

A photograph of a sailboat on the water at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow over the water and the boat's sails. The text is overlaid on the image.

# MAKE IT A WINNING DAY

JIM WALDSMITH

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*Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by  
the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw  
off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor.  
Catch the trade winds in your sails.  
Explore. Dream. Discover.*

Mark Twain

I thank the hundreds of direct sellers who have shared their stories with me over the course of more than two decades in this industry. This book is dedicated to them and to the direct selling champions among us who make it a winning day for themselves, their families, and for everyone they meet.

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# Introduction: No Dream Is Too Outrageous

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In a career spanning more than twenty years, involving the training of hundreds of thousands in direct sales, one fact is indisputable. The direct sales champions who achieve the most make it a winning day – every day.

This is a book about overcoming the odds, about men and women in direct sales as well as in other endeavors who want the best for themselves and their families, who never give up, and serve as an inspiration to us all to strive to be our best.

We make it a winning day when we know  
we cannot be defeated.

We make it a winning day when we  
help others achieve success.

We make it a winning day when we believe in our dreams.

We make it a winning day when we give it our all.

Over the years, I've heard a legion of stories underscoring the power of direct sales to change lives for the better. Every story is different, but all share a common theme: Someone decided to give direct sales a try, and in doing so, made it a winning day.



Candace's husband, Rick, a top executive with a plastics manufacturing company, earned a comfortable six-figure income until the firm moved its manufacturing overseas, leaving him in the unemployment line. He was thirty-eight years old, and due to his specialization and salary level, was out of work for nearly two years. During that time, he lost his health insurance, and then Candace became pregnant. The baby, home only a few weeks, developed a respiratory problem. Rushed to the emergency room, the infant underwent surgery to repair lobes in the left lung. The surgery was successful, and the baby began gaining weight, but the family's finances were in a shambles. In addition to medical bills, their credit cards were maxed out. By the time Rick found a new position, at about a third of his previous job's pay, the family had lost the house to foreclosure and moved in with Candace's parents. The day after Christmas, as Candace stood in a long line at the service desk of a local Target store to return gifts so she could purchase diapers and formula, tears filled her eyes. What had happened to her family and their dreams for a happy life?

About two weeks later, Candace's mother, hosting a direct sales party in her home, encouraged her daughter to join the fun. The consultant demonstrated the cookware and entertaining products and then said, "If you think you'd like to do what I'm doing, ask me after the show. I'll help you get started."

The other guests had left, and Candace's mother, paging through the company's catalog, was selecting several products she earned that evening as the hostess. Candace offered to help the consultant pack up the product display. As they worked, Candace remarked, "I loved your

show tonight. Were you serious when you said you would help someone get started?"

The consultant smiled, "Of course. That's how I started. Someone helped me, and I'm more than willing to do the same. If you're interested, let's talk and see what we can do." Candace took the opportunity brochure, making it a point to set a time the next day for them to get together by phone.

By week's end, with a loan from her mom, Candace purchased the starter kit and signed an agreement to join the company.

Nervous and apprehensive, Candace had her introductory show. Her sponsor was by her side, offering training, advice and encouragement. "You can do it. I know you'll do a great job!"

From this first show, Candace had three bookings. In a few weeks, she repaid her mother's loan and, in less than three months, accumulated \$15,538 in sales. Before the end of the year, she earned a vacation for herself and Rick to Hawaii.

That summer, Candace, along with several other consultants, traveled to the company's national conference where she learned a truth about her business and the company. If you are willing to help others achieve what they want, you will achieve everything you desire.

Candace went on to become one of her company's top consultants. Thanks to her direct sales earnings, the family emerged from debt and purchased a new home.

Miami was an opportunity for a fresh start, Silvia thought, as she stepped off the plane. Originally from Quito, Ecuador, Silvia had excelled in her English-language studies at the Universidad Central del Ecuador,

married, had a son, Gustavo, divorced, and worked for an import/export company. Offered a job in the company's Miami office, she jumped at the chance to relocate to the United States.

In Miami, she discovered a thriving Spanish-speaking community, fell in love and married Miguel, a second-generation Cuban-American, and came upon a company that marketed a nutritional supplement that helped her lose more than 40 pounds.

One evening, she mentioned to Miguel that she wanted to sell for the company. "I'd like to do something that will work around Gustavo's schedule, be different than what I do in the office all day, and earn us a little more income," she reasoned.

"That kind of business is a waste of time," her husband countered.

Hurt, Silvia decided to send for the starter kit and give the business a try, if nothing else, to prove her husband wrong.

In the months that followed, Silvia sold a few products. Her earnings were meager. That's when her upline director said something that resonated. "If you want this to work, you must treat it as a business. Talk to everyone you meet. Share the products, but also share the business opportunity."

The advice was simple and to the point. That was when Silvia decided to make it a winning day. At the office, at her son's soccer games, wherever she went, she talked about her success at losing weight. She proudly showed a "before" photo of herself and then said, "Look. It works, and it will work for you. You can lose weight and gain a whole new business. Who doesn't want to lose weight and earn cash at the same time?"

A year later, Silvia earned a company-sponsored vacation to Paris for herself and her husband. Miguel was now a believer.

Sometimes a direct selling business provides rewards that have nothing to do with money in the bank. As Julie's husband, Pete, hustled to make it in time for the start of a church league basketball game, she called out, "Have fun, and for goodness sakes, don't get hurt." They both laughed.

A little after 8 p.m., the phone rang. It was one of Pete's friends from the basketball league: "Julie, Pete's hurt. He's on the way to the hospital. Please get there as quick as you can."

Outside the trauma unit, Julie learned the grim facts. Pete was going for the game's final shot to take the lead, when an opposing player plowed into him. They both hit the wall, but Pete hit it head-first. His neck was broken. He might not survive the night, and if he did, he would be in a wheelchair the remainder of his life.

Pete survived, yet the injuries were extensive. He was a quadriplegic, unable to walk, use his hands, or breathe on his own. In the months following the accident, Julie left her fulltime job, and when Pete came home from the rehab center, the home's first floor was converted into a hospital suite.

Listening to the respirator in the next room, Julie dialed the number of a friend who sold fashion jewelry for a direct selling company. "I want to join your company," she blurted out.

"Are you crazy?" the jewelry consultant replied incredulously.

“I will be crazy, if I don’t have something else in my life.” Julie said. “Don’t get me wrong. I love Pete and always will, and I’ll be here to care for him, but I’ve got to get out of the house. I need this. I need something to rescue me.”

Suddenly feeling embarrassed by her overly dramatic statement, Julie turned quiet. That’s when her friend found the words that touched her heart. “We must love ourselves before we can love another. If you’re happier, that happiness will brighten your home. Pete needs this as much as you do. Yes, I’ll help you.”

Years later, Julie told me her direct selling business saved her life. It was the outlet she needed to press on. “I can’t tell you how much my business changed my life and made me a better person,” she said, adding, “There is nothing too big that we can’t do, as long as we believe that it’s possible.”

*As long as we believe that it’s possible...nothing is too big...no dream is too outrageous. That’s what this book is about: getting out of bed every morning, eager to make it a winning day.*

Catch an episode of the reality show *Survivor* to see one of the hardest-working people on television. The host, Jeff Probst, was stung by a jellyfish in Borneo. In Africa, a scorpion crawled into his boot, biting him on the Achilles heel. He braved the Australian outback and the jungles of Fiji and Thailand. The former *Access Hollywood* correspondent and writer/director of the award-winning independent film, *Finder’s Fee*, starring James Earl Jones, started his career narrating marketing videos. At *Access Hollywood*, he reportedly racked up more than 300,000 miles traveling the world to track down stories.

Standing on the stage of the Los Angeles Nokia Theater to accept his second Emmy Award, Jeff said, “I want to share this with anybody who has a dream because I am living my dream right here in this moment. If you have a dream, dream big; pursue it with a passion.” Quoting Joseph Campbell, he added these words: “The adventure you’re ready for is the one you get. Life is short. Go for it!”



## Chapter 1: Start with a “Winning Day” Attitude

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To excel, start with a *Winning Day* attitude.

Taking the straight-away at Indianapolis in excess of 220 miles an hour, Danica Patrick is out to win. “The back of the pack is the last place I want to be – ever, *on and off* the track,” she wrote in her autobiography, *Crossing the Line*. “I like to win. I like to be number one.”

In her Indy Car Series debut, she was determined to prove herself capable of competing in a male-dominated “good ‘ol boy” sport. She did it and then some, becoming the 2005 Indy 500 Rookie of the Year by starting in thirteen races, achieving the fastest speeds to win the pole position in two of them, and finishing among the top ten in six. Three years later, Danica Patrick was the first woman to win an Indy car race, the Indy Japan 300. In 2009, she placed third at the Indianapolis 500, the highest finish by a woman in the event’s storied history.

“I am one of those women who understands that when things get tough, it’s time to push harder – to rise to the challenge, as opposed to caving in and surrendering,” she said. “I will do whatever it takes to make something happen, especially when I want it so much I can taste it.”

Do you want success so much you can taste it? If you do, you have what it takes to make it a winning day.



Winners are willing to put in the hours and go the extra mile to make good things happen.

Danica Patrick: “Hard work always pays off. Achieving a high level of success is a difficult process, but it is so worth the chase. Success doesn’t just happen. You have to go out there and make it happen. If you sit around waiting for success, it’ll never come. In the end, all you’ll be is someone just sitting around waiting for success.”

A cold October gust kicked off Lake Erie, a harbinger of an early winter, Alison thought as she looked across the steering wheel of her 12-year-old Honda Civic. Parked under the lights in the parking lot of the twenty-four hour supermarket gave her some comfort. Here she could sleep, use the market’s restroom if needed, and feel relatively safe, as long as the car’s windows were up and the doors locked. She pulled the coat tighter around herself and shivered.

Three days ago at this time of the evening, Alison returned from her job as a cashier to find her luggage, packed and stacked, outside the door of her suburban Lakewood, Ohio home. The house was dark, except for the porch light. She tried her key. It no longer fit. The truth was painfully clear. Her husband of fifteen years had followed through with a threat voiced on several recent occasions. “I don’t love you. I don’t want you. I want you to get out.”

For some time, Alison suspected her husband suffered from a bipolar disorder – the depression, mood swings, anxiety, restlessness, and anger. He refused to see a doctor, telling her it was her fault their marriage had failed. He had taken their 12-year-old son, closed up the house, changed the locks, and she was without a home.

With less than \$20 in her purse, Alison attempted to use a credit card to check into a motel. The card was rejected. It had been cancelled. Fortunately, her cell phone still worked when she placed a call to a friend.

“This is my problem, and I will not impose on our friendship,” Allison explained when the friend offered her the living room couch for the night. That night, Alison slept in her car.

Another friend, employed by a health club, told Alison to stop at the club on the way to work the next day, and she would sneak her into the women’s locker room to shower. Eating at fast food restaurants, surreptitiously showering each morning at the health club, reporting to her job during the day, and sleeping in her car at night, Alison was surviving.

Several months before, Alison joined a direct selling company that marketed spa and body products. That part of her life was on hold, since the samples were locked away in the house. One evening, her upline director called. “Hi Alison. Haven’t heard from you for awhile. Are you doing okay?” the director warmly inquired.

Perhaps it was the director’s friendly voice, or the thought there didn’t seem an end in sight to her homelessness, but at that moment, seated in a sandwich shop, the servers bustling about preparing to close, Alison’s brave front crumbled. Tears welled in her eyes as she told her director what had transpired.

With the director’s help, she located a modest apartment. The apartment complex’s manager took one look at Alison and said, “You look like someone who needs a break.” He waived the first month’s rent requirement and deposit. Alison moved in within the hour.

Using samples borrowed from her director, she restarted her direct sales business. Two months later, Alison was reunited with her son. He had to change schools, but they were together, making it work in the little apartment.

Alison became a sales dynamo, holding three to four spa parties a week, sponsoring one to two new consultants every month, while leading a growing team. During the next five years, she left her job as a cashier to devote fulltime to her direct sales business, purchased a new home, finalized the divorce from her husband, earned a luxury automobile, and helped her son select a college. Not long ago, I was in a hotel ballroom when Alison was honored at her company's national sales convention as the number one overall achiever of the year.

At center stage, in an emotional speech, Alison thanked the director who had believed in her. Then she said, "If you are willing to work, you can do anything. If I can do it, a woman with only a high school education, anybody can do it. You just have to go out there and make it happen."

Danica Patrick says achieving one's best is "all about creating momentum and then keeping that going by being focused."

Alison worked hard, created momentum, and was focused on her goals.

Optimistic people are the most likely to achieve their dreams. In the minutes before the start of a race, when Danica Patrick climbs into her Indy race car, she believes in her heart that she can win. When Alison was forced from her home to start a new life, she was not about to accept defeat. Instead, she was determined to do whatever

she had to do to pick herself up, press on, and build a new life for herself and her son.

Years ago, a wise man wrote, “The hopeful person sees success where others see failure, sunshine where others see shadows and storms.”

