting copy for a television spot I was producing. During the kid's play time, I was also cleaning and organizing their rooms. You get the idea. If you have or had young children, you probably do the same sorts of things.

Even when I became an empty nester, I was still at the MAC master level, or so I thought. I would be on the treadmill every morning watching CNBC to get up to speed on everything that happened business-wise while I was asleep. I would make phone calls and create a mental list of the major things I needed to accomplish. One day I asked my husband to invent and install a shelf under the television but above the treadmill controls so I could type on my laptop, walk at a 15-minute per mile pace, watch CNBC, make phone calls and make my list for the day. I am a tremendously motivated person in the morning. That is the most naturally productive time of the day for me and I wanted to take full advantage of it. For some people the afternoon or evening is their peak performance time, for me it's between seven and eleven in the morning and I didn't want to waste a minute.

I can't pinpoint an exact day that I realized my profound MAC abilities weren't as superheroish as I had imagined. I began realizing that if I wanted to really understand what the stock analyst was saying on television I had to stop typing on my computer. To have a intelligible

conversation with someone on the phone, it was necessary that I not listen to what the woman on television was saying about a company raising its dividend. The good news is that I could still be walking on the treadmill as I talked and listened, thanks to my reptilian automatic motor skills.

It was about this time that I saw a television program, not while walking on the treadmill, that was on the Science Channel. It explained how humans can't focus on two things at once. We think we can, but in actuality, we can't. Only one thought can be present at any given moment in our minds. The show demonstrated through experiments how it actually takes you longer to manage two tasks at once. Furthermore, the margin for error dramatically increases when you juggle two things simultaneously. I was finally convinced by the argument and scientific data presented. I realized that what I had been doing all these years was not mastering Multiple Attention Capacity but Rapid Focused Tasking. I was proficient at moving very rapidly between several tasks. Focus on the television report, focus on my computer screen email, focus on a phone call, all in a rapid circuit. It was a light bulb moment for me. What this meant is that I could enjoy the sheer pleasure of focusing on just one thing, without any guilt. Of course, I may have only ten seconds to give it my full attention before I needed to redirect to something else, but that ten seconds was going to get used well.

This meant full immersion for me. It felt great. After decades of feeling like I was wasting time and energy if I did only one thing at a time, science had set me free. The result was that I felt more motivated because I wasn't preoccupied with trying to figure out how to bundle tasks. Now, I decide how much time I want to devote to something then when and what I will move onto next. I have noticed that being able to focus exclusively on one project, whether for ten seconds or two hours, has allowed me to do a better job in usually less time than before. I know there are still those MACs out there who will think they can defy the laws of science, but to you I say, give up the fight and try it this way. You will be glad you did.

Applying the principle of RFT is simple even if you have a lot of things to accomplish. Cooking is a perfect example. Rapid Focused Tasking is essential when trying to coordinate a meal that contains several items on the menu. I love to cook for family and friends. Blasting songs from my iPod is a sure sign that I am in the kitchen cooking. The music is a huge motivator for me. I start by prioritizing my tasks. Then I rapidly focus on each one; chop the onion, pour the oil in the pan, turn on the flame, add the onion. What I no longer do is try to chop the onion and light the flame at the same time. (Yes, I have tried to do that.) I would always be frustrated when the two things (or more) I was trying to do at the same time weren't being done very well. Now I understand why I wasn't accomplishing my goal. What I was trying to do was basically impossible. I have learned that you actually lose time instead of gaining it when you try to do things simultaneously.

RFT is the most efficient way I have found to accomplish small tasks that need to be done in the present moment. This was a big lesson for me. Come to my kitchen now and you will find me rocking out to my favorite tracks from Depeche Mode, the Cure and other first wave 80's bands while I rapidly move between tiny tasks that add up to one delicious time.

The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.

–Vince Lombardi

Pardon Me For A Moment

When inspiration strikes you must act. Sometimes that inspiration says take a break. Throughout this book I have written about how to motivate yourself. Well, now I'm telling you how to take a break from the motivation. There are those people who are so disciplined that they will continue to work on a project until completion, no matter what. Ultimately, the quality of the work declines. The inspiration has, in fact, dissipated into an unrecognizable twitch that pushes some onward. When this happens, you are well past the time for taking a break.

During my college years I hung out with some medical students for a while. One of them told me that he had learned it was important from a brain function standpoint to take a break about every fifteen minutes when studying. He said you need to stand up to get the blood flowing better throughout your entire body. You should also focus on something entirely different for a couple of minutes. Feed the cat. Empty the garbage. Do something that allows your mind to have a brief break. I always remembered that piece of advice and follow it to this day. One of the interesting things I discovered was that frequently an inspirational thought about the project I was working on would pop into my mind while I was doing the other quick task.

