

Intercourse

How Good Are You?

A Surprising New Look at

Communication

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Table of Contents

Introduction4

Chapter 1: Love8

Chapter 2: Understanding27

Chapter 3: Broken/Healing46

Chapter 4: Restoration63

Chapter 5: Strong 78

Chapter 6: Give92

Chapter 7: Share105

Chapter 8: Finish 120

Introduction

Full disclosure: the book you're reading now is probably not what you were expecting from the title. Intercourse is all about sex, right? Well, not exactly.

Sure, intercourse can include sexual relationships but, as we will help you understand, this book is instead about listening, asking questions, and communication. The first two definitions for intercourse in the Webster's dictionary are as follows:

“connection or dealings between persons or groups” and “exchange, especially of thoughts or feelings”. Intercourse, by any definition, is all about communication.

Every aspect of our life comes back around to communication: as babies learning to speak for the first time, as teenagers learning to express their individuality, and as adults building businesses, communities and places of worship. If we don't know how to have intercourse, then communication simply does not occur and, many times, we walk away feeling unheard and misunderstood.

This book is going to encourage you and lift you up, to heal your life while improving your communication skills. Where you once felt stuck repeating the same habits of communication with your teen, spouse, or relatives, you will instead learn how to make everyone feel understood.

Let's take your spouse for example. Maybe you've had a disagreement and there is something that you'd like to share, something you'd like to say, but you always wind up in the same situation: feeling unheard or misunderstood. You walk away feeling frustrated and reluctant to try broaching the subject again.

Now we need to add another scenario to really put this into context. What is the title of this book? When you think of intercourse, your mind instantly goes to sex, despite its many definitions. Go ahead and lean into that instinct and think about how intimate a relationship is in the bedroom: you are not hiding anything, you're naked physically and emotionally, you are giving yourself to this other person, there is passion involved and, hopefully, love.

Here's the thing, if you're not good in the bedroom, isn't that frustrating to you and your partner? Absolutely. It's interesting that if you look up the true definition of intercourse, and, if you think about your skills today, most of us are woefully inadequate.

It is my hope that this book will lead you into having healthier relationships with your spouse, your children, and your family, and ensuring better relationships with future coworkers, friends, and colleagues. This is all about changing our habits, about strengthening our relationships and our communities.

In his book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* Dr. Stephen Covey's 5th Habit is titled "Seek first to understand, then to be understood". The quote is about listening, pure and simple. But, as simple as that might sound, too many times we are blinded by our own perspective. We demand to be understood and we can't wait to open our mouths, but we aren't always comfortable giving other people the same attention and courtesy.

Think about what you are reading right now. In simple terms, this is nothing more than writing on paper, some images on a digital screen. But it's more than that. It's a message; a message that is going to help you understand that you can change and that you can see change in your relationships.

This book is going to be your guide. We're about to take a journey together where we will be walking side by side. I'll be right here next to you with all the tools you'll need along the way. The upcoming chapters are a map, and what you're seeking in life is the treasure. X marks the spot and I'm going to show you exactly where it's found.

“To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.” - Tony Robbins

Jesus said to him, ““You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ Matthew 22:37

And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” - Mark 12:33

Chapter 1: Love

What is Love? The dictionary defines love as feeling a deep romantic or sexual attachment to someone. It also defines love as an intense feeling of deep affection. So, if you think of that as love when you're growing up, when you become a teen and you kiss someone for the first time you know for certain you must be in love.

Suddenly, you have this deep, affectionate, feeling toward this person like nothing you've ever felt before and you tell your parents "I think I'm in love".

And your parents say "No, you're not in love, you're in..." You can put your word in there if you want, fill in the blank, but we all know the feeling. It's a feeling not of love but of lust; a very strong sexual desire. So, if we think that love is passion or desire, and we associate those feelings with love, as we get older we wonder why we feel isolated and alone. Many times, we are confused about what love really means.

Start by listening to the people around you talk about their childhoods or about their relationships today, and really focus on their stories. Growing up, some people have been abused, and equate pain with love.

In many cases of abuse, the person inflicting pain will say "I'm only doing this because I love you." For anyone who has

experienced that sort of thing, they will start to associate this pain, this roller coaster of conflicting emotions, as love.

When someone is abused as a child, it is often because an authority figure is punishing them for small things like not cleaning up after themselves, speaking too loudly, or disrespecting their elders.

The parent beats them for their “own good” because they “love” them. Deep down we all know that sort of behavior is really messed up. But, for a child growing up in that environment, this becomes their reality, and the pain become their normal.

When I was growing up, my dad owned a bakery. My siblings and I had to work for my dad after school many hours a day even while we were in school. It was simply something we were supposed to do, because we were expressing our love toward our family. So, we thought if we didn’t work hard and come home exhausted, then we weren’t showing love to our family.

Many people have stories like mine, worse than mine, and that is why people can get so confused. Because, if you’re in a relationship and you don’t get the response that you’re looking for, you instantly say to our mate, “you don’t love me, because, if you loved me, you would show your affection and make me feel good.”

Think about the different ideas people have when they get married; they grew up in one culture and their spouse might have grown up in a different one. When these two people come together, they say that they are in love.

When they stand at the alter to get married and they say, “I love you” and recite a vow that says, “I’m committed to you for better or for worse, I will marry you and spend the rest of my life with you to the bitter end.”

They say those words because that’s what they’ve been taught to do, because that’s what our modern culture dictates. But, because those vows often don’t match our reality or culture growing up, suddenly that love doesn’t really have the same meaning. More often than not, we divorce because we fall out of love.

But, how do we fall out of love if we feel so strongly about one another? Because we don’t understand love. Love is an action, not a feeling. Certainly, love is associated with feelings and emotions but at the end of the day, love is all about action.

The best place to find out what love is to go to first Corinthians 13, the love chapter. If you go to verse 4, what does it say?

“Love endures with patience *and* serenity”

Love isn’t ooey-gooey or saccharine sweet. Rather it endures, and it is patient. Think back to when your child’s teeth were coming in and all they could do was cry because it hurt so bad.

You didn't know which way to turn and you wanted to dig your head in the ground and escape. Still, you find out that your child could endure an hour, two hours, more, until finally it seems like their pain is never going to end. But then, suddenly, it's over and peaceful silence returns to your house. You endured those long hours with patience and with love, knowing that your child's pain would be over soon.

“Love is kind *and* thoughtful”

How do we normally enter relationships? By having intercourse and experiencing deep connection. Think about how important it is to be kind and thoughtful in your dearest relationship; whether you're talking about having a sexual relationship with your wife or husband, or simply having a communication relationship. If you really examine human behavior and nature, when it really boils down to it, humans are incredibly selfish.

If we were to look at ourselves in the mirror and look eye to eye at our reflections and ask; “am I selfish?” most of us would say “no, I'm not”. The next time you have a conversation with your wife or kids and they're talking to you, notice how you react. Most of the time, we're so full of ourselves, we can't hear them because we can't wait to tell them our side of the story. We know that love is kind, certainly, but to be thoughtful, that's a hard thing. Because we're self-centered, we're selfish, and, often, deeply insecure.

“And is not jealous *or* envious”

Jealousy goes hand in hand with selfishness. We often become jealous for the first time as children. A kid brother gets less attention than his older sister or an older sister gets less attention than her baby brother. As a kid you wonder, “what about my turn, when am I next?” Apply that same perspective to your relationship with your husband/wife and you’ll see that you are often wildly jealous of your spouse’s relationships with other people.

If you’re the wife, and you’re telling your husband something over and over and he just doesn’t get it, you are so frustrated that you could scream. I think this is a real common thing and we can all relate to the wife in this scenario. This woman is trying to express something important to the man and he doesn’t understand, he doesn’t get it.

But then, someone comes over at a party and says the *exact same thing*, suddenly the lightbulb goes off for him. He then says, “did you hear that honey?” And she answers, “I’ve been trying to tell you that for months and you wouldn’t listen. Why do you care about what their opinion and not mine?”

Often that same conversation is followed by a fight and hurt feelings. Think about how envious and jealous we get when we should instead be pleased that our partner finally understands what we’ve been trying to tell them all along.