To make it a winning day, practice the art of the optimistic life. Fill your heart with hope, and learn to find happiness everywhere.

Nuclear engineer Leo Cox, retiring in 1987, decided to develop a winery. Land in California’s wine country was too expensive. So were plots in Oregon. However, while visiting his daughter in Arizona, Cox came upon an undeveloped piece of real estate that held promise. This 10-acre tract with hot days and cool nights was like the wine country of Spain. Testing the soil, he found it could grow grapes. So in 1995, Leo Cox planted 450 vines. Four years later, he bottled his first vintage, a white Merlot, quickly selling every bottle. Charron Vineyards became a leader in the growing Arizona wine industry. Leo Cox planted a vineyard to make it a winning day.

No one would have faulted Kathleen Wehner for calling it quits. The company her husband started, to inventory and sell parts for large-engine airplanes, was on the ropes, and the airline companies, her primary customers, were in trouble. David Wehner had built Cirrus Aviation into a profitable multimillion-dollar business as a reseller of aircraft parts. Kathleen helped in the office. Everything was going great until David was diagnosed with brain cancer. He died in 2001, and when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the airline industry took a nosedive. The large-engine parts business

dried up immediately. Practically overnight, Kathleen and her employees shifted to serve propeller and small-engine airplanes. She negotiated a new line of credit and opened a repair shop. Kathleen Wehner saved her husband's company to make it a winning day.

Employed by an Omaha advertising agency, Chip Davis wrote advertising jingles. The lyrics came from the company's copywriter, William Fries. As a sideline, the song-writing duo wrote a country ballad about truck drivers using CB radios, recording it under the pseudonym, C.W. McCall. Their song, "Convoy," went to the top of the music charts in 1976, became a movie starring Kris Kristofferson and Ernest Borgnine, and helped earn Davis that year's ASCAP Country Music Writer of the Year. A few years later, Chip Davis began writing music that fused rhythms of rock with classical. Every major record label turned him down, so he created his own label, called it American Gramophone, and released the first Mannheim Steamroller album. Chip Davis pioneered a new kind of music and built a record label to make it a winning day.

Shelley Kramm was frustrated. Her young daughter, Hadley, a child with cerebral palsy, would not take the foul-tasting medication that reduced her seizures. After repeated trips to the emergency room brought on by not taking the medication, Shelley asked her husband to step in and help. Kenny Kramm came up with a flavor that took the yuk out of the bad-tasting medicine. Hadley took her medicine, the number of seizures diminished, and in 1995, the father with a better idea started FlavorX, a company to manufacture and market medication flavorings. Children around the world are taking their medications, and FlavorX

is a multimillion-dollar company because Kenny Kramm made it a winning day.

The priests at a rectory near the projects in South Boston needed a cook. They hired 13-year-old Barbara Lynch, who lived across the street with her mother and six brothers and sisters in public housing. After dropping out of high school, Barbara worked in a warehouse and then bluffed her way through an interview to land a job as a chef on a dinner cruise. Positions in several of Boston's top restaurants followed and in 1998, with money from investors who were fans of her cooking, Barbara opened No. 9 Park, named one of the twenty-five best new restaurants in America by *Bon Appétit*. Working with determination to succeed, Barbara Lynch made it a winning day.

One of broadcast television's most influential and respected interviewers is Charlie Rose. Like most of us, Rose didn't start out at the top of his game. He had to learn his trade. As a young man, Rose recorded segments of *60 Minutes* and the *CBS Evening News*, transcribing them to study how television news worked. His wife, Mary, held up the transcriptions so Rose could learn to read from a TelePrompter. Preparing for a life in broadcasting, Charlie Rose made it a winning day.

Board a Cape Air flight from Baltimore to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and, if it's a Saturday, your pilot might be this regional airlines' CEO. I believe Dan Wolf starts every morning to make it a winning day. "I was one of those kids always intrigued by the whole idea of flying," Wolf told a reporter. "I used to hang out at the airports

whenever I could. In the summers between years at Wesleyan, I learned to fly around Cape Cod. The more I did it, the more I loved it.”

Dan took a semester off from college to earn his commercial pilot’s license. After completing studies at Middletown Connecticut’s Wesleyan University, he flew to Alaska and later to the California coast. Thinking a career in the air might be enhanced by some knowledge of how airplanes were put together, torn down, and rebuilt, Dan Wolf devoted the next two years to becoming a top-notch aircraft mechanic.

By 1988, he had founded Cape Air, an Atlantic coast flight school as well as an aircraft maintenance and fueling outfit. At times, he handled charters. When Continental Airlines dropped its Provincetown to Boston route, Cape Air stepped in. Today, Cape Air, operating a fleet of fifty planes as the nation’s largest independent regional airlines, services seventeen cities in the Northeastern United States and seven airports in the Caribbean.

Says Wolf, “There are airline CEOs who make a point to be active on the front lines – handing out nuts and meeting passengers in the airplane – but I really love the idea of still being able to fly.”

Optimistic to the core, the flying CEO of Cape Air says no one is born to be an entrepreneur. Wolf explains, “Behind any great entrepreneur, there’s a whole team of people. That’s why when I hire I focus on people whose egos are last and whose desire to work collaboratively are first.” Dan Wolf, the flying CEO, harnesses the power of positive thinking and willingly passes it on to the members of his team. Dan and his employees know that success starts with a winning day attitude.

## Chapter 2:

# Live the Life You Were Meant to Live

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The meeting of about three hundred direct sellers was well under way when I took a seat near the back of the room. A moment later, a consultant named Misaki was invited to the stage to give a testimonial about her business success. This is what she said:

“When I became a consultant, I had no idea so many new doors of opportunity would open for me and that my life would be changed so completely. My daughter, Nanako, invited me to a party, and I can still see the cover of the catalog. It was love at first sight.

“I flipped through the pages. I wanted every product. When I came to the back cover, there was the message: ‘Isn’t it time you began living the life you were meant to live?’ After the party, that question continued to run through my mind. A few days later, I told my family I wanted to be a consultant with this company. I know my family loves me and wants the best for me, but you should have seen their faces. As much as they tried, they couldn’t hide the look of doubt in their eyes. They knew I had a terrible fear of speaking in front of a group, a fear so strong, I could become physically ill.

“In May, I put on a brave face and launched my new business. Those were very difficult days. I shook so much,



I wonder to this day why my display did not tumble over and smash to the floor. To my surprise, at my first show, I sold over \$800 in products. It certainly wasn't my presentation. I truly believe our products are the best, and people want them.

“At my first monthly group meeting, someone said to take it one step at a time, not to worry about earning money, but just be yourself and have a good time. Just to let *the real you* shine through. I took that advice to heart, letting the real me shine through, and it worked. I wasn't afraid anymore.

“I noticed my family looked at me in a different way. They could see my confidence building right before their eyes. When I talked about goals, I could see a glimmer of belief in their eyes.

“Today, a year later, I am a new me. I worked through my fears. I've traveled to places I would never have otherwise been to, and I've made lifelong friends. There will never be a commission check as large as the value of personal growth that I have achieved. To see the pride in my husband's eyes when I told him I was to speak to you at today's conference was absolutely priceless.

“Some of you may be like I was, filled with self-doubt, lacking in confidence and in your own abilities. If you are feeling this way, I ask you the question that changed my life: ‘Isn't it time you began living the life you were meant to live?’

“You can. Remember, the only way you will fail is to simply not try.”

Misaki turned from the podium as the members of the audience rose to their feet in thunderous applause.

In direct sales, thousands are living the life they were meant to live.

I know of a woman at the age of 69 who joined a direct selling company. The retired piano teacher plays for weddings, provides accompaniment at her church on Sunday mornings, and presents home parties about two nights a week. She told me, “I started booking parties, writing up orders, and was totally amused at myself.”

When her sons asked her why she was selling candles and decorative products, the grandmother of four responded, “Why not? I expect to live at least another twenty years. Just think what I can achieve by the time I’m ninety?”

Margo had a thriving direct sales business and a growing team centered in Plano, Texas and the north Dallas suburbs. In only three months, she promoted to management, and before year’s end, her group numbered 23 representatives. In February, her husband’s company consolidated operations, and he was offered a position in Wilmington, North Carolina.

Margo’s upline manager assured her the move was “a blessing in disguise” because she had the opportunity to grow a team in another state, while retaining her group in Texas.

Six days after the moving truck arrived, Margo attended a meeting of mothers at her son’s new school. “I just moved here,” she announced. “I don’t know a soul, and I need someone to host a party for me.” Three mothers booked parties. Within nine weeks, Margo enjoyed her largest retail sales month to date, with personal sales exceeding \$6,500.

Today, Margo is one of her company's top managers. Her monthly commission checks total about \$15,000. "The rewards are more than I ever imagined, but the friendships I have made are priceless," she says.

Marianne started her day at 5 a.m. By 6:30, she was on the floor as a nurse in a large metropolitan hospital. "My supervisors only paid attention to me if I did something wrong," she later recalled. "There were no 'pats on the back' or words of praise for a job well done. Each night, I came home exhausted and discouraged."

A long-time friend convinced her to join a direct sales company. Marianne's husband was less than enthusiastic. "It won't work," he said.

In a dead-end job at the hospital, Marianne set a goal to match her nurse's pay within two years. "I knew it wouldn't be easy. I knew it would take every ounce of perseverance I could muster and then some, but I would keep going no matter what," she said.

Two years later, Marianne's team had grown to 248. She more than surpassed her hospital job earnings. One afternoon, this nurse's supervisor told her the hospital was reassigning her to another floor, for the third time in fourteen months. Without hesitation, Marianne looked the supervisor in the eyes. "You'll have my letter of resignation in the morning."

Years later, Marianne said, "I will never forget that feeling of joy and independence at that moment for as long as I live."

Margo, the direct seller who had to start over, and Marianne, the former nurse who became a direct sales

superstar, discovered there is one thing better than making a living – making a life.

In more times than not, those who dedicate their lives to making a life are those who give of themselves. When they do, they're rewarded many times over. There's an old saying, "Give and increase; hoard and lose."

Annie Mae Ward made it a winning day with barbecue sauce, beef ribs, and pulled pork. In so doing, she changed hundreds, perhaps thousands of lives for the better. It all started one day in the mid-1970s when her husband and friends decided to freshen up the paint at their Huntsville, Texas church. Annie Mae suggested they set up a barbecue grill in the church parking lot so she could prepare lunch for the hungry congregants. As the unmistakable scent of post-oak smoke filled the air along Montgomery Road, passersby stopped at the New Zion Missionary Baptist Church to inquire if the sweet smelling beef and pork lunches were for sale.

For the New Zion deacons, the proverbial light bulb went off. If Annie Mae was willing to do the cooking, the church would sponsor the roadside diner, with a portion of the profit finding its way into the New Zion's collection plate.

Word of the new eatery spread fast. For two years, the beef and pork barbecue business boomed until a city health inspector got wind of the operation. Citing an arm-length list of licensing and health code violations that Ward and the church had overlooked, the city official closed down the business.

Church members quickly came to Annie Mae's rescue. Next to the church was a vacant frame structure, that, with a little remodeling, held potential. The church purchased the property, and in 1979 the New Zion

Missionary Baptist Church Barbecue restaurant re-opened for business, fully licensed and law abiding.

Now in her 90s, Annie Mae has long hung up her barbecue apron and ladle, but the little business she started as a lunchtime repast has grown into a legend. Featured on the Food Network's *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*, the popular eating place, only open on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, attracts a loyal following as well as travelers from distant states. The line is long, but the wait is worth it. Ribs, brisket, chicken, all slathered in barbecue sauce using Annie Mae's recipe, beans, potato salad and pecan pie satisfy the hungry diners. I believe Annie Mae has lived the life she was meant to live.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, a direct seller I know, living in hard-hit Biloxi, Mississippi, received a package from members of her sales team located in other states. Inside were diapers, formula, food, and cash. She told me her direct sales sisters sent help weeks before she heard from a government agency.

A Chicago policewoman traded her badge and gun for a jewelry starter kit and a dream to find a way to earn a living while staying home with her pre-school children. She tells the members of her team, "Never pre-judge. The person you may think won't be interested in our business opportunity in a million years, such as a patrol officer, may be your next recruit."

Losing a high-paying corporate position, the former pharmaceutical executive wanted to supplement her severance package while searching for a new job. Needing \$1,500 a month to keep up with the car payment, mortgage, the children's tuition, and the household bills, she asked her upline manager what she needed to do.

“Book six parties a month,” was the reply.

The new consultant did better than that, holding an average of two parties a week.

“After six months, I was having so much fun and making so much money, I stopped looking for another nine-to-five corporate job,” she said. Her direct sales business became her fulltime career. Leading an organization that numbers several hundred, she earns a lucrative six-figure income.

Rebekah, a fashion model for fifteen years, worked the runways in New York, Europe, and Asia and appeared in magazines, in television commercials, and in catalogs. Retiring from the runway, Rebekah became a stay-at-home mom with twin boys. “Being a single mom has many wonderful benefits,” she told me, smiling, “but pay isn’t one of them.” Seeking a way to supplement the family’s income, she joined a direct sales company to sell cosmetics and skin care products. Working around her children’s schedules, Rebekah set her sights on earning a company-sponsored trip to Bora Bora.