When we take the pressure off of performing, whether it's studying, writing, crunching numbers, whatever, and focus on something simple and unrelated for a few minutes our brains are set free. Solutions or ideas that we may not have thought of otherwise suddenly pop into our minds when we relax mentally. Creativity can run amuck without our rational mind intervening. But remember, after a couple of minutes, no more than fifteen, you need to plug back into that place of focus. Refer the motivation tips and tricks mentioned earlier, or ones that you have created, if you have any problems plugging back in to your focused state.

While taking a routine ten minute break is a normal and healthy thing to do, sometimes you need something unplanned. When a spontaneous notion whispers in your ear, you should listen. It might be just what you need for your project. A great example for me is taking a leisurely bath in the middle of the afternoon. It doesn't happen very often, but occasionally the thought of soaking in my deep tub filled with salts and a bit of essential oil sounds like just what I need. So I do it. As I am lying there, not thinking about anything in particular, and with my iPhone playing Liquid Mind radio on Pandora, thoughts will begin floating toward me. Brilliant solutions or answers to things. I immediately grab my phone and record the thoughts. Even if I don't receive a major aha moment while soaking, I emerge from the bath feeling as reborn as Venus on the half-shell.

There will be times when a routine break or even a spontaneous break don't do the trick,

then it's time to pull out the big guns. I am talking about a real, bona fide vacation. When I first began my small business of publishing magazines, I felt like I shouldn't take vacations. I felt guilty when I took even a couple of days off during the holidays. After all, I had a business to build. If I worked harder and longer, my rational mind said, I would achieve my goals faster. That is partially true, I learned. Great ideas are worthless unless implemented. Most of the time it takes hard work to create a business from nothing. However, if you don't occasionally take a vacation or holiday, then you burn out. It is a plain and simple fact. I am a shining example of it too. Following several years of not taking a single vacation and hardly two days in a row off, I was a grumpy, mentally exhausted mess. Finally, my husband insisted that we go to Paris. I hesitated. Can you believe it? I did, but eventually I gave in and we went. It took me a solid two or three days of feeling anxious, guilty, lazy and terrified before I gave up the ridiculous mental fight with myself and surrendered to Paris. I am eternally grateful for that trip. Now we return almost every year.

Think of vacations as your emotional and mental recharge zone. That is what they are. Without them, you run out of the juice that powers your drive, stamina and creativity. Notice how, when you have had time to relax for a few days, you look at your job or projects with a new attitude or from a different perspective. Your brain has had time to do what I described earlier, send you creative, inspiring thoughts without your sheer will constantly overriding the process. Your mind has time to be playful, to relax and enjoy giving you great ideas. Needless to say, you do reach a tipping point where too much down time will become detrimental. You must remain disciplined and determined to complete your projects after your break. It reminds me of what was carved into stone lintels above the two doorways leading into the legendary temple of Apollo where oracle of Delphi dwelled: Know thyself. Nothing in excess. Wise words to live by. Keep everything in balance.

I do not try to dance better than anyone else. I only try to dance better than myself.
–Mikhail Baryshnikov

Live the Life You Love, Love the Life You Live

There are dozens of suggestions and examples in this book of how to get and stay motivated to accomplish what you want. I have saved the biggest secret to success for last: Love what you are doing. Success is assured if you love what you are doing. Yes, I know what you are thinking, "I don't love taking out the garbage or studying for an exam." I understand, and I don't enjoy those things either. I do, however, love what the end result of those tasks bring me. Taking the garbage out means my house will smell and feel cleaner. Studying for an exam will move me closer to getting the degree I want. Sometimes you need to take a look at the bigger picture to find the love. If the job of painting your house seems too daunting, think about painting just a wall. That is an easily managed task, and it takes you a big step closer to your goal.

Getting motivated is all about playing a wonderful mind game with yourself. You can get motivated instantly if you play the right game at the right time. You can accomplish things that you could only imagine in your wildest dreams. That is the only difference between you and some of the legendary writers, artists and inventors mentioned in this book. We all have amazing ideas. These legends acted on theirs. Will you?

You can also help others get motivated. Once you know some of the tricks, create some of your own. You are without boundaries on what you can accomplish and help others create. One of the greatest lessons I have learned over the many years of motivating myself and others is that if you put the energy of love behind it, anything is possible.

The most difficult decision is to act, the rest is merely tenacity.

–Amelia Earhart

Instant Motivation Action Steps:

- 1) Discover your inherent motivators: what gets you out of bed in the morning?
- 2) Practice the ancient Hawaiian technique of Ho'oponopono to clear your psyche.
- 3) Practice Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) to clear negative beliefs.
- 4) Pivot an idea, project or business plan if motivation is lacking. Remotivation comes from fresh ideas.
- 5) Use Rapid Focused Tasking for small tasks that need your present attention and to get little nagging things done.
- 6) Take routine breaks from your focused work. Do something unrelated to your task.
- 7) Take at least one vacation per year where you disconnect from your routine work.