“Love does not brag and is not proud”

A lot of times when we are having intercourse (communication, remember?) and someone shares a story, we feel a deep need to brag/one up them and tell a story that is even better. We want the attention. But love doesn't brag. Love is not about someone who gets the attention or the accolades. It's not about who gets the recognition. When you love someone, you don't need to brag, and you don't have to always win an argument. Think about what causes wars; it's the very thing that causes divorces. It's a power thing. It's about releasing control. **People like to be *in control* because they feel *out of control*.**

“It is not rude; it is not self-seeking, it is not provoked”

I don't know about you but when someone pokes me in the chest, provokes me, something in me triggers that says, “I must really be careful.”

Going back to when I was a teenager, I didn't feel understood. I felt depressed, frustrated, and discouraged because I didn't know how to have good intercourse. I was never any good at communication. When someone challenged or confronted me, I was easily provoked.

Many times, I got into fights at school and I argued with my parents all the time, because I wasn't taught how to have good

intercourse, how to listen, how to be kind, how to be thoughtful. Instead, I was taught how to work.

I started work at eight years old, washing pans in my father's bakery. Work ethics I understood, but that didn't help me in my relationships, and my first marriage ended after 17 years. I thought that the man was always right, and I was easily provoked into fighting with my first wife.

If we are honest and look at our relationships, we will see that when we are misunderstood we can be easily provoked.

“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

What do people need in their lives? We live in a world that is all about mental illness, isolation, and depression. We have an opioid epidemic spurred by mental illness. It's because we have lost hope and love, we have lost our dreams. We don't know what love is, what it means.

What can really heal our society, our life, our family? It's love. Sure, it might sound corny but it's true.

What is truth? My belief is that, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. What he did on the cross, that is the picture of love, our demonstration of the power of love. Through his love, through

his stripes, we can be healed. He was marred and beaten so that we can have a chance at eternal peace. If you think about how powerful that is, it's overwhelming. Christ demonstrated his love and while we were lost, he died to save us. Even if you aren't a Christian, I hope that you can appreciate the beauty of that story and the selflessness of a man willing to die for the good of the world.

Now, let's go back to where we started, with the dictionary definition of love. That definition was more about emotion or feeling, the emotional piece. When we are seeking how to have great communication and great intercourse, we must look at our culture. We have to look at the traditions that have been handed down from one generation to the next.

What have you been taught about the word love, about the word intercourse? What was your culture around the dinner table about communication?

One of the oldest sayings is that children are supposed to be seen, not heard. What a great communication lesson, huh? So, when we want to go express ourselves, we've internalized the idea that our point of view is useless because we're just dumb kids.

On the other hand, when you grow up in a world of patience, thoughtfulness, love, when you grow up in a world based on the

word of God you don't have mental illness. You don't have to eat drugs, drown your sorrows in alcohol.

Why is love so important for intercourse?

You have your personal relations, and your verbal relations. Think about somebody that works on the streets, like a prostitute. How does that person feel about intercourse? We're finally talking now about sexual relations but try to think about that woman's point of view. How does communication affect her job? It goes hand in hand with the physical side of things. How does she feel about a person? When she is sleeping with so many men, she may feel cheap, used, underappreciated. She doesn't feel loved or respected. She doesn't feel like somebody in a healthy relationship where there's a give and take in the bedroom and also in the communication. She doesn't feel heard or understood and she definitely isn't appreciated.

Think about young people. Boys have one thing on their mind and we all know what that is! When you're with a girl, that girl doesn't feel appreciated or loved, because all the boy wants to do is grope. And, many times, it's learned behavior from the home or from his environment/culture. Even with that being said, there are boys who treat women well.

Looking at things from the sexual aspect and from the communication aspect, when you are never heard, you feel used and abused, you don't feel respected. Love is absolutely vital for

the breath, and the life, of a relationship. When people listen to you, think about how empowered you feel. Think about what it's like to have someone really listen to you when you express yourself. So, why is love so important for intercourse? It has everything to do with strengthening, uplifting, empowering, one another. Love is more than just feeling. When we have intercourse, communication, be the one on the other side that listens.

What is the golden rule?

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you: do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” – Matthew 7:12

How can I show love to my coworkers?

Everyone has that person in their work or a place outside of their home that they cannot stand. I remember my kids when they were working back in Oregon, and they had a job, and they would complain about that one person who didn't pull their weight. They would say, “I can't stand this person, I need to get another job.”

I would smile and tell them, “you can go get another job, but that person will be at your other job.”

And they would say “what”?

“They will be there, just wearing another face.”

We go through life learning lessons. When you get older, you realize that those sorts of people are unavoidable. I look at them as the greatest teachers, the ones that I have a hard time respecting. Do you want to get good at intercourse? Think about how you can listen to someone you can't stand. Man, that's tough. But they are people just like you and me.

So, how do we have intercourse with coworkers/associations? We need to learn the lesson to listen to them. There are people out there who are gabbers, who like to gobble up your time chatting. We have to respect our time while still respecting them and listening to what they have to say. That conversation might mean the world to them. If you want to help, to make an impact, to be someone who respects others, the next time that you go to work, and you see that person in the breakroom who you can't stand to even look at, ask them how their weekend was. When they start to talk, consciously listen to them.

Here's an example from my personal life. The other day at a nursery we bought some potting soil and we walked past a gentleman and his wife. The man was trying to pick up the soil and you could tell he had some back problems and was struggling to lift the heavy bag. I offered to help him put it in the truck and as I did so, I saw that the wife was smiling. “That's so nice,” she said.

After I finished helping the couple, we got to talking and it turned out that they were both in their 80's and had been married for a long time.

We didn't spend all that much time talking but, when I walked away, I felt extremely rewarded. I realized then that even though helping them made me feel good, the encounter wasn't about me, it was about them.

When Jesus saw the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. - Matthew 9:36

When you hug someone and when you show them this act of love, you know that the person getting hugged is receiving this wonderful, magical, thing called love. When you really embrace them, it affects everyone around you and it's powerful.

The same thing is just as powerful when you talk bad about someone, when you trash talk someone with your friends. In the South people often say "bless their heart" first as an excuse to then say any bad thing and be washed of your sins. Have you ever walked away from a trash talker and then thought, what do they say about you when you walk away? Think, before you open your mouth. Is what you're saying going to help someone or discourage/belittle someone?

Can you have effective intercourse without love?

What does effective mean? Producing a desired or intended result. So, how can we have effective intercourse without love? The answer is simple: we can't. If you go back to the example of being misunderstood, if love is not in the center of the picture, we create depression, anger, and mistrust. We can't be effective at intercourse at all without love.

There's an interesting thing about the word I'm about to use. Many times, it can be misunderstood, and that is a word called **sin**.

Many of you are probably thinking, "*oh lord there he goes again!*" But please, bear with me. Sin is actually an archery term which means when the arrow misses its mark. Because when you miss the mark with what love is, you're lost.

Go back to when you were a young person and you had sexual intercourse for the first time. How did you feel? For most of us, that experience was awkward and when we were finished, we felt used, abused, and let down. I don't care how you slice it, if you have any kind of intercourse without love, you've missed the mark.

Here's something to leave you with. We create our realities, we create what we think is real, what we believe to be true. That is created in our culture but, as we get older, we get to pick and choose what we call truth and reality. At one time, we thought the earth was flat, that a man couldn't break the four-minute

mile, that we couldn't break the sound barrier. Our own limitations become our reality, become our truth.

Often when we try something new, SID (self-induced doubt) jumps on your shoulder. Truths point you in the direction of your life. So, what is your normal? What is your reality, what is your truth?

Mine? I didn't think I could read or write, because back in grade school they told me I was slow. I went through life thinking I was stupid, that I had a reading disability. There were three of us that went to a Special Ed reading box with a special reading teacher. The other kids called us the dumb ones, the slow ones.

How did that become my normal? Kids used to throw balls at me, push me down, call me stupid. Hearing that, day after day, I internalized those words as my truth.

Food gave me comfort back then. Cookies were always baked fresh at the bakery and I would get treats after school as a reward for helping my parents. I subconsciously associated those sweets with my parents love and I became an emotional eater. I put on a lot of weight and the kids called me the Pillsbury dough boy and made fun of me even more.

What did that do to my reality, to my normal? By the time I graduated from high school, I had about a third or fourth grade education and terrible self-esteem.

So, what's your normal? Your new reality? What's the new truth you want to express?

Maybe you want to change something in your life but maybe you're just too tired to try. Maybe you think you could never move to another country, write a book, finish school, because your life experiences are holding you back.

What if we change that from *you can't* to *you can*? Take the word impossible out of your dictionary, rip it out.

If you think about the word "impossible", take the first two letters and make it "I Am Possible."