This incentive helped her expand her sales team, and after returning from the Bora Bora trip, she kicked her business into high gear. She said, “I have made great new friends. I have a wonderful man in my life and two amazing boys. I’m doing something that is fun. I’m helping others achieve financial and personal success. I’m happy!”

Victoria decided to make a difference in someone’s life each and every day. As a reminder, on her bathroom mirror is a card that reads, “Make a Difference Today.” By day, Victoria works as a television news producer. In her

off hours, she sells home décor products for a direct sales company.

Arriving at work, she acknowledges the security guard with a wide smile, a friendly hello, and a compliment, “Jack, you look great this morning. You’ve been working out and losing weight. Way to go!”

Walking by the receptionist, Victoria pauses to look her in the eyes, give a genuine smile, and ask about her children. As she goes through the morning, she focuses on each person she meets, asks questions to inquire about their interests, and listens intently when they share with her. Victoria knows that when you are interested in other people and help them to smile, you make a difference in their lives.

By the way, Victoria is never without bookings or customers. She is a top recruiter, recently earning a company-paid Lexus automobile. Victoria is living the life she was meant to live.

So is Blake Mycoskie, the founder of TOMS Shoes, the company that gives a free pair of shoes to a child in need for every pair that is purchased by a customer. In his mid thirties, Blake is best known as a third-place finisher in the television reality show, *The Amazing Race*. While vacationing in Argentina, a favorite destination during the show, he was struck by the hundreds of children with cuts and sores on their feet because they could not afford shoes. “I had an epiphany” he told *People* magazine. “What if I redesigned [the canvas-type shoe worn by locals] and every time I sold a pair, I gave one to these kids.” Working with craftsmen in Argentina, Blake came up with a durable, rubber-soled shoe that sells for about \$50 on-line ([www.tomsshoes.com](http://www.tomsshoes.com)).

Since starting the company in 2006, Blake has given away 150,000 pairs of shoes to children in Ethiopia, South Africa, Uruguay, and Argentina. In 2009, the goal is to give away 300,000 pairs of shoes to children who do not have them in many of the poorest countries of the world. Since being featured in an AT&T commercial, the TOMS Shoes website is getting as many as 90,000 inquiries a day.

Explains one of Blake's employees, "It's about putting other people ahead of yourself." As the company website states, "Changing a life begins with a single step."

Blake Mycoskie is living the life he was meant to live.





## Chapter 3:

# Defeat the Fear of Failure

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“The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure,” wrote international soccer manager Sven-Göran Eriksson. If you intend to make it a winning day, face your fears to make things happen. Do not permit irrational fears to hold you back or stop you from living life to the fullest. Do not be afraid to fail. After all, if you’re not failing at times, you’re not trying.

Earning an all-expenses-paid Jamaican vacation for two from your direct sales company should be an accomplishment worth celebrating with a “hip, hip, hooray!” For Jessica, receiving the invitation to join several hundred others for a trip of a lifetime was a moment she had been dreading. Not that she did not want to spend a January week on the warm beaches of this island paradise. She did, and so did her husband. It was getting there that was the problem. You see, Jessica feared flying, heights to be exact, and to get to Jamaica, she would be forced to take to the friendly skies at 35,000 feet or more.

After Jessica had not responded to the company’s email and letter, she heard from her upline director, Ana Christina. “Jessica, congratulations! You earned the trip. Are you excited about going to Jamaica?” the director enthusiastically asked.

“I don’t think we can go,” Jessica replied. “I think we’re going to be busy that week.”

“Busy? Are you kidding me? Five days in Ocho Rios? You earned it, girl,” Ana Christina said with a laugh. “Now, what’s really going on?”

Jessica had been a member of Ana Christina’s team for just over a year. Within weeks of joining the company, the new jewelry consultant became one of the team’s highest producers and had started a team of her own. Over the course of these several months, the two women had grown close, with Jessica sharing some of the duties of organizing the group’s monthly sales meetings.

“Ana Christina, there is something about me that I’ve not told you,” Jessica said in a serious tone. She took a deep breath and then said, “I don’t like heights. I don’t like tall buildings. I’ll never get on an airplane, much less fly all the way to Jamaica.”

The director’s voice grew gentle. “I understand. I was once afraid of flying too.”

“You?” Jessica responded in surprise. “But you fly all the time. You go see your grandchildren in Texas. You’re on the company’s advisory board, so you fly to meetings. How can you be afraid of flying?”

“It’s true,” Ana Christina continued. “Then I learned an important lesson: We can choose not to be afraid. Let’s not let fear keep you from enjoying all that life has to offer.”

Jessica was quiet. The director spoke again, “I’ll tell you what. If I can help you overcome your fear of flying, will you come with us to Jamaica?”

In the weeks that followed, Jessica met with Ana Christina, and this is what the jewelry consultant learned: As many as 60 million Americans have at least some fear

of getting on an airplane. Statistically, flying is safer than riding in an automobile. Fear is a choice. We can choose fear, or we can choose to live and enjoy life.

There is a truth about fear, whether it's a fear of public speaking, of making a sales presentation, of asking someone to join your team, or stepping onto a jet liner. The thing we fear happening is actually the thing we either consciously or subconsciously expect to happen.

We expect to make a fool of ourselves as we make a speech. We expect not to make the sale. We expect a potential recruit to say, "No, thank you." We expect the plane to crash.

Whatever you fear, ask yourself, "Can I let go of expecting bad things to happen?"

Few, if any of us, want to be in an uncomfortable, fearful situation. We do not typically look for tragic outcomes.

Instead, we tend to want positive things to occur – for the speech to be a success, for the guest to make a purchase, for the potential new team member to join our company.

We can choose not to be afraid, just as we can choose not to expect unpleasant outcomes.

For their third meeting, Ana Christina suggested Jessica meet her for lunch at their local airport. After lunch, they watched the planes take off and land. "You know, there really are a lot of planes coming and going, and all kinds of people, many with children, seem to be flying today," Jessica admitted.

Ana Christina smiled knowingly. "That's the kind of positive 'self-talk' I would expect from you, Jessica."

A few weeks later, Jessica's director made a surprising offer. "Let's go to Chicago, just you and me.

We can do some shopping. Have lunch. It's a quick flight, less than an hour, and we'll be back in time for supper."

Jessica swallowed her fear, repeating her director's wisdom like a mantra: We can choose not to be afraid.

The boarding pass shook in her nervous hand when she gave it to the gate attendant to be scanned, and before she knew it, Jessica was seated on the plane beside her friend. We can choose not to be afraid.

The trip to Chicago was uneventful. In fact, the flight was so smooth, and Ana Christina was so much fun, Jessica marveled that she actually forgot she was in the air until the flight attendant announced they would soon be landing at O'Hare.

That January, Jessica, Ana Christina, and several hundred top achievers rendezvoused in Jamaica. It was an amazing week – sun, surf, a horseback ride through a tropical rainforest to the edge of an azure sea, and lots of jerk chicken, spice-rubbed pork, delectable fish, and exotic "umbrella" beverages. On the final day in Jamaica, a number of the jewelry consultants signed up for the mountain top zip-line, including Jessica.

Perched on a rocky precipice, a mile up on Blue Mountain, she was harnessed to a wire and about to soar through the jungle seven hundred feet above the forest floor.

As her feet shoved off, Jessica heard Ana Christina call out from the group standing behind her. "You go, Jessica. Remember, we can choose not to be afraid."

Jessica chose to not let fear keep her from enjoying all that life has to offer. Remember the first time you attempted to ride a bicycle or took a dive from the high board into a swimming pool? The fear you felt quickly

dissipated, as soon as the bike's wheels turned beneath your feet or you rose to the surface to hear your family's applause. You tried it. You survived it. You were ready to try again.

Jane Seymour says, "The antidote to fear is action." Before stepping in front of the camera to film a scene for a movie or giving a speech, this actress admits to feeling terrified. "I'm in a state of total panic," she says. "My way of coping with the fear is to be in the moment, to speak from the heart."

The Appalachian Trail winds more than two thousand miles through fourteen states from Mount Katahdin in Maine to Georgia's Springer Mountain. Since the 1930s, it is believed about 10,000 hikers have completed the five-to-seven-month traverse of the entire trail. Much of the Appalachian Trail is through rugged, pristine wilderness country that hasn't changed all that much in thousands of years. The trees are so dense, the branches catch your backpack to throw you off your feet.

Three friends invited Martha to join them for a hike of the Appalachian Trail. They would do it over the course of three consecutive summers. Traveling to the mountains of northern Georgia, the four women set out on the first leg of this amazing journey. About a week into the hike, they awoke to a downpour. In the torrential rain, they started out, mud clinging to their boots, water soaking their gear. Rounding a bend in the trail, Martha's feet slipped out from under her, sending her body careening down an embankment, through tangled vines and muddy outcroppings.

“Martha, are you okay?” her fellow hikers screamed, scrambling to her side. There was nothing broken, just a lot of mud and bruises.

“I ached. I was disheartened. I knew I couldn’t go another step,” Martha recalled. “Tears streamed down my face, the salt mixing with the rain.”

A hand gently touched her shoulder. Martha looked up into the face of her smiling friend. “Martha, you can do this. You will not be defeated.”

An inner strength she didn’t know she possessed coursed through her veins. Martha stood, climbed up the slippery embankment, and continued moving north. She and her friends completed the Appalachian Trail. To this day, Martha says the experience made her stronger and more resilient.

Martha tells this story to encourage the members of her direct sales team to press on through any setback, to overcome every barrier on their quest to achieving long-term goals.

“Don’t get bogged down in self-defeat and hardship,” she says. “Don’t give up, because your goal may be just one more step ahead of you.”

*The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure.* Step out of your comfort zone. Overcome the fear of rejection. With each experience, gain confidence. Push beyond your limits. Dream it, and you can do it!

I expect Zac Sunderland greets each morning with the thought of making it a winning day. You may not be familiar with Zac and his story of courage and fortitude, but his accomplishment is a lesson in making dreams come true. On a warm June day in 2008, the seventeen-year-old set sail in a boat he had purchased for \$6,500, money saved

from summer jobs. His dream? To sail around the world. Quite ambitious for a teen who didn't yet have a driver's license.

But Zac was no stranger to the seafaring life. His dad, a California shipwright, introduced the young man to sailing at an early age, and most of those summer jobs involved scraping, patching and painting boats near his California home. He devoted countless 18-hour days preparing his boat, the *Intrepid*, for the circumnavigation attempt.

A few weeks before the start of the trip, Zac said, "I had the opportunity and desire to do this, and I decided to make it work. Get out there. Have an adventure, and see where it takes me."

For a period of 13 months, Zac piloted his 36-foot second-hand sailor from the California coastal town of Marina Del Ray to Oahu, then on to Darwin, Australia, Cape Town, across the Atlantic and through the Isthmus of Panama, finally anchoring back home in California. Along the way, he battled high seas to outrun a hurricane, was chased by pirates off Indonesia, dealt with schools of sharks, took on major boat repairs, and warded off fear and loneliness. Through it all, he was determined to achieve his goal of circumnavigating the world. "I have to keep my thoughts focused on the task at hand," he told Susan Heeger, writing for *Coastal Living* magazine. "Can't get too caught up in what-ifs."

On July 16, 2009, after cruising 25,000 miles aboard the *Intrepid*, Zac Sunderland became the youngest person ever to sail around the world solo.

Whether contemplating hiking the Appalachian Trail, sailing around the world, or taking your direct selling



business to a new level of success, often the most difficult hurdle to overcome is the fear of taking the first step.

## Chapter 4:

# Live Up to Your Expectations

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Wolfgang Puck is known as the Austrian-born chef with sixteen restaurants, more than eighty express bistros from New York to Maui, a frozen-foods business, and a line of high-end kitchenware. Less known about this high-achieving entrepreneur is the road he traveled, starting as a cooking apprentice. Working in the kitchen of a hotel in his Austrian hometown, Puck was determined to move to France to pursue his ambition to become a chef. He was 18 years old and fearless.

Speaking to Liz Welch, an *Inc.* magazine contributing editor, Puck recalled, “I wrote letter after letter to all the two- and three-star restaurants until Raymond Thuilier, the owner of Provence’s famous Baumanière, hired me. He didn’t pay me for three months. I finally told him I had to leave, because I was broke, but he said, ‘No, I like you!’ He started paying me, and it’s the reason I decided to become a chef. He was my mentor: town mayor, painter, and a great chef who cooked from the heart without recipes – a real Renaissance man.”

In 1973, Wolfgang Puck relocated to Los Angeles to take a job as a chef at a French restaurant. Nine years later, he opened Spago on Sunset Boulevard. It quickly became known as the pizzeria to the stars.

“Johnny Carson used to come to Spago and take home ten pizzas. One day, I said, ‘Johnny, are you having a party?’ He said, ‘No, I put them in my freezer and then pop them in the oven for dinner.’ I thought, how can you do that to my pizza? Then I tried it – it wasn’t bad. I met people from Gelson’s supermarket chain, and we built frozen pizzas into a multimillion-dollar business before selling to ConAgra.”

Chef Puck reportedly said, “Only you can judge your life. You have to live up to your own expectations.”

What are your expectations? When asking an acquaintance to host a party or to join your team, are you expecting a “no thank you” or are you expecting a “yes, that sounds great!”

Do you expect to make it a winning day?

A new member of Carla’s direct selling group wasn’t experiencing much luck in booking shows. As they talked about the lack of positive responses, the consultant admitted, “Carla, I’m simply afraid people will not want to book with me. I don’t like that feeling, when someone says they are too busy or just not interested.”

The seasoned director offered this advice: “Care about everyone you meet. Your goal is to meet ten people a day. If someone is not interested at this time, that’s okay, because your goal was simply to meet that person. You had a friendly conversation, maybe you made a new friend, and that, in and of itself, is a success. Keep meeting people, and eventually someone will be interested in your offer. In meeting ten people, it makes no difference if the person who says, ‘Yes, that sounds great!’ is the first person or tenth.”

Carla added, “If your goal is to meet new people, as long as you are doing that, you are a success.”

Those realizing success in business, more times than not, say the goal is to satisfy customers. The money will come after that. As Wolfgang Puck said, “Success for me has always been focusing on the product first, the money second, whether that is a can of soup, a frying pan, or a restaurant.”

Master salesman Zig Ziglar, speaking to an audience of sales professionals, wanted to impress upon this group of men and women the importance of setting goals and working to reach those goals. For his example, Ziglar drew upon his struggle to lose thirty-seven pounds. “For twenty-four years of my adult life, by choice, I weighed well over two hundred pounds. I say, by choice, because, you see, I have never accidentally eaten anything,” Zig told his audience to uproarious laughter, adding, “When I choose to eat too much today, I’ve chosen to weigh too much tomorrow.”

According to this motivational speaker, individuals can choose to set goals as they work to realize their full potential, or can choose to ignore setting goals with the understanding that the consequences may be an unfulfilled life.

Returning to the weight-loss example, Zig admitted that he yo-yo dieted for more than twenty years, losing a pound or two and just as quickly gaining them back. “But it wasn’t until I wrote it down, put a date on it, listed the obstacles I had to overcome, identified the people, the groups, the organizations I needed to work with, spelled out a plan of action, set that time limit in there, and identified all the benefits to me, it was only after I did all that, that the goal became a reality.”

In a matter of minutes, Zig Ziglar gave his audience a formula for achieving any goal.

To live up to your expectations, take the time to set goals. A goal needs to be realistic. For example, deciding to swim from California to Tahiti is not a realistic goal. Sailing a boat to the Pacific island paradise is a possible goal that can be achieved with thoughtful planning. Determine when you intend to make the trip. List what needs to be accomplished before setting sail: I need to learn to handle a boat, gain experience in deep water sailing, study navigation, and acquire and stock the boat. Using Ziglar's formula, identify the groups and organizations that can help you achieve your goal: a sailing club or school and a shipwright

Finally, identify the benefits of sailing to Tahiti, because goal setting requires motivation. Achievement expert and author Douglas Vermeeren says the most important element of goal setting is often overlooked. "That is finding your motivation. If you want to get to your goals quickly, you have got to clarify why you want it. What does it mean to you? Why do you need it in your life? And the stronger and more important the *why*, the more power you will have to pursue that goal."

Whether your goal is to sail to Tahiti or to pick up the phone and call ten potential hostesses, procrastination can ruin the noblest of goals. If you find yourself saying, "I'll do it tomorrow," you may need some surefire-ways to break out of a slump. Begin by getting organized. List what needs to be accomplished in the order of importance. In other words, prioritize your tasks. Determine the amount of time required to accomplish each item on your list and establish deadlines. Your mother's advice is as true now as ever before: "Bite off only what you can chew." If

the job is large and seemingly overwhelming, break it down into manageable parts. Get going, and be sure to reward your efforts when the job is done.

Your expectations determine the outcome of your life. Wherever Giles goes on his route, delivering packages to businesses and homes, he always has a book on the truck's passenger seat. Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends & Influence People*, or *Awaken the Giant Within* by Anthony Robbins, or another title just as motivational and inspiring. You see, during the day, Giles is a delivery driver. In the evenings and weekends, he is building a lucrative direct sales business.

"My mother was sixteen when I came along," Giles told me. "My father was already in prison by the time I was born, so I didn't know him, but there were lots of boyfriends coming and going as I was growing up. When I turned six, my Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Reed took me in, to keep me away from the dealers and the crack houses. I guess you could say, that was the day that determined the rest of my life."

Giles shifted in his chair. "You see, my mom meant well and tried real hard, but I was better off with Lizzy and Reed. They had three children of their own, but Thomas was my age. We were both in the second grade. Here I was, in a new town, a new school, and my cousin Thomas was my only friend."

Continuing his story, Giles said that when he arrived in his new second grade class, about a month before the summer break, his teacher soon realized he could not read or write. At a parent conference, she told Giles' aunt that the boy would be sent back to first grade in the fall.

“My Aunt Lizzy would have none of it,” Giles continued. “She asked the teacher, ‘If the boy learns to read over the summer, can he go on into the third grade with my Thomas?’ My teacher gave a tentative approval, but said I would need to be tested before the start of school to make sure I could keep up.

“That night, my Aunt Lizzy sat me down at the kitchen table with a beginner’s reader and a lot of patience. Before cracking open the book, she looked me in the eyes and lovingly said, ‘I expect you can do anything you set your mind to doing. If you want to read bad enough, then you can.’

“She opened the reader, and we began.

“That summer, I learned to read and write. When school started back that September, I was a slow reader, but I passed the test and went on to the third grade with Thomas.”

Giles paused for a moment. “My Aunt Lizzy had high expectation for me, but most importantly, she made it possible for me to have high expectations for myself.”

How we feel on the inside determines our actions on the outside. Several years after his life-altering accident, Christopher Reeve, the actor who played Superman in the movies, confined to a wheelchair, unable to walk, move his arms, or take a breath without a machine, wrote these words:

“What happens to many people who are fully functional physically is that they become paralyzed in an emotional or psychological sense. Perhaps they have low self-esteem, are still influenced by their upbringing, or failed too often to be willing to try again. But just as surely

as we can allow ourselves to become paralyzed within, we can also choose to set ourselves free.”

A man who lived up to his expectations was Paul Newman, actor, film director, auto racing enthusiast, entrepreneur, and humanitarian. The food company he co-founded, Newman’s Own, donates post-tax profits and royalties to charity, an estimated \$250 million to date. A World War II veteran who served on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, Newman earned a degree from Kenyon College in Ohio, studied drama at Yale, and was a student of Lee Strasberg of New York’s Actor’s Studio. Following a few Broadway roles, Paul Newman went to Hollywood where he starred in the biggest movies of the day, including *Exodus*, *The Hustler*, *Hud*, *Cool Hand Luke*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, and *The Color of Money*, earning Newman an Academy Award. Among the charities receiving Newman’s Own funding are the Hole in the Wall Gang Camps that provide annual outdoor experiences free of charge for as many as 13,000 seriously ill children in four countries.

“I’m two people,” Newman told a reporter. “I’m me, Paul Newman. And I’m Paul Newman the actor.” It often surprised people who worked with Newman or raced with him that off screen, he was unassuming, approachable, and more than willing to laugh at his own shortcomings and foibles. On stage and screen, he set the bar high. On the street, he was a regular guy.

For years, he took pride in making his own salad dressing, giving bottles to friends and neighbors in his Westport, Connecticut neighborhood. A few weeks before Christmas 1980, Newman recruited a friend, A.E. Hotchner, to help him mix up a batch of the fabled salad dressing as presents. In a barn on Newman’s property, the



two men dumped gallons of olive oil, red wine vinegar, chopped garlic, onion, and seasonings in a massive bowl. The bottles of dressing were a hit. One of their neighbors, Martha Stewart, gave it a thumbs up.

The idea was born to start a little company to sell the concoction, with the profits, if there were to be profits, going to charity. Newman's Own started with a rented office in Westport, furniture from Newman's swimming pool, and a ping-pong table set up as a conference table.

A local food store agreed to stock Newman's Own salad dressing, and in three weeks, customers purchased ten thousand bottles. Today, Newman's Own products, from salad dressings and sauces to popcorn and snacks, are staples in groceries everywhere.

Asked about his business plan, Newman scoffed, "We have no plan. We never have had a plan. Hotch and I comprise two of the great witless people in business – none of this is supposed to work, you understand. We are a testament to the theory of Random – whatever that means!"

Newman's Own was a "random" success by a man who seldom took himself seriously but was serious about living life on his terms.

"One thing is interesting to learn in acting," he said. "You cannot let it affect you when people laugh at you. If you don't take chances in rehearsals, you might just as well get out of the business."

We can all take a lesson from Paul Newman's example. Be your own person. Give more than you get. Live a full life. Live up to your expectations.

## Chapter 5: Give it Your All

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Long before Kelly Clarkson was discovered on television's *American Idol*, a similar show aired in Australia. It was 1964, and the winner was promised a trip to New York City and a recording contract with Mercury Records. Helen Reddy, the daughter of a well-known show business couple on the country's vaudeville circuit, had appeared on local TV variety shows and in Melbourne clubs when she entered the contest. The chances of making it to the top were indeed daunting. After all, 1,357 other contestants harbored the same dream of landing a recording contract in the United States. She decided to give it her all.

“During the six months that the contest ran, every morning I would get up, look at myself in the mirror, and say, ‘Helen Reddy – you are going to win that contest!’” she recalled years later. If doubt crept into her mind, Helen banished the negative thoughts. She was determined to win this contest, possibly her only opportunity to come to America to pursue a career in music. Week after week, other contestants dropped to the wayside, and Helen was left standing – and performing. As the show's finale approached, Helen's confidence wavered. Maybe it would be better to stay in Australia. Her apprehension grew. “What if I can't survive in America?” she worried.

It was time to select a song for the finale. What kind of song would impress the judges? Should it be a ballad or a high-energy dance tune? Helen deliberated for days, listening to albums, searching for the perfect song. She found it in “Strangers and Lovers,” a number that started out slow and contemplative, but finished as an uptempo rocker. Helen picked out a white evening gown and had it altered to fit her perfectly. Her performance was flawless.

The night of the taping, Helen and the other contestants waited as the judges tallied the scores. Finally, they announced the winner. By a vote of three to two, Helen Reddy was the winner.

Arriving in New York, Helen went to the Fifth Avenue headquarters of Mercury Records, expecting to sign a contract and begin recording sessions. Instead, she was told she must have misunderstood. First prize was an audition, not a contract, and since they had a recording of her performance from Australian television, there was no need for an audition. “Have a nice time while in New York, and don’t forget to call before returning to Australia,” a company representative cheerfully said, showing her to the door.

Disappointed, but not returning home, Helen worked in Canada and Chicago as a singer in clubs and eventually made her way to Los Angeles to again try for a record contract. Twenty-seven labels rejected her before she signed with Capitol Records in 1970. Two years later, Helen co-wrote and recorded, “I Am Woman,” which became a number one hit in the United States and around the world, earning her a Grammy. It was the beginning of a recording career that generated more than a dozen Top 40 hits, performances in Las Vegas, roles on Broadway and in

feature films, and the sale of more than 25 million records worldwide.

Helen Reddy, the singer who wrote the lyrics, “I am woman, hear me roar,” persevered to achieve her dream as a pop idol. As she said, “I always believed that I could make it, or I never would have spent so many years trying to get here.”

In 1999, Pete Carroll was fired from his head coaching job for the New England Patriots. A few weeks later, with few prospects of a coaching position on the horizon, Carroll took out a notebook. He wrote across the page: “What is my philosophy?” Then he wrote one simple line, “I’m a competitor.”

Then, Pete Carroll wrote: “What is my approach?”

“We’re going to do things better than it’s ever been done before in everything we do,” he decided.

Since becoming the head coach at the University of Southern California, Carroll has amassed an enviable record of success: two national championships, six BCS bowl wins, and three Heisman Trophy winners.

Coach Carroll admits he has always had a competitive spirit. “That’s my whole life since I was three, four years old,” he told a gathering of USC alumni. “I tried to beat my big brother in every game we played. All of his friends would just laugh at how hard I’d try. I’d be fighting and scratching and crying and whatever it took.”

So when this competitor, at a crossroads in his life’s journey, took stock of his career, he decided to do it better than ever before. At that moment, Pete Carroll went from being a follower to being a leader. He would no longer be an imitator, but be an innovator. He refused to see himself

as a failure. He was a victor determined to succeed on his own terms.

Helen Reddy, Pete Carroll, and thousands of others have achieved success by believing in themselves, in their dreams, and persevering with a dogged determination. More than a hundred years ago, a learned man wrote, "Failure is the final test of persistence and of an iron will; it either crushes a life or solidifies it." How many fall short of their goals, giving up, when they could have persisted a little longer and achieved success?