Let's wrap things up now. Can you have intercourse without love? No, unless your intended result is to feel cheap, used, or abused. But, if you want to feel healthy and strong, then you need to embrace the love that can only change your life. To me, Jesus is that love.

Tips to Take Away

1) Listen. Listening is really getting back to what we talked about regarding intercourse (and if you remember what intercourse was, it is communication between individuals or groups). So, we think listening is us talking, or hearing what the other person says, but really, we're so full of ourselves that we can't hear them. Listening is really hearing what the other person is saying.

2) Make it about them not you. So many times, we are trying to get our story across or our thoughts out in the conversation that we're having. Have you ever been around someone that when you tell a story that they must one-up your story and make it better and then you share another story and you are in competition? Knowing you're doing that is half the battle, and really understanding people when you are listening or having intercourse with them. When you're listening to them, don't feel like you must contribute, just make it about them.

3) Be present in the moment. If you're going to put love into practice on an everyday scale, to do little things really turn into big things. But, we typically don't understand or recognize these little actions. So, when you are in a grocery store and you see someone coming toward you and they are pushing a cart, their

head is down, they don't look happy, take the time as you walk by them to say hi, how are you today. Watch the look on their face as they look up, and smile, and answer. We don't know what just happened because to us it seems small, but to them it might mean the world.

4) Listen to your family. Sometimes this is tough to do, because we had our day to. We are full of our good/bad/ experiences and we want to be heard dog-gonnit! Everyone seems to be talking at once, so be the one to stop and say “why don't you go first? And we'll all listen to you.” Really pay attention and listen to that person. Maybe your kid had a bad day, so be the grownup and listen. Just pay attention to what's going on, rattling around in your head, when you come walking in the door.

5) Revisit what love is. Think about what we learned about love in this chapter. Go back to the time when you had your first kiss and your boyfriend said “oh, I love you...” Chances are, he probably was confusing lust or simple affection as love. Remember that love is an action, not an emotion.

Look at the words listed below, and you'll begin to understand what love really is.

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things,

believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” ~1 Corinthians 13 New King James Version

“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”~ Epictetus

“Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.” ~ Luke 2:46

Chapter 2 – Understanding

There's a picture going around the internet with a number on the ground which looks like a six. In the image, there are two people standing on either side of the number. One person says, "this is the number six" and the other person says, "no this is a nine" and they have an argument.

Many times, when we say, "I understand what you're saying or going through", we're really not seeing the other side of the story, even though we'd like to. What happens is we're saying the same things and we get into an argument or have a misunderstanding and we walk away feeling frustrated at our partners/kids/parents because "I see the six and all you see is the nine".

My wife usually gets home late, and she always calls me when she is getting in the car on her way out of work. So, she called me one night and said she was on her way home but that she had to stop and get gas because the light was on in the car. After she stopped to get gas, the pump wouldn't work. She called me and said she was going to another station. Turns out, the card wouldn't work at the next station either. By that point she was so frustrated and discouraged that the good day she had previously was ruined.

When she got home, she was livid. I said, “how are you?” and she said, “fine” in the way that means *I’m not fine*. I asked what was going on and she told me. She finished by saying, “maybe I’m just not supposed to get gas tonight.”

So, we’re staring at the same number, seeing very different things. When we are having a good day, it’s hard for us to understand someone else’s situation. It’s hard to empathize. If I’m happy, why can’t you be happy? What happens is we don’t understand their situation and we miss an opportunity to hug them and say, “It’s going to be alright, what can I do for you today?”

If we go to the book of Exodus, we can examine how God dealt with Moses. Here he was on the back side of the desert, tending sheep, forgetting his younger days in Egypt, when he had the burning bush experience. The bush tells him to take off his shoes, “you are on holy ground”. And God instructs him to tell pharaoh to let my people go.

What did Moses say?

“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'" ~Exodus 3:11-14

I think we can all relate to Moses' trepidation in the face of such a great task. Still, he goes to confront the pharaoh and he says, "let my people go."

From the other perspective, Pharaoh understood what he thought his world was, what his life was all about. The pharaoh's life was about success and making a name for himself. Slaves, and production, were simply a piece of the bigger puzzle. That's the way it had been for generations. And Moses, having the message of God in his heart, had a completely different view. In the end, we see that Moses was right and how things ended up. Still, the fact remains that the two men waged one of Christianity's greatest battles because each side believed they had the right answer.

If you think about little misunderstandings, how you come across in conversations, when one person is saying one thing and you're thinking something different, you get into these power plays and it becomes a struggle. Next thing you know, your childhood best friend is no longer your friend because of a misunderstanding.

Take that same example into business, families, communities. Look what it does to cities and states.

Go back to the Civil War, to a horrible time when we were killing one another off because of principles and rightness. It's the very thing that causes wars. Misunderstanding and power struggles are the heart of all conflicts, no matter how large or small.

Not to put men in a category but I think we have a harder time because we aren't as emotional. We are the hunter gatherers and women are the nurturers. If one of the kids gets a scraped knee, guys typically will say "walk it out, get back out there." But, women will say "sorry you got hurt, let me bandage your cut, help the swelling go down".

Still, there's a female side to guys also. A man's-man will say, "I don't have a female side." Well, buddy, it's time to put on a pink shirt and get in touch with your feminine side!

What is the answer to better understanding one another?

How do you find a solution when someone won't listen to you? There will always be conflict and chaos, fights and drama. Life isn't like that all the time, but people are busier today than ever. Stop and think about just how busy we are as a society. Because we live in a world when we can spend hours of time on the computer or on a cell phone, texting people all the time, we are

having intercourse constantly without really understanding the person on the other side of the screen.

Here's an example. I use the talk-text feature on my phone constantly. If I'm not careful, the voice reader will sometime mess up and misunderstand what I'm trying to say. One time I was texting my wife and I said something not clear and I looked down and it said, "you bitch".

Could you imagine if I had sent that text to my wife? She definitely would have misunderstood what I was trying to say, and it could have caused a whole great big battle that would end with me sleeping on the couch.

How far can something that small go? It could end up in divorce if other things had previously fallen through the cracks, because we hadn't practiced what we can do to heal our relationships and our communities. If we would step back and say, "I understand what you're saying" and REALLY mean it, that could change the world. Take the time to hear their side.

Here's another good one. We grow up in our family culture, we're steeped in various traditions from birth. In the middle east, some women have their heads covered and we look at that as being odd or strange when to them it is totally normal.

As a child, if you walk up to a stranger and start talking to them, your mom or dad comes running over and says, "stop talking to

strangers, you're not supposed to talk to people you don't know."

As we get older, we're steeped in the culture of avoiding different people, that somebody we don't understand might want to hurt us.

So, what do you do when you get a job? You can't figure out why you have such a hard time interacting with people. You might get a sales job and you can't even sell your product. You get discouraged and you can't figure out how come you feel that way because your product is great. The problem isn't in the product, it's because deep down you know that it's bad to talk to strangers.

Think about the misunderstandings that you really have about who you are as a person, about your self-image. You will never outperform your self-image until you learn how to change it. If you were to read my first book *The Make It Happen Man*, you'd begin to see my personal culture and the traditions that I grew up with.

The relationship I had with myself, the intercourse I had with myself, impacted everything I tried to do. SID (self-induced doubt) jumped on my shoulder every time I tried something new. SID whispered in my ear, "did you forget that you had a reading disability as a kid, that you had to be separated from the other

kids? Did you forget that you had big red balls thrown at you, that the other kids would laugh and call you stupid?”

I wanted to write a book, but my self-image had been formed in such a concrete way that before I got my first book published, I sat on my idea for thirteen years. I was unable to act because my inner voice said “who’s going to read your book? Don’t you know you’re stupid, you can’t even read or write?”

Every time that doubt crept into my mind, I would stop. I stopped and started for thirteen years. It wasn’t until I developed a team that understood me, and we worked well together, that I was able to get my story out.

The process of writing a book was so painful because I didn’t believe in myself, I was staring at the number six when it was really a number nine all along. God was trying to help me get on the other side, to help me understand that nothing is impossible. I wasn’t a dummy, God doesn’t make junk, we’re all geniuses in our own right because Christ lives within us and nothing is imperfect in the kingdom of God.

When I finished my book, I still didn’t feel like an author, because the person I thought I was wasn’t my authentic self. The real me has a genius quality within him but I couldn’t see it. The whole time I was working on my book, my daughter Heather, would tell me “ok dad , tell me a story.”