The son of a Kenyan student and a single mother, Barack Obama suggested, "Making your mark on the world is hard. If it were easy, everybody would do it. But it's not. It takes patience; it takes commitment; and it comes with plenty of failure along the way. The real test is not whether you avoid this failure, because you won't. It's whether you let it harden or shame you into inaction, or whether you learn from it; whether you choose to persevere."

Failure is no longer trying. The price of success is dedication of purpose, unrelenting hard work, and the devotion to see the task at hand through to its ultimate conclusion. "You're not obligated to win," counseled Marian Wright Edelman. "You're obligated to keep trying to do the best you can every day."

If you have the tenacity, the stick-to-itiveness, the internal strength to carry on, you have the right stuff to achieve where others may fail. "I can't imagine a person becoming a success who doesn't give this game of life everything he's got," advised the legendary newsman, Walter Cronkite.

Take a walk on a beach in Hawaii where the surfers go to play, and you may spot a young woman gracefully skimming the waves on her long board. You may look twice when you realize she is balancing up there with only one arm.

In 2005, Bethany Hamilton won the first place trophy in her age group at the National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA) National Championships, making her one of the best young surfers in the world. A remarkable achievement for any sixteen-year-old, but incredible for Bethany, who did it with one arm.

Two years earlier, on Halloween morning, Bethany was surfing with her friends in the warm waters near her home in Kauai, Hawaii. Lying on her board, waiting for a wave, her left arm dangling in the water, she was attacked by a fifteen-foot tiger shark. Despite losing her arm at the shoulder, Bethany was determined to return to the sport she loved. The day before Thanksgiving, only a few weeks after the attack, this tenacious youngster paddled her nine-foot long board into the surf.

“My first couple of tries didn’t work: I couldn’t get up. I have to admit I was a little bit discouraged,” Bethany recounted. “My dad, who was in the water with me, kept shouting, ‘Bethany, try it one more time. This one will be it!’ So I did.

“Then it happened. A wave rolled through, I caught it, put my hand on the deck to push up, and I was standing,” she continued. “It’s hard for me to describe the joy I felt after I stood up and rode a wave for the first time after the attack. I was incredibly thankful and happy inside. The tiny bit of doubt that would sometimes tell me, ‘You’ll never surf again’ was gone in one wave! Even though I

was all wet, I felt tears of happiness trickling down my face.”

Bethany Hamilton has appeared on *20/20*, *Good Morning America*, *Inside Edition*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and been featured in numerous magazine articles. Invariably, the interviewer will ask, “What about sharks? Aren’t you afraid of going into the water?”

Bethany’s answer tells a lot about her determination to succeed as well as the courage to face fear head on. Surfers play it smart by not going in water known to have active shark populations, she says, but “to constantly dwell on what might happen would totally suck the joy out of the sport.” She explains: “It’s like asking, What if the roller coaster comes off the track? What if the horse throws you? What if you get hit in the head with a baseball, the puck, or the golf ball? What if you crash on a bike, get run over while jogging, or break your neck in a fall while water skiing, climbing, or snowboarding, or get bitten by a rattler while hiking? See what I mean? Life is full of what-ifs. You can’t let it hold you back. If you do, you’re not really living at all...just kind of going through the motions with no meaning.”

When Bethany Hamilton hits the surf, she’s making it a winning day. The same can be said of anyone devoted to a sport. It’s an amazing moment to watch a tennis pro win at Wimbledon, a golfer putt to a Master’s finish, and to see a figure skater slide onto the ice to compete for Olympic gold.

The girl was not yet eight years old. Seated with her family watching Brian Boitano on television win the gold medal at the 1988 winter games, she was mesmerized. For about two years, along with her sister, she had been

enrolled in skating lessons at a local rink. She enjoyed wearing her skating skirts to school and thought it was cool she could do something many of her classmates could not, but now, to see Olympic competition, a fire of desire was ignited within her small frame.

Little Michelle Kwan vowed that someday she would earn an Olympic medal. “I started counting the years,” she wrote in her autobiography *Heart of a Champion*. “At the 1994 Olympics, I’d be thirteen (a teenager!). In 1998, I’d be seventeen (almost an adult!). In 2002, twenty-one years old (mature, sophisticated). In 2006, I’d be twenty-five. I told myself that I would be at all those Olympics. I didn’t know that you had to qualify to get in. I thought you could just show up.

“People find it hard to believe that I had that kind of determination at such a young age, but that’s the way it happened. It just wasn’t a one-night wish. I could see it happening. If I’d ever told myself it was an impossible dream, I never would have gotten this far.”

Michelle started practicing four hours a day, waking up at 3 a.m. to get to the rink before school, and returning to the rink after school. Paying for the increased rink time and coaching became an impossible financial hardship for her mother and father. That’s when a member of the Los Angeles Figure Skating Club, believing in Michelle’s potential, made arrangements for her training to continue at the Ice Castle International Training Center in Lake Arrowhead, California.

Kwan went on to win five World Championships and two Olympic gold medals to become the most decorated figure skater in United States history.

Through the years of training required to become the world’s best, Michelle’s parents told her to “work hard, be



yourself, and have fun.” These words of wisdom are Michelle Kwan’s motto to this day.

Achievers making it a winning day know there’s no getting around hard work. Do it, and you will find success in all that you do. Don’t work, and you may as well depend on purchasing a winning lottery ticket. Work is a sure thing. The opposite is throwing your ambitions to the wind.

As Norman Vincent Peale said, “It takes struggle, a goal, and enthusiasm to make a champion.”

A champion in every aspect of the word is Lisa Leslie, one of the greatest to play professional women’s basketball. As much as this three-time Women’s National Basketball Association MVP and four-time Olympic gold medal winner worked to earn every accolade received on and off the court, the real hero of her story is Lisa’s mother, Christine. It’s a story that began before the roundball phenom was born. Walter Lee Leslie was married with four children when he abandoned his family in Maryland to relocate to California, changing his name to Bernard Leslie. Bernard and Christine married, and then he left when this second wife was four months pregnant with Lisa.

Christine awoke each morning at 5 o’clock, put on a neatly ironed uniform, and left before dawn for her job as a mail carrier. At 7:30 a.m., Lisa dressed herself, watched television, then turned off the lights, locked the door, checked in with a neighbor, and walked to kindergarten.

Realizing her mail route job would not afford them the opportunity to move to a better neighborhood or eventually pay for a college education for Lisa, the hard-working mother looked for a new job. North American Van Lines needed drivers. Here was the deal: the moving company would teach you to drive an 18-wheeler; you

would provide your own truck; and North American would put you into the long-haul freight business.

“Let me tell you what a giant leap of faith this was,” Lisa recalled. “My mom did not even know how to drive a stick shift. She had no clue. On top of that, North American Van Lines was headquartered in Fort Wayne, Indiana. That was also where the driving classes were held.”

Without money to fly, the mother rode a bus from California to Fort Wayne. In two weeks, using a truck on loan from North American, Christine Leslie learned to drive a big rig.

Back in California, confident she was doing what was best for her family, she took out a loan, using her house as collateral, and bought a new International Harvester. It was the start of an over-the-road career that took her to all forty-eight states, Canada, and Mexico. During the school year, Lisa stayed with relatives. In the summer months, she rode with her mom, hauling washing machines to Orlando, tomato sauce to Denver, or baby diapers to Providence.

According to Lisa, “We would spend the summer driving across America, talking, laughing, and, along the way, doing our shopping for the coming school year.”

It was a rough life for both daughter and mother. Long months apart and, for Christine, lonely days driving through torrential rains, blizzards, sleet, and every kind of weather imaginable. The truck driving momma with a goal did what she believed she had to do, and Lisa went on to lead her high school team to win the California state championship, to be a standout at the University of Southern California, and one of the most celebrated athletes to play professional women’s basketball.

Determined to succeed, nothing can stop a champion from making it a winning day. Of all the qualities that lead to success, I believe persistence is required every time. Talent, critical thinking, and education can only take a person so far. Persistence takes you the rest of the way, across the finish line, victorious.

## Chapter 6: Be There for Others

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There's a story I like about a Christian music artist, her country music husband, and an elderly woman's birthday. Amy Grant and Vince Gill were moving into a new home in the Nashville suburbs. As Amy shuffled through a stack of papers, magazines, and letters haphazardly tossed on a kitchen counter, she came upon an envelope, their old address scrawled across it in blue marker. The letter was a request to have Vince send a birthday message to a woman on her eighty-ninth birthday. It had been mailed by the woman's daughter.

It must have been shuffled in the mail and temporarily misplaced during the hectic days of the move, Amy surmised. Neither she nor Vince remembered seeing it before. Taking another look at the letter, Amy checked the date of the birthday. It was today!

Later that evening, returning from a friend's home, Amy pulled the letter from her back pocket, read it aloud to her husband, and Vince called the number on his cell phone. A busy signal. They drove around some more, and Vince tried the number again. Still busy. After a few more attempts, Vince said, "Hey, where does this woman live? Let's just drive by her house."

They were about a block away from the address when Vince finally got through. “Hey, I understand somebody in this house is having a birthday,” he said. “This is Vince Gill, and I just called to say hi...No, really, it’s me...Yes, it is...That’s right. And if you’re not too busy, my wife and I thought we’d stop by to say hello.”

Moments later, Vince and Amy arrived at the home of Dorothy Lee. A wheelchair was parked in the modest home’s front room, but Dorothy had walked to the door to greet them. Inviting them into the house, Dorothy proceeded to give Vince and Amy a tour. “Pictures of Vince were everywhere,” Amy recounted. “A magnet on the refrigerator; a cardboard stand-up of Vince in the front room, framed clippings on a wall. Dorothy didn’t act gooey or silly toward Vince, but one look at her house, and you could tell that she was a true fan.”

They talked for a long time that evening as Dorothy shared stories about her childhood growing up on a rural Kentucky farm, her children and grandchildren. Preparing to leave, Amy mentioned that she and Vince were expecting a baby. The elderly woman grew pensive, and this is what she said: “Years ago, my sister, who worked at the Department of Human Services, called me on the phone and said, ‘You’ve got to come down here. A family was dropped off today. You’ve just got to come see them.’ When I walked in, I saw a little girl about seven months old. Do you know, that child just raised her arms to me, just like that. Well, I looked at my sister and said, ‘I guess this one’s mine.’ I brought her home and raised her.”

The rescued child, now a grown woman, was the one who wrote the letter that brought Vince and Amy to this small house to meet this special lady on her birthday.

Success, achievement, and happiness offer little meaning unless they are shared. Vince Gill and Amy Grant opened their hearts to an elderly fan on her birthday, a woman who opened her heart to an abandoned child many years before. We make it a winning day when we are there for others.

One direct selling company's highest honor, the Spirit of Generosity Award, is presented to the sales consultant who opens her heart to help another consultant in need. I was privileged to be on hand when this wonderful award was presented at the company's national sales convention to a most deserving recipient. In the days and weeks following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, this consultant put together a network of fellow consultants, numbering in the hundreds, to help members of the company's sales family residing on the Gulf Coast. Calling the effort, "Operation Adopt-a-Consultant," this direct seller coordinated a massive relief effort. Families in nearby states took in families that had evacuated their storm-ravaged homes in Louisiana and Mississippi. Others sent food, clothing, and financial aid. It was an amazing testament to the will of one woman who worked tirelessly to make life better for so many others.

Just before Kenneth Clark shipped out for Air Force basic training in 2006, he and fiancée Monique Barnett rushed to the courthouse to get married, settling on chili dogs from a street side vendor for their wedding day dinner. They made a vow that someday they would have a real wedding with all the trimmings. Over the next two years, with Kenneth stationed at Travis Air Force Base, the young couple saved every dime, ultimately banking \$8,000 for the dream wedding they never had.

Then they met Chuckie Dennis as volunteer mentors with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. The ten-year-old boy's mother had been murdered, and he was living with his two sisters at the home of a great-grandmother.

Learning the family's kitchen was bare, the Clarks dug into the wedding savings to buy \$300 worth of groceries. One thing led to another as Kenneth and Monique made purchases for Chuckie and his sisters, taking cash from the wedding account to buy back-to-school clothes, tickets to a ballet, pay for trips to a museum, a basketball game, and more. Explained Monique, "They needed things, and a wedding isn't a need." Three years after opening the wedding savings account, Monique closed it. The balance in the account had dropped to \$37.

Hearing of this generous couple who was there for others in need, *People* magazine joined with Turtle Bay Resort in Hawaii to give the Clarks an all-expenses-paid honeymoon vacation on the North Shore of Oahu.

In Cleveland, Ohio, he's known as King James. One of the greatest basketball players of all time, LeBron James went straight from high school to the NBA Cavaliers, receiving a \$90 million contract from Nike before stepping foot on the court as a pro. The league's Rookie of the Year, LeBron has gone on to basketball superstardom, including winning a gold medal at the 2008 Olympic Games.