We worked that way for weeks as she transcribed my speeches. Sometimes she'd ask, "wow, Dad, did that really happen to you?" and I'd say "yes, that happened" She learned a lot about me as we put the book together. After a year and a half, I got the copy of my book and I finally felt like an author. But even then, I felt self-induced doubt. Why did that keep happening? In my subconscious mind, I was trapped.

You and I think in visual terms, right? If I asked you to imagine your back yard, your car, your pet, the image in your mind will be replaced each time I mention something new as I rattle off the list. If I asked you to think about my car or house, your mind will be blank, or you will have to imagine something.

In 1934, Dr Thurman Fleet was trying to help his patients expand their minds and understand how we relate to one another. In doing so, he tried to help get his patients from point A to point B. He found it was difficult for people stuck on point A to get to point B and once they got there, it was hard for them to stay in B, because they kept bouncing back to A.

What pops into your mind when I say, "imagine your mind?" Most people say that they see a brain or that they can't see anything at all.

Your brain is not your mind. Your mind is the spiritual essence of who you are. If you go back to the third chapter of John, Nicomedus is coming to Jesus by night. Many of us know the

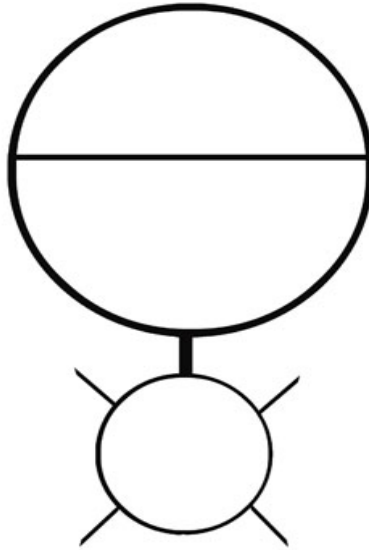
story. Nicodemus asked, “how does man enter into the kingdom of heaven?”

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.” ~

John 3:5

He’s talking about being born again, he says we were born flesh of flesh but that our spirit is something that can flourish and change. We see the effects of wind, but we can’t see the wind. Our mind is the spiritual essence of who we are. It’s the invisible part of us.

So, Dr. Fleet developed an image based on the stick person (next page). Notice that the body is significantly smaller because most of our lives we’re focused on the physical. But, with the larger circle on top representing the mind and the smaller circle representing the body, we can see that the mind is activity and the brain is the chemical switching station. The body is the manifestation of the mind.

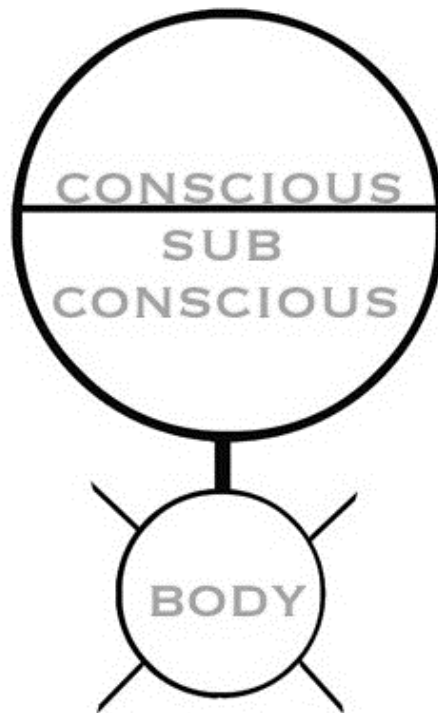


Think about the tablet or book you're holding; do you know that the item is not solid? It's slowed down energy. If I look at my hand and I hit it, I'll say my hand is not solid. You'd say, you're nuttier than a fruitcake. But if I look at it under a microscope, you'll see a bunch of molecules, then when you look under a more powerful microscope you will find an ocean of energy. Everything is an ocean of motion. When you're dead and buried, your body is still moving.

Now you're probably thinking that I've really lost my marbles. Well, not quite. The reason our dead bodies are still moving is that we are returning to our original state, to dust. Take the diagram above in conjunction with **Romans 12.2** "*don't be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of the mind.*"

If we don't have an image to work with we're in a state of confusion. The mind is the essence of what we are.

So, we're going to take the head circle and cut it in half. The bottom half is the subconscious mind. This showed me the whole world, why I was getting the results I did in my life. It's not easy but it is a helpful model to help show me my blocks, to eradicate belief systems that don't work for me.



Free will is in the top half "conscious". I can't make you do or act or feel anything. But if we're going down the road behind someone going slower than molasses, we say, "he makes me so mad" No, but you've just given away your power. "Free Will"

and “Wish” are also in the top half. What does this have with understanding? Everything.

After all, just the word intercourse sends your mind to the six instead of to the nine!

The conscious mind is where you have the ability to accept, reject, or neglect any idea. You can say, “there might be something here” or you can say, “you’re off your rocker”.

Let’s put a funnel in the top of the mind. And title it Power

Scientists would call that word energy, spiritualists call it source. I’m a man of faith and I’ll call it God. This power flows to and through us at all times. Think about an idea that you have in your life, your desire to have better relationships with your family, to have a better business, to earn a certain amount of money, etc. Whatever that idea is, take a moment to think about it. The key is, when you have that idea, how do you get into harmony with the laws of power? How do you get in harmony with the laws of the universe?

Right now, I’m holding my phone in my hand, and the phone represents a bar of steel. In front of me is a table, representing a bowl of water. If I stick the steel on top of the water, what happens? It sinks.

James Allen “until thought is linked with purpose, there is no intelligent accomplishment.” If you think about this bar of steel

floating, we all know it won't float. But how does a company make an aircraft carrier that houses thousands of military people, plus helicopters and equipment, that sits out on the ocean? It's because they got in harmony with science and learned how to make things balance. When you look at planes, you think, "there's no way this thing is going to fly". How do they do that? Because they understand the laws of aerodynamics.

Let's go back to your idea, to the thing you really want. Write it down. Whatever it is, write it down and ask the question, why? Why do you want that? This is where people mess up. Because their life is too busy they don't have time to think about why they want something. People will tell you answers based on things on the surface: to have a better relationship, more freedom, more love, etc. I get all of that, but I'll ask you again: why?

I want you to keep drilling down because here's what happens. The people that ask themselves "why?" begin to discover their purpose.

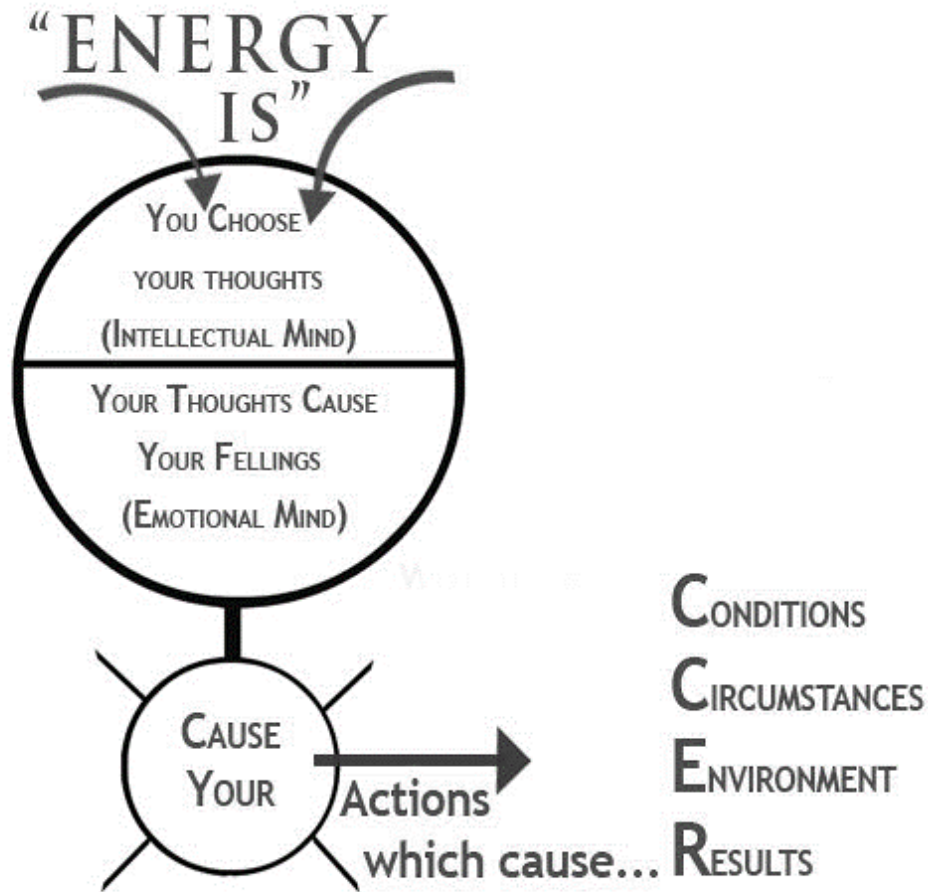
The shift that begins to happen is between the conscious part of your mind and the subconscious. See yourself as though you already have what you want. When you ask "why?" you become emotionally invested in the result.

Here's what happens. The subconscious is your feeling mind/your emotional mind, is where your self-image is.

Remember: you'll never change unless you learn how to change your self-image. The lower part of your mind is conditioned, where your fixed habits are, where your belief systems are housed and protected. It's your operating system.

Two things to get out of this example. The subconscious cannot distinguish between what is truth and what is imagined, it just accepts it. Henry Ford said, "if you think you can, you can, and if you think you can't, you can't". You're absolutely right. This part of your mind simply accepts ideas. That's why people get what they are, not what they want. These vibrations move our body into action and produce what we call results.

When you begin to see yourself with your goals, to make those ideas as real as the chair where you're sitting. It sets up a vibration. The energy that is leaving us, makes us attract the same energy back. Whatever you think about, you bring about, whatever you focus on grows.



A man told me a story once about light and dark existing inside of us. He said to imagine a black wolf and white wolf inside of me fighting. They don't understand one another, they're biting and hurting one another, over and over again.

When asked, which one wins, I answered, “The white one.”

He said, “No, whichever one you feed the most, wins.”

Many times, we think that we are feeding the right wolf. But, maybe because of our upbringing we have a tendency to feed the wolf that is most in line with our family culture instead of our true spiritual nature.

Which wolf are you letting win today?

Tips to Take Away

1) Seek first to understand, then be understood. These tips are not to be applied just one time and expect change. That quote is really about wanting to listen to that person when they are talking. Pay attention to being aware, ask yourself, am I listening, am I engaged. Many times, we fall back into our old pattern of intercourse, to do the same things over and over again. The way you change a habit is to be aware of the thinking that got you in the problem in the first place. The same type of thinking is not going to heal or mend the problem.

2) Realize that someone always has to win. When we're trying to get our point across and the other person is trying to get their point across, it winds up being a power struggle. Be the bigger person, step back, and really listen to the other person. No matter how many times you want to speak, really seek to listen with your heart.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” ~ Proverbs 4:23

3) How do we listen when there is so much monkey chatter in our brain? We have to capture the thoughts that want to destroy or pull down our psyche. You have to learn that you have the power to change a thought. Any time you go to change your life

or move towards a higher goal, it's going to reveal insecurities and expose your self-image. We have to realize that's a lie. What is the truth? The truth is, God made us in his image and likeness. So, if we think God is love, then step into that and lead with love and understanding. Remember, we talked about what is love. Go back and look up what love is and lead with that. If you do that, you will see things start to change over time.

4) Get to the root of what makes us do, and say, and think the way we do. So, if you think about the epidemic of opioid addiction, it's because those addicts are fixing their problems with a band-aid. We think if we get a book on positive thinking that it's going to change our life but there is more to it than that because we have to get to the root of our problems. Many times, as we open ourselves up, it's hard, but that's where healing beings. When you find the real.

“It's hard asking someone with a broken heart to fall in love again.” ~ Eric Kripke

“In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” ~ Revelation 22:2

Chapter Three – Broken/Healing

As you discover that love is the most important thing, and you learn how to love yourself and understand how listening is so important, you'll also see imperfections and flaws begin to emerge. As we get older, often we become even harder on ourselves because we start to gain weight and get more wrinkles. We begin to look at ourselves in a way that seems broken. We feel like we don't fit it and, turns out, we have probably felt that way the whole time.

Think back to your childhood days when you were going to school. Did you really want to join a club or participate in an activity but were too scared to try? What were you really afraid of? What made you feel like you couldn't sign up? Chances are you felt like you would be misunderstood, that your social reputation might change, or that you simply would not fit in with the group. We carry those same insecurities with us into our adult lives and there's nothing more damaging than feeling left out. As we start approaching the ways to better our lives, the closer we get to real change, the more broken we feel.

In my life, I began to realize that if I ever wanted to move up to the next level, to become a better person, that I would have to face myself. That is a difficult thing to do, much more difficult

than it sounds, because we forget about some of our broken pieces. We're tricking ourselves into thinking that our lives are ok. We want to think our lives are good, and for the most part, they probably are.

But, why do people get divorced? They don't want to deal with the problems; they know their relationship is broken but they don't know how to fix it and feel that it is too painful to address. They feel misunderstood, and out of place, and those feelings keep building until they finally explode, and they say they're done. If those same people were to take time and go to an environment that is conducive to healing, maybe the marriage could have been salvaged.

Consider the tragedy of losing a loved one through suicide. That's a dark, dark, place for someone to go. In order to commit suicide, a person has become so depressed that they don't know where to turn. They don't even know where to begin to look for support and healing.

I knew a lady many years ago who was one of my clients. She had a daughter who committed suicide and she was the one who found her daughter's body. Years later, as I began to build a friendship with her, she still couldn't deal with that fact without getting emotional. That's what happens to us when those things occur, we don't seek a place, or people, who can help us. The human tendency is to grieve in private; we wall ourselves off.

We might seek out a friend's shoulder to cry on from time to time, but mostly we deal with that emotional trauma in our own heads. So, in this instance, when I began to talk to my friend to see if she would open up, she would shut me down. It's easier to sweep pain under the rug, or to avoid expressing our emotions, but you will soon find that the grief will start to leech out of your spirit and will start affecting your body instead.

Here's another example from my younger days. Back when I owned a landscaping business, I had a client who was an elderly gentleman that had served in WWII. When I would come by, he would always stand up in his yard to greet me and I would go up and shake his hand. When I took the time to visit with him, he would often talk to me about the war, about how he had landed on one three of the main beaches on D-Day. He watched his friends get mowed down, sawed in half with bullets, and even in his old age he couldn't shake the memory of the sights and sounds of so many people around him dying. As he talked, he would tear up and have to excuse himself to go back inside because he couldn't face that brokenness within his mind.

Then, there came a time when we had to do some work inside the man's home. I noticed that he was sitting in the den and when I went over to talk to him, I happened to look over to the shelves beside his television set. Those shelves were covered in stacks of WWII movies he had watched over and over again.

I understood then that through watching those films, he was reliving the horrors of the things he had seen and what had happened to him all those years ago. Between his memories and those movies, he had created his own version of *Groundhog Day*, stuck in an infinite loop of pain.

Part of me felt really bad when I discovered that man's truth. You don't know what to do to make people feel better and it's impossible to take away another person's pain. Often times, survivors of trauma find that they can find a strange sort of pleasure in the pain, taking a kind of comfort in the familiarity. Even though they want to move away from the pain, a lot of times they create a relationship with the pain and it becomes their new normal.

Here's another example. I'm sure we all know people who are always hurt or sick. They tell you how sick they are, how broken they are, every time you speak to one another. Those people have found out that by being sick or hurt that they get more attention. Bad things happen to good people, sure, but the fact is that getting attention feels good.

If I were to look at my life, I learned about this sort of relationship with pain when I was about five years old. I had mononucleosis, and everyone felt sorry for me and gave me special treatment. After that things started happening like dominos falling in a row. I started getting sick more often, broke

my arms a couple times, received numerous stitches from fighting, and even got into a few car accidents.

One of my sister-in laws once told me, “I don’t know anyone else like you, you spend so much time at the hospital.” I didn’t realize it then, but I know now that it was because I was broken on the inside. By being sick or having visible stitches, that made people treat me more kindly.

A lot of times, we cut ourselves just to make sure we can still feel something. You’ve heard about how some teens cut themselves with razors but others, like heroin addicts, will also turn to cutting behaviors. Addicts will adopt other behaviors if they are sent to jail or to rehab to take their mind off of the pain of withdrawal.

People who are already in pain will likely cause themselves more pain. They will create pain in their marriages, or in their relationships.