We may never have heard of LeBron James, if it had not been for a salesman employed by Hunt-Wesson foods who liked to play basketball on the weekends and shared his love of the game with his son and his son's friends. Dru Joyce worked in Cleveland but settled his family in nearby Akron because the homes there were less expensive. On

Saturday mornings, as Dru played in a church league, his five-year-old son, Little Dru, watching from the sidelines, mimicked his daddy's on-court moves. The father taught Little Dru the game's fundamentals.

As Little Dru grew a bit older and wanted to play on a team with other boys his age, the father volunteered to coach. The team was the Shooting Stars, and since Dru had no coaching experience, he bought every book and tape on the subject he could find, including *The John Wooden Pyramid of Success*, by the legendary UCLA coach.

One of Little Dru's friends was a tall, lanky kid named LeBron. LeBron lived in government housing with his mother. Another addition to the team was a stocky, friendly boy, Sian Cotton, who attended the same church as the Joyce family.

"We started out in fifth grade, in 1995, in a red-brick building on Maple Street that housed the Salvation Army," recounts LeBron James. "The gym was tiny, about twenty feet shorter than a regulation court. The floor was made of linoleum; playing on it was like dribbling in your kitchen. But that was the best we could find."

More boys joined the Shooting Stars. Little Dru was tireless on the court. LeBron displayed a natural athleticism. Sian was big and intimidating. The team played well enough to be invited to a tournament held that summer in Cocoa Beach, Florida. One boy's father volunteered the family minivan. Twenty hours and 1,187 miles later, the team arrived in Cocoa Beach for the tournament involving sixty-four teams of kids age eleven and under. Expecting to be eliminated early, the Shooting Stars finished a respectable ninth place. LeBron: "We were excited and exploding with confidence. We were packing up our gear to return to Akron, preparing for the ride home,



when Coach Dru just looked at his son and Sian and me and said, ‘I don’t know what it is, but you guys are going to do something special.’”

Due to a troubled home life, LeBron lived at the Joyce home during the summer months, where he learned friendship, family, and teamwork.

The three boys stayed together, leading their high school team to two state championships. None of this might have happened, if it was not for the gentle nature of a man who was there when others needed him. Coach Dru became a high school basketball coach. He’s still there, helping young people be the best they can be.

Joel Klein’s father didn’t make it through high school, but he knew the value of education. Forced to live in public housing, the father encouraged his son to listen to the teachers and do his homework. Joel did just that. By the time he was in high school, he was making a mark for himself as a diligent student. That’s when a physics teacher, Sidney Harris, sat him down and told him he was good enough to apply to Columbia University. No member of the Klein family had gone to college, and the idea of Columbia seemed impossibly out of reach. Where would the tuition money come from? Harris helped the student to apply for a National Science Foundation fellowship.

Joel Klein enrolled at Columbia. Four years later, he graduated with honors, going on to earn a doctorate degree in law. Today, as the chancellor of the New York City Schools, he is credited with reshaping America’s largest public school system into one of the best urban systems in the nation. Years later, recalling his acceptance to Columbia, Klein observed, “It made me realize that, first, I can actually run in this race, I can play in this game. And

second, I met people who then inspired me. It was my teachers who kept saying, ‘Don’t let your background, your family situation, define your world.’ And I believe it deeply – that’s the transformative power of education.”

Can one person change a life? Joel Klein’s father told him to listen to his teachers, and teachers, like Sidney Harris, gave of themselves to turn a life around.

Paula approached her upline director’s door with mixed feelings – excited to be participating in her first sales meeting, apprehensive that she had what it takes to be a success in direct sales, and afraid no one would like her. Shy and reserved, Paula hesitated. There was still time, she thought, to hurry back to her car and drive away. The door opened, and a young woman displaying a warm and friendly smile said, “Hi there. You must be Paula. We’re so glad to meet you.”

Inside the home, a dozen or so women, gathering for the weekly group meeting, enthusiastically welcomed Paula. She felt she had found a home among friends.

When you are there for others, freely give of your most precious asset, your time. The good feelings you share come back to you ten-fold. As David Augsburger wrote, “The golden rule of friendship is to listen to others as you would have them listen to you.”

A Hollywood legend known for the way he made everyone feel needed and important was Michael Landon, Little Joe Cartwright of the *Bonanza* clan, and star, writer, and producer of the beloved *Little House on the Prairie* TV series.

*Little House* was about to start its final season when Pamela Roylance, a former high school drama teacher from Portland, Oregon, auditioned for the part of Sarah Carter.

Years later, Pamela recalled meeting Landon for the first time. “I was pretty green when he met me. I had no experience, and he hired me from nowhere. Even during the auditions, he made me feel so good because he gave me immediate response.”

At the end of the audition, Landon said, “Terrific!” His arms went up in the air, and he again said, “Terrific!”

“And I thought, ‘Gee, no one’s done that before. He must really mean what he says,’” the hopeful actress said. “It was wonderful to have him believe in me when I had no credits.” According to Roylance, Landon gave people opportunity and a chance to succeed.

Working with Michael Landon, Roylance said, also offered the opportunity to work with a caring professional that freely gave of himself. “I remember one time when we were on the set, and I had a question to ask him during a break. There was so much activity going on, a lot of noise and everything, but he gave me his full attention, and his eyes were focused right on my eyes, and he just looked right at me, his attention and his eye contact never wavering. He waited until I was completely done asking my question, letting me explain everything and get the whole question out. When he answered it, he took his time, and he was right there with exactly what I needed for the answer. I thought he had finished talking, so I had begun to speak again when he started talking too, and then he stopped. I had interrupted him, not meaning to, but he stopped and let me go on. But everything was going on, and he was giving me all this undivided attention. And I

watched him do it constantly with other people, especially with the children on the set. He was right there for you.”

Be there for others. Imagine everyone you meet is wearing a button that says, “I’m important. I’m a VIP.” Make eye contact and maintain it. Listen before speaking, or as Mark Goulston, the author of *Just Listen*, suggests, “Listen, ask, mirror, and reflect back to people what you’ve heard.” By using “active listening,” confirm what you’ve heard, understand the other person’s needs and desires, and then offer your thoughts. Treat every conversation as the two-way street that it is.

In short, place the needs of others before your own needs. Those possessing a servant’s heart are always looking for ways to make others feel important.



## Chapter 7: Keep Smiling (and Laughing)

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Kate, seven months pregnant with her first child, was presenting a kitchen tools show for her cousin, who was five months pregnant. “As each guest came for the show, Kate said, “I greeted them, and to my surprise, one after another, they were all expectant mothers, except for one guest, who was very thin and obviously not about to have a baby.

“I always start off with each person introducing herself,” she continued. “I started with the thin lady by asking, ‘Tell us how you know our hostesses?’”

“She hesitated, looking about the room of expectant mothers, and said, ‘Maybe this is catching. I just found out today that *I’m* pregnant,’ to which my cousin chimed in, ‘Then you’re both welcome.’ We all had a big laugh with that one!”

Victor Hugo wrote, “Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face,” and French philosopher Henri Bergson observed, “Laughter is the corrective force which prevents us from becoming cranks.”

As *The Today Show* host, Kathie Lee Gifford says, “That’s what life’s about: the small ridiculous moments.”

Thank goodness we can turn to laughter when we need it most. Sometimes, there's nothing better than a good belly laugh.

Researchers have determined an open-mouthed smile is visible from farther away than a frown. Smile in a crowd, and your smile will be recognized by those a great distance from you. Those who see you smile will feel better. So will you. When there's a smile on the face, there's no room for a frown. Regardless of the chore at hand, learn to find happiness in its accomplishment. Maintain a sense of humor. Manage a good laugh at least once a day.

*Smile once in a while,  
It will make your heart seem lighter.  
Life's a mirror: if we smile,  
Smiles come back to greet us;  
If we're frowning all the while  
Frowns forever meet us.*

Is laughter really the best medicine? Leave it to a learned professor to make a case for keeping a sunny disposition. Dr. Melissa B. Wanzer, Professor of communication studies at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York, studied people with stress-filled jobs and determined a sense of humor can't be beat.

"If employees view their managers as humor-oriented, they also view them as more effective," Dr. Wanzer noted. Employees reported increased job satisfaction when working for managers who "use humor effectively and appropriately," she said.

Similar research conducted at Texas A&M and at the University of Missouri suggests people with a sense of

humor are more hopeful, experience less stress, are more creative, and accomplish more. “Humor has a significant impact in organizations,” observed Missouri’s Assistant Professor of Management Chris Robert. “We argue that humor is pretty important. It’s not just clowning around and having fun; it has meaningful impact on cohesiveness in the workplace and communication quality among workers. The ability to appreciate humor, the ability to laugh and make other people laugh actually has physiological effects on the body that cause people to become more bonded.”

The man who created *The Office* television comedy, actor, writer, and director Ricky Gervais, was interviewed about his feature film, *The Invention of Lying*. “When I was little, I used to drink milk from the bottle in the fridge. My mom said, ‘You should never do that, okay?’ But one day, I was doing it, and the bottle slipped and spilled milk everywhere, and I thought, ‘Oh my, I’m going to get in trouble.’ So I quickly rubbed milk all over the cat, as if mom would believe any of it. She said to me later, ‘Oh dear, it must have been the cat.’ And I said, ‘Yeah, yeah, bloody cat.’ And she said, ‘I can’t believe how good he’s gotten at opening the fridge.’ It was a very bad lie. I was about five or six. If only cats could open fridge doors, I’d have been overjoyed and scot-free.”

The ridiculous moments make life interesting. Whenever direct sellers get together to share stories, invariably I hear tales that would be gist for comedy writers like Ricky Gervais.

A cat darted through the living room. In a flash, the family’s two labs bolted after it, leaping over guest’s legs and tumbling under the card table. As the table tipped on its side, sending the jewelry display crashing to the floor,



the sales representative deadpanned, “This party’s gone to the dogs.”

Nervous because this was her coming out party, the consultant was attempting to demonstrate a keepsake box’s locking mechanism. As she closed the box’s lid, the tip of her scarf slipped inside. The heavy locked box, jammed shut, now hung from her neck like an anchor on a chain. “I didn’t know whether I should laugh or cry, so I chose to laugh, suggesting everyone take a break by going to the snack table. The hostess’s husband, using a screw driver, finally pried the box off of me. Wouldn’t you know? I had over a thousand dollars in sales that night, after I got that box off my neck, that is!”

The hostess, wanting to have a casual, fun party, began serving the wine early and generously kept the glasses filled. Forty-five minutes later, as the advisor was winding down the presentation, she had lost the attention of her audience of talking and laughing women. As frustration began to take over her demeanor, the advisor stopped herself, deciding to substitute rising anger with another response. She quickly wrapped up the party and said, “Okay, give me a glass!” Later that evening, she had five bookings.

The manager and her husband were talking about buying a larger house, now that they had a second child. As she comforted the fussy baby, they discussed what they wanted in the new house, made possible by her increased earnings from her direct selling business. Their three-year-old, all this time listening patiently, piped up, “It’s no use. He’ll just follow us anyway.”

In the movies or on the stage, if a drama is crossing the line from solemn to morose, often a character is introduced to serve as the “comedy relief.” It’s a pause in

the somber action meant to lighten the mood. I think of laughter that way. The ability to laugh is nature's way of deflecting the seriousness to bring life back into balance. Laughter has been called "a life-preserver, a health-promoter, a joy-generator, a success-maker."

Laughter cushions us from the hard knocks, serves as an antidote for heartache, and rescues us from the "blues." I have no proof of it, but I believe laughter helps us to live happier, longer, and more contented lives. Humor makes living worthwhile. Maybe that's why many companies call their in-home presentations "parties." It's an opportunity for friends to gather, have a good time, enjoy themselves, have cheerful conversation, laugh, and eat.

After all, cheerfulness is one of the world's greatest blessings. Do your best, continue to smile even when things go wrong, and you can never be defeated.

There's a story about Mary Kay Ash when she sold cleaning products. This was years before starting Mary Kay. In those days, there were more men in sales than women. Winning a company contest, Mary Kay eagerly anticipated receiving her reward. The prize? A "flounder light," an apparatus to be pinned on hip boots when you fished at night. Mary Kay loved to tell this tale, and when she finished, she would let out a hearty laugh.



## Chapter 8: Build a “Winning Day” Team

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There’s a biotech company in South San Francisco that’s emerged as a kind of legend in the field of bringing innovative pharmaceuticals to market. Genentech is best known for developing the revolutionary cancer-fighter Avastin. How do they do it? Christopher Tkaczyk, writing for *Fortune* magazine, thinks he knows the answer. The development of revolutionary drugs is a matter of teamwork that’s “a result of a culture that puts a premium on curiosity and creativity,” he notes. Through a Genentech-funded initiative, as many as 120 Ph.D. holders conduct cutting-edge research on any number of projects that could eventually lead to a new drug. There are no limits to what can be tried.

Owned by the Swiss drug maker Roche, Genentech makes everyday a winning day by fostering an entrepreneurial, creative spirit. Explains the company’s head of research, Richard Scheller, “People are encouraged to work on projects that are high risk. We expect that projects might not work – in fact, most of them won’t. But those that do work often end up being true breakthroughs.”

Adds Lori Friedman, a cancer researcher receiving Genentech funding, “People are very motivated to think of the endgame. How do we make the right drug? How’s this

going to help the patient? And I think it's that sense of mission that really brings people together in the community of researchers here."

Building a "winning day" team, whether comprised of some of the world's most celebrated medical researchers or a band of like-minded direct sales champions, begins with a shared purpose. Just as the people of Genentech are working to create the pharmaceuticals of tomorrow, the people on your sales team need a challenge – a goal they can call their own.

What is your team dream? What is the vision for your organization?

One of the greatest dreamers of the twentieth century was Walt Disney. Inspecting the undeveloped swampland, more than twice the size of Manhattan Island, located sixteen miles from the sleepy central Florida town of Orlando, Disney was talking about building a theme park larger than the one that bore his name in California. Then he paused and became wistful. "Wouldn't it be something," he asked Joe Potter, a Disney vice president, "if we could build a city here, an experimental community of tomorrow, where people could live without traffic or smog or slums?"

"But, Walt," Potter pleaded, "that would cost hundreds of millions of dollars!"

Disney smiled, then asked his friend, "Joe, can't you keep your mind on the subject and away from inessentials?"

When I think about Walt Disney, I not only see a dreamer and a visionary, but a doer who made things happen. It can be the same for you and your team. Like Disney, dare to dream big, and make those dreams come true.

Your team's dream may be to be celebrated at your company's national sales conference as the number one organization in sponsoring success. Your team's dream may be to increase group sales by fifty percent. A direct sales leader I know came up with a virtual baseball game. Dividing her group into two "baseball" clubs, she rewarded a booking by giving the responsible team a single, a \$1,000 party was a double, and so on. A new recruit joined, and her team received a homerun. By year's end, the virtual baseball game, coupled with the competitive spirit of her group's many members, propelled her organization to the company's lead in overall performance. Whatever your goal, make it one worthy of pursuing.

Once your team's goal is firmly planted in everyone's mind, create a team feeling based on everyone being a winner. Sow the seeds that anything can be accomplished, believe in your people, praise achievement, and you will cultivate self-confidence.

"Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him and to let him know that you trust him," wrote Booker T. Washington.

Apprehensive about joining the beauty and skin care company, Anna finally agreed to purchase the starter kit because her best friend, Libby, promised she could give it up in a month or two, if the business didn't pan out. Besides, the products in the kit added up to be a bargain.

"I'm just not cut out to be in sales," Anna warned her friend. "I don't do well in front of people, and I don't know the first thing about talking about these products."

"Anna, you know enough about them to know you like them, that they work for you," Libby gently countered. "Simply share from your heart," she suggested. "Let people know why you think these are great products, and if

they want to try them, that's great. If they don't, that's okay too. The main thing is to have fun."

Within a few weeks, with Libby's help and encouragement, Anna sold enough products to receive her first commission check, \$276. "Way to go, Anna!" Libby called to congratulate her friend. "You're off to a great start! In fact, you're our Rookie of the Month!"

Anna felt the glow of accomplishment. Libby continued, "At our group meeting next week, will you share with everyone how you did it? It would mean a great deal to our newest team members to hear from you."

On the day of the group meeting, Anna seriously considered feigning illness to keep from going to Libby's house. The thought of speaking to the other team members was terrifying. "What do I know?" she thought. "Who would want to hear from me?"

Gathering her courage, knees knocking, she went to the meeting. It was about time for her to talk about her start in the business, when Libby told the group, "We have someone here who I am so proud of. I had to twist her arm to join us, and now that she has, I can't tell you how much I admire her. She really has done the job and deserves to be our Rookie of the Month. Let's give her a lot of encouragement. Of course, I'm talking about everyone's friend, Anna." With that, the sixteen women in the room enthusiastically applauded and cheered. Anna was not frightened anymore.

It takes every member of a team to achieve greatness. In a way, a team is like a ship. Each part of the ship, by itself, if tossed on the sea, will surely sink. The steel rudder that helps guide the ship will sink. The propeller, that sends the ship through the water, will sink. The engine that powers the ship will sink. Each steel plate, rivet, or

sheet of glass will sink. Put all these parts together, make them one, and a ship can take you to the ends of the earth.

As a leader of a direct sales organization, you're not the boss, issuing orders and expecting them to be followed. You're not a manager, designing a strategy and assigning people to complete various tasks. You're more of a coach, building relationships with the members of the team, making yourself accessible to answer questions and offer advice, being a role model by growing your own personal business, and genuinely caring about each and every member of the team.

A coach says, "I'm here for you when you need me. I'll do whatever I can to help you become a success."

A coach says, "Watch what I do. Follow my lead."

A coach says, "Let me help make you better, gain self-confidence, and grow stronger."

A coach says, "As you grow your team, I'll help you become a coach, too."

As Samuel Johnson, the 18<sup>th</sup> century writer, observed, "People need to be reminded more than they need to be instructed." Be honestly interested in the lives of your team members and equally committed to improving those lives. Remind each member of your team that he or she possesses the ability to achieve anything, if there is the drive to succeed.

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success," Henry Ford said. I think the forward-thinking inventor of the modern assembly line realized that for a team to succeed, each member of the team must accept the personal responsibility to do the best job possible, and each person must help everyone else achieve more. To build an effective team,



implement these two principles, and encourage your team members to follow your lead.

As Zig Ziglar tells us, you can have everything in life that you want, if you help enough other people get what they want. So the question to ask yourself is: “What can I do to help make the people around me achieve success?” Place this question on your desk. Put it on your refrigerator. Use this question to guide your work as you strive to build a winning team.

The warm trade winds billowed the canvas of the *Direct Sails* as the ship turned away from a northeasterly breeze, setting course for Abaco Island in the Bahamas. My host, one of three owners to share this magnificent 160-foot craft, developed one of the world’s most successful direct selling companies before retiring some years ago. Respected for having built winning teams, this amazing woman had agreed to meet with me. Seated in the main salon, a sparkling sea of blue on display through the panoramic floor to ceiling windows, we began our interview.

**Question:** *How did you go about building outstanding direct sales teams?*

**Answer:** By listening, caring, helping, and nurturing self-confidence. That’s about it! As you can probably tell, I love sailing. I always admired people who could take a boat out on the water, work the canvas, and go wherever they wanted to go, with nothing more than the wind at their back and a good boat under their feet. So I joined a sailing club with the purpose of learning to sail. There were about eight of us in the class. After a few days of instruction, we were each assigned a Sunfish of our own to pilot. A Sunfish is a small, one-sail boat with just two lines needed

for control, so it's perfect for beginners. In a protected harbor, with our instructor on his boat in the lead, we ventured out, doing as he was doing, copying his every move the best we could. If a boat dropped back, the sailing instructor offered suggestions to help the novice sailor find the wind. If a boat went off course, there were words of encouragement to bring the boat around. As we gained confidence, the sailing became easier. Before long, we were outside the harbor and on the open sea. What a thrill that was! It was a wonderful day, and, by the end of it, I was confident that I could someday sail with the best of them. Our instructor cared about each of his students, but, most of all, he served as an example. "Do as I am doing," he said. In direct sales, leaders help others replicate themselves. They say, "do as I am doing."

**Question:** *How do you define success?*

**Answer:** Success, as such, means different things to different people. One person may say success is having a child and helping that child grow healthy, strong, and mature. Another's idea of success may be to purchase a home, or to pay off credit card debt, or maybe to someday own a boat. When it comes to success, one size does not fit all. It's for each person to figure out, but once you have an idea of what you want, go for it.

**Question:** *In your life's journey, did someone you respected give you a piece of advice that has stuck with you over the years?*

**Answer:** I've learned from just about everyone I've met and worked with. In fact, I'm still learning; seeking advice. My first boss took me to lunch. I must have been about twenty-one or twenty-two. It was a lovely restaurant. First rate. I don't recall the exact words, but the gist of the advice was this: take responsibility for your own career.

Never blame someone else when something doesn't work out exactly the way you wanted it to work out. You're responsible. No one else. When you realize this truth, everything comes into focus. Take responsibility. Make your own career path, don't expect someone else to hand success to you.

**Question:** *How important is believing in oneself?*

**Answer:** More than anything, you must believe in yourself, put yourself in the frame of mind that you will achieve your dreams, that nothing will stop you, that anything's possible. There's a certain magic in believing in the possibilities. The people I know who have done amazing things had a vision for themselves, set goals, and then took the responsibility to do what they could do to achieve those goals, to fulfill that vision. If faced with an obstacle, they looked for a way over it or around it. In other words, they didn't give up when the going got rough. They were flexible, sure, but the goal, the vision never wavered. It's paramount to believe in yourself. Believe you can. If there's a will, there's way. I know that's a worn out platitude, but it's true.

**Question:** *But sometimes, things can seem impossible. Don't you agree?*

**Answer:** If your goal is an impossible dream, such as, say, becoming the queen of your own country, then yes, that's a child's notion. But if the goal is realistic, then persevere. Take the first step, do what you know how to do, and learn what is new to you, ask for help and get support when needed, and don't take no for an answer. In other words, refuse to believe you can't do something simply because conventional wisdom tells you so. Sometimes, someone tells me they want to achieve something, but they're unsure what they want. I suggest

they come up with a goal, any reasonable goal, and get started. It's more important to start than to never start at all. Change the goal four or six months down the line. That's okay. The important thing is to make the personal commitment to start. Once a person begins to set goals and works to achieve those goals, they will soon be in the goal setting habit. Every successful person started with the first step.

**Question:** *So, it's about sticking to it? Not giving up?*

**Answer:** You have got to want it, whatever it is you want. Just saying it, isn't enough. In your heart, you must want it, and you better have a passion for it, because when times get tough, and sooner or later they always get tough, if you love what you are doing, you will not only survive, you will emerge better and stronger than before. Always keep your goal in mind, or whatever your vision for your life's work. If you truly want to fulfill the vision you have created for yourself, all the obstacles you encounter will be nothing more than road bumps on your journey to success. Some of those bumps will be huge, no doubt about it, but you will overcome them because the vision is bigger than any problem you may encounter. If a bump is so huge it can't be overcome, then work out another solution. Go around it. I think it was Einstein who said, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result." Always be flexible. If something isn't working, try something else. Approach the problem in a different way. Get creative. Find the positive in every negative. Ask questions. Seek help. But always be tenacious. Never give up the vision.

**Question:** *How much does luck play in all of this?*

**Answer:** There can always be an element of luck, but I prefer to place my destiny in something more than luck, such as hard work, commitment, and tenacity. More times than not, it may seem that a great thing simply fell into someone's lap, by sheer luck. Look closer, and you will likely see that people make their own luck by working hard and spending the hours to learn and prepare, by strategically thinking through their next moves, so they are in the right place at the right time, and then seizing the opportunity when it's presented. A lot of times, luck is more about caring about what you are doing and having a passion for your work, than about some arbitrary game of chance. Sure, someone can win a mega lottery and instantly have the cash to buy whatever they want. It happens. But I wouldn't want to be the person who waits around for lady luck to come calling. The wait may be for a lifetime. I'd rather go out and do it on my own, because at least, whether I achieved my goal or not, at least I lived life to the fullest on my terms. To me, that's really being a lucky lady.

**Question:** *What about risk? How much risk are you willing to take to achieve your dreams?*

**Answer:** Every day, in everything we do, there's risk. There's risk the moment we climb out of bed, get in a car, cross a street. Every breath we take is a risk. So, once we accept that risk is inherent in everything we do, that there's an upside as well as a downside for every choice we make, we realize that taking a risk is part of the responsibility we accept for moving forward. I don't want to end the day saying, "If only I had done this or done that. I would rather end the day knowing I made a decision, made a choice, and if it worked, great, and if it didn't work, then I learned from it and will go in a different direction the

next time. Usually, it's a greater risk to do nothing, to stay put, immobile, and frightened.

When about to make an important decision, I ask questions such as: What happens if we do nothing? What alternatives should we consider? Is this the right time to do this? Is this decision based on reliable information? What will be the likely outcome?

If I feel confident that the decision is the correct one, then I go ahead. Yes, there's always a risk, but that's life, and life can be very exciting.

**Question:** *One final question, what do you want others to say about you?*

**Answer:** That's a tough one. That I was generous and willing to give more than I asked for in return. It's important to pass along to others the kind of support and help that you received in the course of your career. So many people have helped me, and I want to be there to help others succeed in their dreams. I believe each and every person, no matter what they are doing, can make a difference for others. Offer a word of encouragement. Build others up. Open doors of opportunity for others to walk through. Freely share what you have learned and experienced. After all, knowledge is only useful when you share it with others by spreading it around.

In its simplest definition, teamwork is less me and more we. Serve the members of your team, help each of them achieve their fullest potential, and you will be rewarded in ways you never would have dreamed.