Think about all the ways people hurt themselves. Some people have affairs because they get an adrenaline rush, transferring the pain from their marriage into physical pleasure by having sex with another person. Their life takes on a whole different meaning, but then they find themselves caught in a trap. Their lover will eventually seek a deeper relationship that they can’t give them, leading to the end of the affair, and divorce still looms on the horizon.

Now, think about a person that uses alcohol. In an alcoholic's life, we often come home already stressed from the work day, only to walk into a home full of chaos, so we reach for a beer or a bottle of wine. As time goes on, one glass turns into two, one can will turn into six, and before long you're drinking alone to avoid facing your problems. We find ourselves trapped in a prison of thought, a prison made from our own mind. Alcohol enhances how we feel about ourselves and you make things worse the more you drink. It's like a dog that chases its tail and gets so dizzy he falls over.

I don't know if you've ever heard about how they catch monkeys in the Amazonian region, but the trapper's technique is fascinating. Years ago, I read a story about how the trappers would get monkeys and it's something that struck me profoundly. Simply put, the trappers would take coconuts and carve a hole large enough for the monkey to get their hands in. They would then tie the coconut to a stake in the ground and put peanuts inside of the coconut. Once the trappers left, the monkeys would grab the peanuts inside of the coconuts. By grabbing onto the nuts, their hands became fists, and their fists are too large to pull out of the coconut. The monkeys are trapped, doomed to be captured or killed, because they wouldn't let go of the peanuts.

So, what peanuts are you holding onto? What are the things in your life that do not serve you, but that you are too afraid to let go of? What are the broken pieces that you're holding onto?

This is where things get tricky. We want to feel balanced and whole, but many times the trap or the process of our thoughts holds us captive.

Part of my coaching mission statement is that I want to help bring awareness to those who want to unlock their gift and infinite potential. If you break that down, my mission is to help uncover and to reveal.

Awareness is like finding a blanket in front of a coffee table. If I asked you to try to describe what's behind the blanket without you knowing what it really was, to describe the color, the shape, all of it, you would look at me like I was crazy. You wouldn't know where to begin., You would start to make guesses at best, or tell me that you didn't know, at worst. After you've given me your answer, I would then take that blanket and pull it aside. Only then could you describe it, that you can see it for what it really was.

I want to help people unlock their potential. Even the phrase unlocking is important; to release people from their inner prison.

What is your gift?

Let's take a look at the lighter side of things. Think about what it would be like to be set free, to be able to set foot outside of your inner prison, to find the key and realize how good life can be.

Did you know we have infinite potential? If my grandkids are in the crowd when I'm speaking at a seminar, I'll say, "but I can't be a Michael Jordan and play like he can, I can't put on a tutu and dance like a ballerina" my grandkids will heckle me and say, "sure you can grandpa!"

Still, beyond extreme cases like those, we can accomplish almost anything we put our minds to. We are co-creators with God and, because of this, we have infinite potential.

The process of putting a rocket in space is phenomenal. The technology is so advanced, it's still hard to believe that we put a man in the moon in the 1960's.

What is your dream?

What broken piece is holding you back from what you want to accomplish in life? If you talk to kids in school, they say they want to be a policeman, an astronaut, the president!

But, if you ask those same kids that question as they enter high school, the teens will often say, "I don't know".

Somewhere along the line, someone stole their dream, told them they can't do it, and they believed the lie. Think about the

dearest dreams, the ones that you've guarded deep in your heart. What do you really want? Remember your college days, maybe you dropped out because you couldn't juggle school life and home life, or you chose a different degree program because it is what people wanted you to study and not what you really wanted to do. After college, you had a family to provide for and before you know it, you're middle aged and you have no idea how you got there and what you've done with your life.

When you look into the eyes of older people, you will see two types of individuals. The eyes are the windows to the soul, after all, so try this as an exercise. Take time to consciously look people 65, 75, 80, or older in the eye and study their expressions.

One set of eyes will be very graceful, full of joy, there is a sparkle in their eye. They understand their life, they are grateful and feel blessed by their experiences. They take joy in their family and the accomplishments of those around them. They appreciate the wisdom life has given them and there is a completeness about their expression that comes out of brokenness.

Remember: out of the heart the issues of life spring. The other set of eyes you will discover are dark. Those people are without hope and often without real expression. Life handed them lemons and they didn't know how to make lemonade.

Viktor Frankl was a Viennese psychiatrist during the Nazi era and he wrote the book *Man's Search for Meaning*. His family was wealthy and well to-do but even they were captured by the Nazi's and placed in a concentration camp. He watched people brutally tortured and murdered in Auschwitz. He was crammed into bunkers with other men, covered in fleas, surrounded by rats and filth.

They would be forced to march in the wintertime when their boots had been taken and they wore rags on their wounded feet. They would be made to dig ditches and cover them back in before they were brought back to the camps.

Viktor could look into the eyes of those around him and he could tell who was going to be alive the next morning and who would be dead. Because the hope they held onto or the hope they lost was all they had left. The people who died committed what today we call mental suicide. That's powerful.

If we can will ourselves to die, what can we will ourselves to do?

What's the answer to this brokenness and this pain? I know when I was a young man, I was an alcoholic and a drug addict. I rode a motorcycle and bounced in and out of court and jail. I thought I was tough, but really, I was just a scared kid. My parents taught me how to work at the age of eight, but, as I grew

up, by the time I was 24, I was lost. I was doing drugs and alcohol every day.

I had an old pickup truck and motorcycle, and one day I decided to travel to Arizona. As I got ready to go, I picked up a gal I knew, and she traveled with me. I remember arriving in Flagstaff Arizona and by the time we pulled into an old hotel we were out of money, gas, and food. Because I had already been living an unstable life, things like that simply didn't bother me. I pawned some items off in exchange for a couple of nights stay so that we could get showers and search for work.

The next day, I told my lady friend to take one side of the street, and I'd take the other, and together we were sure to find some jobs. I remember walking down the street and I said to myself "I don't know how to get out of this lifestyle, but I am tired of it." I had friends who were overdosing on heroin, people who had lived their lives so long in the darkness that they had forgotten what the light even looked like.

As I made my way across town, I walked into a lumberyard and asked the foreman if they were hiring. He said "yeah, fill out this application."

Because of being labeled as having a learning disability, I struggled with paper applications. Still, I scribbled and spelled the best I could. At the time I had real long hair and looked like a

pirate. A year or so prior, I had gone through the windshield in a car accident and my face was covered in scars.

Once I was finished, I handed the application to the man and he said, "I'll get back to you."

I would later learn that there were five Christians who worked in the back of the lumberyard. Every time they were ready to hire, the foreman would take applications back to them to discuss who they wanted to hire.

Once I walked out of the place, those five men had a meeting and told the foreman, "hire that long-haired guy."

I didn't know then, but God was setting me up. After I started working there, I remember talking to those guys and they kept trying to give me their testimonies of converting to Christianity. Every time I had to ask them to stop. I had never been around people like that. I blew them off, but they persisted. I remember that one had been a good kid and one had been a juvenile delinquent like me. They asked me to church countless times and I finally relented and went, just to make them stop asking.

If you had looked into my eyes before that day in 1979 when I gave my life to God, you would have seen hopelessness. Lots of hippies were giving their lives to Christ in those days but I thought it was just another fad. As a kid, I never was taught about Jesus or God. I never knew anything about him beyond

seeing pictures of him on the wall. All I knew at that time was that because he had long hair and sandals that he must have been a hippie.

But, the day I went down to the altar, my life changed. From the minute I gave my life over to Christ, I gave up alcohol and drugs. In the time when I was without Christ, I was without hope. I used drugs and alcohol to transfer the pain of my upbringing, to escape my relationships. All of a sudden, I was clean, and my spirit was light, because hope had entered my life.

Fast-forward 12 years, I messed up and put my hope in man and I can assure you, they will let you down every time. If you put your hope in other people, they are sure to let you down. In my disappointment, I left the church and went back to Oregon with a cigarette in one hand and a beer in the other.

I built a business without Christ and spent 24 years without direction. In 2010, I moved to Greenville SC. I didn't know a soul, had never been there, only to find that God had set me up again. I got my heart right and once again I found myself with a dream and with purpose. God is the one that directs my steps. Still, this isn't about church, or religion, it's about a relationship with Christ.

So, what's my point? I want to know what obstacles are in your path. What are you grabbing onto in the metaphorical coconut that you won't let go of, the thing that you think is solving the

pain that you have? Here's the hard truth: whatever that is, it's not helping, it's creating more pain. I've lived my life without God but in my experiences, a life without God is a life without hope.

We want healing, we want to be made whole, to be saved from our pain. So, turn to a place that will bring you the wholeness and that healing we all crave. The only way healing happens is when you face your brokenness. That's why we started this book with love and understanding. Now we're in this place where you realize you need an answer; that **you need hope**.

Maybe take that thing you wrote down years ago, that you scribbled on your desk or daydreamed about in your childhood. Revisit your old dreams. Get involved with people who lift you up, not tear you down. Get somewhere that can heal your thoughts and your mind.

Finally, think about your friends. Do they encourage you or do they break you down? Think about where you put yourself. Step into that healing, that place in your life where you can be made whole, where you can add value to yourself and to the people around you.

Tips to Take Away

1) Face yourself. As you begin to see your brokenness, be aware that this is a process that you have to endure. You must see the problem and the source before you can heal it. This is the place where you need to put yourself and be sure to have a good support group because it will be hard. Share your life, your darkest parts, with people who can help.

2) Realize it's not a sprint, it's a marathon. We think we're going to fix ourselves because we read a book or tried a new thing, only to find that our problem can't be fixed in 24 hours. Realize, changing is a lifestyle. You'll think differently about the world and about people. Have patience with yourself, be graceful, be kind in this process.

3) What are the peanuts you're hanging onto? If you could look at the things you're holding onto and open your hand to label what's inside, what would they be? Think about what you can't let go of, what you're not willing to save yourself to let go of. The thing about moving to a higher nature is that you must let go of that lower nature. What is keeping you captive? (Remember the word awareness? Your problems will reveal themselves when you have proper awareness of yourself.)

4) Understand light vs dark. When you get a taste of walking in a room and it's dark and you flip on the light, all of a sudden

you can see everything. You won't fall over or hurt yourself because you turned on the light. Where does the darkness go? It must leave. Think about walking towards the light, where did it go? For me, that light was Jesus, but what is your light? What are you moving towards, walking through the darkness? Light is better than dark and if you must endure a little bit of pain to get there then it will all be worth it in the end. Figure out what the light switch is and turn it on. You will become addicted to the light.

*“He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of
righteousness For His name’s sake.” ~ Psalm 23:3*

*“I want to be remembered as the person who helped us restore
faith in ourselves.” ~ Wilma Mankiller*

Chapter Four – Restoration

Let's take a moment to examine the word restoration. The dictionary defines it as returning something to its original state. Think back to a time in your life when you've been driving down the road, going to a fair, maybe an outdoor event, and when you drive past, you see a bunch of old cars, muscle cars that were restored and brought back to their original state.

When most people see cars like that, they walk around and examine the vehicles in awe, appreciating the glittering paint jobs and immaculate interiors. But they haven't seen the car before it was restored, only when it reached its final, beautiful, form.

Most of the time, the people who bring the cars to the shows will have purchased an old vehicle in rough shape. They then bring it into their shop and dismantle it before bringing it back to its original state. Those people will spend hours sanding and tearing things apart, repainting and rebuilding, to bring the car back to a form that looks just like the original, but which is likely in even better condition.

To me, it's amazing to see how much time, energy, and focus it takes to do something like that; to have the attention span to work on something so detailed for months or even years. I've seen programs on tv about restoring, as I'm sure most of you have as well. Some restorations, like working on train engines, can take a lifetime. Even something like a rusty old fire truck can become something beautiful when it's restored to its original state.

Imagine you're going down the road and you see an old jalopy, covered in weeds and rust, with broken windows. At one time it was a beautiful car, but because of neglect, it sits in a field just rotting away. Someone with an eye will drive by a field like that and will stop and think, "I can restore that. I can take it to the original state and make it even better."

Think about where you're at now at this point in life. **What is your original state?** Have you really given it much thought, to sit back and reflect?

Ask yourself the question; "Who am I? Who is this person I look at in the mirror, who is looking back at me?"

There was a time that I couldn't even stand to look at myself in the mirror because my self-image was so dark. I took me a long time to learn what my original state was, and that is someone who has a close relationship with God.

There is like a show called *Auction Kings* about a gallery and auction house in Atlanta, GA. People will bring in motorcycles or cars which they claim are in their original state. If the gallery owners are unfamiliar with the vehicles, they will call in an expert. As the expert looks at it, he will begin to show them how things are different in subtle ways, like restored chrome, or different lights, etc.

In life, we do the exact same thing, by adding things to our self-image that aren't original to our spiritual being.

It's my belief that warped self-image is often why people have mental illness. I'm not a doctor and I don't claim to be one. There was a time in my life where God restored my spirit. That action allowed me to set aside so much anger and sadness that I could live without the crutch of alcohol or drugs.

You see, we are more than just flesh and bone. When my spirit was born again I went back to that original state. There was a time in my life when I was travelling and evangelizing, I pioneered two churches, but because of circumstances, I put my trust in people who let me down.

As I did this, I turned my eyes away from Christ, to man. I left Arizona and returned to a town in Oregon. We arrived in 1990 and I turned my back on Christ. I began to slowly lose that original state, the place that brought me peace and joy and happiness, that brought me fulfillment.

When I did that, I went to Oregon and started a business. I had three businesses going and started doing drugs and alcohol again. I had allowed my circumstances to make changes to my original state, to add false pieces to my spirit.

Let's try another visual exercise. Picture one of those gorgeous muscle cars, that has been restored to its original state. Now imagine that you neglect it, that things begin to rot and decay. That's exactly what happened to my life when I turned my back on Christ. I was trying to put on the fake fenders and chrome, trying to add different things in my life that didn't fit.

Because of that, I found myself in my home one day, curled up in a corner, in a fetal position, having a mental breakdown. As I was in that place, I lost myself completely. I had a vague awareness of where I was, and it was daylight when I got in that position in the corner. I was so devastated and depressed that the next thing I knew, it was nighttime. I found out that I had been there, lost in the throes of depression, for about seven hours.

I've heard about how people can mentally "check out" whether by suicide, or by abusing drugs. Simply put, those people reach a point where their mind simply can't take it anymore. I've experienced that sensation first hand.

When you finally break down, it releases a chemical in your brain. If you don't get help very soon after breaking down, you are on borrowed time and you need to seek help immediately.

People who linger in that state are much more likely to hurt themselves, commit suicide, or cross over a line where mentally they don't come back.

Now, those same people who are experiencing the breakdown will think that they no longer have any responsibility. They are so broken that they feel like they don't have to fix anything.

When I was in that dark place, I remember reaching out to the only person I could think of; my ex-wife. It took everything in me to reach for the phone and give her a call.

At that time, just as I was calling her, my right arm and chest felt like they were about to explode. When she answered the phone, I broke down at the sound of her voice.

"I need help," I told her. "I need someone to help me."

She was in no state to help me, but she dropped everything and came over. When she opened the door, and saw me in the corner curled up, she turned on the lights and came over to my side. She looked me in the eye and saw my gaze was wildly out of focus. We knew that something was dramatically wrong, my eyes were not moving together. She grabbed me and took me to the hospital, even as I protested.

When I got to the hospital, they laid me down on a gurney and wired me for sound. Even the nurses were convinced that I was

having a heart attack. Finally, the doctor came in to see me after reviewing my chart and said I was having a stress attack.

A stress attack? Where did that even come from?

Days leading up to this event, I had locked myself up in my house for days. My neighbor didn't come over and knock on the door to check on me because the night before he'd had a dream.

This is how real and how powerful our thoughts can be. My neighbor was sleeping soundly, and I was in a depressed, suicidal, state. But, in the middle of the night he awakened to the sound of a gunshot. It was so loud and so real, the next day he didn't want to come over because he knew I had committed suicide. That was days before I found myself curled up in the corner.

Now, did that have anything to do with me? I don't know. But I do know this. I was checking out and I wanted it to be over. When I got out of the hospital and I got back to a place where I could barely function (but I was functioning) I realized where that mental illness originated. It came from my thought process, pure and simple. The more I thought about the dark, about the pain, the more it grew and grew, and grew.

I said to myself, when I got halfway back to a normal place, I will never, ever, ever, go back to that place again, I will never find myself having a mental breakdown again. Because I knew

where it came from. But, just because you know where it comes from doesn't mean it will be easy. It was a painful road. I had developed patterns of thought that kept me trapped. So, I began to surround myself with people that could help me.