## Chapter 9: Choose to Make it a Winning Day

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Maine 1984: Roxanne Quimby, seeking a way to earn extra money, decided to sell beeswax candles at local craft fairs. “I guess you could say it all started because there weren’t many jobs up there north of Bangor,” Roxanne says. Burt Shavitz was the village’s beekeeper, peddling quarts of honey off the tailgate of his pickup truck. Owning thirty hives, a flock of chickens, and a pony, he lived in a converted eight-foot by eight-foot turkey coop.

Burt earned enough money from the honey to cover his annual property taxes and put gas in the truck. That was about it. One thing he had a lot of was beeswax, the by-product of his honey business. Recalls Roxanne, “He’d been storing it in the honey house for years, figuring sometime he’d use it for something.” It was a partnership based on need – and friendship. Roxanne fashioned a number of candles, carefully making sure each was as perfect as she could make it, and then set up her display at a Christmas craft fair at a nearby school. That day she took in about \$200, and as Roxanne says, “We knew that our business venture was bound for glory.”

By the end of the first year, working out of an abandoned one-room schoolhouse with no heat, electricity, or running water, sales climbed to \$20,000. Over the next



five years, the candle business quickly expanded as Roxanne began selling in shops and boutiques as far away as New York. Production moved to a former bowling alley that could house the company's forty employees and warehouse.

At about this time, Roxanne came upon a nineteenth century book of homemade recipes for soap, perfumes, and other personal care products. By 1991, the company was shipping 500,000 candles a year, and Roxanne got the idea of making a natural lip balm. The lip balm became Burt's Bee's signature product, and today it's their number one seller.

Within two years, Burt's Bees needed to either expand dramatically or stop growing. They decided to go for it, relocating the entire business to an 18,000 square-foot former garment factory in Creedmoor, North Carolina. Candles were dropped from the line to concentrate future growth on the popular personal care products.

Today, Burt's Bees operates from a massive facility in Durham, North Carolina, and its products are sold in stores around the world. Annual sales are over \$250 million. As a leader in forest conservation, Roxanne has used some of the company's profits to purchase tracts of wilderness land in northern Maine.

Roxanne Quimby, with the idea of selling beeswax candles, chose to make it a winning day.

Lou Holtz, one of the most respected football coaches of all time, chose to make it a winning day throughout his long career, learning to play the game as a student at Kent State University and later, as a developer of champions, leading several college programs, including Notre Dame and South Carolina.

According to Coach Holtz, “Life provides all of us with a series of choices. The choices we make determine how successful we are. When you acknowledge that you and only you are responsible and accountable for the choices you make, and when you refuse to blame others for the choices you have made, you have in your hands the blueprint for success.”

This multiple winner of the coveted National Coach of the Year award says, “When you allow others to choose your path so that you can blame someone else when things don’t go your way, you are fooling no one and cheating no one but yourself. When you accept the fact that you are in your present condition, good or bad, because of the choices you have made, you will find yourself capable of changing your situation by making better choices. No one but you determines your success in life. Making the right choices paves your way.”

Make the commitment to something you believe in and see it through. Put the focus on others or on the project you have undertaken, not with the thought of self-aggrandizement, but with the belief that there are things bigger than yourself.

In the summer months here in Ohio, monarch butterflies flit about the flowers, and by fall, they are gone, only to return the following spring. The annual monarch migration, a pilgrimage that covers more than 5,000 miles, is a feat of nature that we are only recently beginning to understand. The monarchs begin appearing in the southern United States in late March. They lay eggs which become caterpillars that become new butterflies. This second generation of monarchs flutters north, covering about 80 miles a day, to lay more eggs in the Midwest. The cycle

begins anew, and the third generation moves on to the Great Lakes region and the northeastern United States, arriving about mid-summer. A fourth and fifth generation fly on into Canada. The coming of autumn reverses the migration. This has been going on for thousands of years, and where the butterflies spend the winter months remained a mystery until 12-year-old John McClusky chose to become an amateur researcher.

In the Hill Country of Texas, north of San Antonio, John McClusky was intrigued by the arrival of swarms of monarchs each fall. Where did they come from? Where did they go? In the backyard of his Fredericksburg home, he used a butterfly net to capture monarchs, which he carefully tagged with his own hand-written labels. He wasn't the only one tagging the insects. Canadian entomologist Fred Urquhart, with help from volunteers, had tagged thousands of monarch butterflies. He knew from his research the monarchs wintered in Mexico, but the exact location was unknown.

Then on January 2, 1975, a naturalist, along with his wife, were climbing the slopes of a mountain called Cerro Pelón in southwestern Mexico when they came upon an unbelievable sight – hibernating monarch butterflies by the millions clinging to the trees.

Knowing of Dr. Urquhart's research, the naturalist and his wife picked through the butterflies in search of a tag to prove these creatures had arrived from North America. They found a tag, but not one they expected. On the tag was a phone number. Returning home, they dialed the number. It was the McClusky home in the Texas Hill Country. Today, John McClusky is a chemistry professor at Texas Lutheran University. "I didn't know there were any professionals doing it," John told free-lance writer Jack

Boulware. “I was hoping that someone would find them. I didn’t really know I was contributing to science.” As a child, John McClusky was curious and chose to follow his intuition, spending part of each day during the summer months capturing, tagging, and releasing monarch butterflies.

We are the product of the choices we make. The way we spend our time, the books we read, the movies we watch, the people we associate with, the foods we eat are all choices. At times, we may feel powerless to change the course of our lives, but we may have more power than we realize. We can choose to start a business, work the hours required to achieve success, and make it a winning day.

Years ago, I had the good fortune to work with Alexandra Stoddard, the brilliant author, interior designer, and lifestyle maven. According to Alexandra, “The ability to make choices can be life-transforming. Nothing is preordained or predestined; it is our personal responsibility to choose for ourselves and live with our decisions. Simply doing so is a step toward freedom.”

You can do anything! The choice is yours to make!

It seems that some people have a natural charisma, a kind of magnetic appeal that makes others want to be near them. There’s an easy smile, a charming disposition, a resolute nature, a sense that they believe in themselves – that anything’s possible. You choose to be this kind of person when you toss self-doubt out the window, confidently address your goals, enthusiastically confront obstacles, and fearlessly make it a winning day.

I have interviewed many people who told me they let opportunities pass them by because they lacked the confidence to do the job, or they feared making a mistake,

or they thought they needed more education, or better developed skills. Fear and timidity are the enemies of confidence and self-assurance. Instead, fill your thoughts with images of achievement and success.

On CNBC's *Mad Money*, the animated host and commentator, Jim Cramer, is the whirling dervish of stock market news and education. Jim Cramer definitely chooses to make it a winning day. "I'm one of those guys who gets up in the morning and is like, today's the day. Today's the day I'm gonna be unstoppable," he says.

Many people seem to think that ambition is something a person is born to have, like auburn hair or blue eyes. I disagree. Ambition is a trait that is learned and can be refined just as a capacity for art or music can be developed. We strengthen our ambition when we accept responsibility, walk through opened doors of opportunity, and prove to ourselves that, yes, we can!

Admits television and film actress Brooke Shields, "I have an incredible sense of drive. I'm ambitious. Because I'm a perfectionist, my ambition is a very personal one." She adds, "I'm more competitive with myself than I am with anybody else. I'm always trying to make myself better."

Before children, Darla was a pharmaceutical representative, calling on physicians to encourage them to prescribe the drugs her company manufactured. She was good at her job, respected, earned a lucrative income, and, if asked at the time, happy. She met Tom at a sales conference. He was single, handsome, and lived in a beachside condo west of Portland, Oregon, in Rockaway. It was love at first sight. They knew, if they married, one

of them would need to leave the company. Darla chose to turn in her resignation. The wedding, on a warm June day, took place on an Oregon coastal bluff, the blue Pacific sparkling like a million diamonds below.

Darla and Tom, deciding to keep the beachside condo as a weekend retreat, purchased a home in a Portland suburb. Using her college degree in broadcast journalism, Darla was hired by a local station as a television news reporter and weekend anchor.

Three years later, Darla left the newsroom behind to stay home with their first child, Andy. A second child, Jenny, arrived the following year. Darla loved being a mom, but once Jenny was in school, she became restless.

One evening, with the dishwasher humming along out in the kitchen, Darla told Tom, “I need to get out and do something.”

Now that she had her husband’s attention, she continued, “With the kids in school, I need something for myself. Something I can call my own.”

“Great,” Tom said in a supportive voice. “I believe in you. You can do anything.” He paused and then asked, “So, what would be the perfect job for you?”

As they talked, Darla outlined the perfect job: responsibility, a way to use her people skills, unlimited income potential, needs to be fun, still have time for her twice-weekly indoor cycling spinning class, and, most importantly, flexible hours. “I still want to see Andy and Jenny off to school and be here when they return home,” she stated.

Tom’s eyes grew wide. “That’s quite a job description!” They both laughed at what seemed to be an absurd list of demands to take to a future employer.

Later that week, as Darla came out of the spinning class at their sports club, she was telling her friend, Joy, about her conversation with Tom and the impossible list of job demands.

“Wait a minute,” Joy said. “You want to work on your schedule, determine how much you want to earn, be home with Andy and Jenny, and have fun.”

“That’s right,” Darla responded with an impish smile. “Impossible, right?”

“No, not really,” came the surprising response. “You should talk with my sister because that sounds like the kind of work she does, and she loves it.”

Joy arranged for her friend to meet with her sister, a manager with a direct sales company.

Darla purchased the starter kit, earned the bonuses available through the company’s quick start program, and went to work. “If you put in the hours, such as when your children are in school plus some evenings, are willing to work, set goals, and follow the company’s program, not only will you be a success, but also your earnings will be beyond your wildest imagination,” the manager told her.

Since that fateful meeting at the spinning class several years ago, Darla has developed a thriving personal business as well as a large downline. She and Tom have traveled to Egypt, Monaco, Hong Kong, Paris, and Australia – all free trips she earned through her company. Andy and Jenny are outstanding students. Along the way, she made careful, meaningful choices. She chose to join an excellent direct sales company, chose to listen and learn from her sponsor, chose to work the hours that were required, and chose to always be making herself better.

Not long ago, Darla told me the best compliment she has ever received was from her daughter. She overheard

Jenny tell a friend, “My mom’s amazing. She can do anything.”

Darla and thousands of other direct sales champions know that success requires work. Asked what makes a person successful, Matt Lauer, co-host of *The Today Show*, said, “I think a lot of it is great work ethic.

“There’s no question about it,” he continued. “I mean, you have to be willing to put the work in that’s required. I know a couple of people who’ve been successful by accident, but they usually don’t stay successful by accident. Then they have to put the work in. But I think the story with most of the people I know – and in my case, it’s something I’ve been very conscious about – has been: you’ve got to make a decision in your life that it is going to take a certain amount of work to get to this place and then maintain that place. And if you’re not willing to do the amount of work, then you should settle for something less. So I think work ethic has probably been the most important thing.”

The choices we make determine the outcome of our lives. When Maria Shriver was sixteen years old, her father ran for vice president of the United States. “I was lucky enough to fly in the back of his campaign plane with all the working journalists – the ones who were asking all the questions and seemed to be having all the fun,” she recalled many years later. “Right then and there, I discovered what I wanted to be when I grew up: a TV journalist. I wanted to be the woman on your television screen, telling you what was going on in the world,” she said, adding, “I wanted to be that smart, successful TV newswoman.”

Armed with a college degree and following her dream, Maria went to work for a Philadelphia television



station. “I started at the bottom getting coffee and worked my way up to be a news producer, then a reporter,” she said. From these humble beginnings, Maria Shriver went on to co-anchor the *CBS Morning News* and later was a contributing anchor for *Dateline NBC*. As the wife of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Maria gave up her television job, told there could be a conflict of interest with her politician husband. So Maria made another choice, to reinvent California’s Women’s Conference into one of the nation’s largest and most influential annual events dedicated to the empowerment of women.

“If you follow your heart,” says Shriver. “You’ll turn into the you, you are destined to be!”

## Conclusion: Explore. Dream. Discover.

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If you want more out of life, this can be the day you make the choice to embark on a new course. Determine where you want to take your life, establish your goals, and work to make it happen. Don't just wish it. Do it.

Wishing for something better is meaningless, unless wishes are backed by enterprise, resolve, and a tenacious determination to succeed.

Expect success. Go into the world confident that you will achieve. Build up others as you build yourself up.

Author and humorist Mark Twain wrote, "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Explore your world of possibilities.

Dream of what can be.

Discover your full potential.

Do these things, and you will live the life you were meant to live, because no dream is too outrageous, no star too far off, and no future too out of reach. With courage in your heart, the passion to succeed as your guide, begin now to make it a winning day.

## ABOUT JIM WALDSMITH

Jim Waldsmith is a professional writer who works with Fortune 500 companies and executives. A former news reporter, editor, and news director, this award-winning journalist is an accomplished speechwriter and producer. His company, Jim Waldsmith's Creative Arts, LLC, produces conventions and video projects throughout the United States and in Europe.

In addition, Jim writes *Make it a Winning Day*, daily motivational messages for direct sales champions and anyone wanting to achieve more. Jim can be reached at [www.makeitawinningday.com](http://www.makeitawinningday.com).