What did I want? The same things most people want. They want to experience peace, joy, and happiness, to express themselves and feel fulfilled. So, did I. Over time, in lots of different books, teachers, and mentors, my studies led me back to the place of getting my heart right with God. I knew that this was where I needed to be restored; to return to a place where you can see beauty, where others can find beauty in you.

There are people you know, people whose lives are like a testament. They exude joy and peace. It's because they are being restored to that original state and you want to hang out with them because they seem so complete.

The sad thing about human behavior is that when we see people who "have it together", we equate and enviable life with monetary things, or with family dynamics. Many times, however, those people might have financial struggles, or they may fight with their spouses at home.

People who have been restored, however, will never exude those same signs of stress. We have a false impression of what we think restoration is. I believe in prosperity and abundance, that God has given us the keys to the kingdom. That's the keys to

every key to every room. He didn't just leave out keys for things like health, or prosperity, but to every room in the kingdom.

Consider people that we regard as being very successful. Many of us have heard the story of Howard Hughes. By the end of his life, he was so eccentric he couldn't speak to people.

We think of Henry Ford as a genius, as the man who invented automobiles. His son, Edsel, on the other hand, has largely been forgotten. Edsel wanted his dad to have a different color of the cars, or a different, shape, but Henry didn't want to change anything.

If you read stories about Henry Ford, you will learn how he pitted his main guys against each other just to stay in control. Once, he went on vacation with his wife, and his son put together a prototype with a different style of car. When Henry came home, Edsel couldn't wait to take him out to the shop and show him the changes he had made. When they opened the door, Henry was so upset he began to tear that car apart with his bare hands. He tore off the wipers, the fenders, the mirrors. He was asserting his dominance and said that he was in control of the business.

Oftentimes, the most successful people are plagued with mental illness. I think it's because they have taken their eyes off God and they have made themselves God. That sort of behavior will destroy your life quicker than anything. Their ego becomes

bigger. It blocks out the light. The acronym for EGO is Edging God Out. So, the bigger your ego, the smaller your God.

Consider your original state. Before we were born, when your mom got pregnant, your essence was a seed that was so small, it couldn't be detected. But, everything you needed was in that little cell; your hair color, your eyes, everything that makes up your physical and spiritual being was in there.

Those tiny cells grew into a human and as that child was born, you were so connected to your spiritual source, you couldn't see it.

It's not until children get older that they begin to be trained, to be molded and shaped in a culture that is either full of love or full of hate.

I don't know about you, but I want to go back to my original state. We all know the story of Adam and Eve and the garden. Think about what it must have been like when God would come down and walk with them, to talk with them and share his light.

It wasn't until they ate the fruit and had to hide from God that they lost their original state. When God came down to walk with Adam, he couldn't find him. God said, "where are you?"

And Adam said, "I am hiding because I am ashamed."

Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit, they were kicked out of the garden. We know what it's like to hear this story in Sunday school. But, here's the simple truth. At one point they walked with God and then they didn't. It's because they moved away from their original state.

If you have anxiety, depression, an addiction of any kind, you're not alone. Mental illness is an epidemic. People have to numb their pain because they are searching for riches, to find out what life is all about. I think it's pretty simple, we just make it hard. For me, it's having a relationship with Christ; not what some man says I need to do, what some church doctrine says to do, it's what the word of God says I need to do.

Whether you go to church or not, the question is, are you moving towards and getting back to your original state? Are you restoring your spirit?

Things that have been restored to a perfect degree are staggeringly beautiful, so much so that you might ache with jealousy. **When God restores people to their original state, we stare at them in the same way, with envy and awe.** Those people don't follow the masses, they follow their destined path. If you're following the crowd, it might be a good idea to turn around and walk the other way. It's safe to walk in the same direction.

If it's on the internet it must be true, right? What do you believe?
What do you think about yourself? Who are you really?

Who am I? Am I a preacher, am I a speaker, am I a coach? If you look at yourself, you will often say what you do, not what you are. Those terms are just labels.

Again, my question is: who are you?

**Are you the person you see in the mirror
or are you someone else?**

We make it seem like such a grand mystery to find out who we are as individuals. But really, it is a simple process. You need to move in the direction of what the word of God says.

Go back to that place that I talked about in the Love chapter. What is love? If you want to talk about restoration, go back to that first Corinthians chapter 13 about what love is. Love is kind, is peace, is hope. Love doesn't bully people. Love is something that is strong, love is an action. Love is someone who gives their life for the people who hanged him on the cross.

We hear stories about people in the military who saved a friend, who jumped in front of a bullet to save a life. Those people go to extreme measures to pick up their friend and haul them back to a place of safety, sometimes at the cost of their own lives. That is love.

So, think about your original state. Is it depression and anxiety, is it eating drugs by the handful, is it drinking gallons of liquor? Sad to say, that can become people's reality, that is the way they get through life. You have to somehow move away from that state of pain.

I encourage you, as you're reading this book, to stop and pray. This would be a really good time to start the journey back to your original state. Christ said he would never leave you, or forsake you, and that is true.

If you want to pray, just ask Christ to come into your life, say yes to Jesus. It doesn't have to be fancy.

Just say, "God, restore me to my original state."

I don't know if we can ever make it back to that divine original state in this world, in this mortal coil. Only when we reach heaven, we will finally be completely restored. I don't think we'll be sitting on clouds with wings fluttering, I think it will be much more powerful than that. So, I would encourage you to move your eyes towards the truth.

Jesus said, *I am the truth, the way, and the life*. Think about that statement. If that's what we are seeking, he's laying it out for us through the gospel. Drop your pride, let go of your ego, and give yourself over to Christ.

Tips to Take Away

1) Think about who you are. I believe once you begin to realize who you are and who you are not, you will begin to discover your true purpose. What is your purpose? As you begin to move toward your original state, I believe you will also uncover your purpose, to find out why you are here.

2) Be true to yourself. As we are true to ourselves, we'll find that we aren't perfect. If anything, I've made more mistakes than most, but I've also had success. As we're looking at who we are, be true to that person you see in the mirror. God wrote the laws on our heart, we know right from wrong, good from bad. Do we always do the right thing? No, but that's where love comes in. As you discover yourself and if you're true to yourself, scales will fall off your eyes and you will start to see things as they really are.

3) Is what you're doing working? Jesus said he is the way, the truth, and the life. Is what you're doing bringing you joy and happiness? If you think about truth, life, if that's what we're seeking, I'll tell you that my truth was not working when I had a breakdown. Examine your heart and what you hang on to.

4) Let love permeate your being. Go back and revisit the characterizes of love and begin to impart those into your life.

Begin to think about them, cultivate them, nurture them. Let those words of what love is, begin to become your truth, your way, and your life, let them guide your steps and shine a light upon your path. Let them wrap around you to hug you and love you, and heal you, because they will.

“I believe forgiveness is the best form of love in any relationship. It takes a strong person to say they're sorry and an even stronger person to forgive.” ~ Yolanda Hadid

“For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy.” ~ Psalm 61:3

Chapter Five: Strong

Body, Mind, & Spirit

Let's go back to the word intercourse and what it means. It not only means a sexual encounter, but it also means communication with a person or group. Let's refresh the importance of these two interlocking words: communication and sex.

When your sexual relationship is not good, it seems like it affects every area of our life. When it's bad, it's bad, and when it's good, it's good! What's really interesting, with men, especially, when you're married for any length of time at all, there are times when a woman will withhold sex, it really messes with a man's psyche.

If you're in a fight and you're having a hard time, maybe you should consider going to counseling. Because, if at any point of the relationship sex is being withheld, it messes with your head. Men and women are sexual creatures and we equate so many different things to that.

If you go to bed and your wife says, "not now honey, I have a headache." That is rejection, plain and simple. Even if it's legit,

and she's not interested, in a man's head rejection turns into frustration. That's because it deals with our manhood.

When it's good in the bedroom, it's good, and it affects every area of your life. But, if it's bad, it can mess with your head to such a degree that it can mess with your job. Why am I bringing this up?

Reflect on the word **strong**.

If you think about how powerful sexual relationships are and you go back to communicating, when you're misunderstood, it affects every area of your life. When you try to get something across, when you try to share something with somebody, and you're misunderstood, that person looks at you differently. Because you can't get your point across, it changes you.

Let's look at three categories of strength: body, mind and spirit. We misinterpret what being strong is. When you're a kid, to rebel against society, rebel against your parents, and when you fight for something, you think that's being strong. But really, it's showing weakness.

What does the word strong really mean? The dictionary defines it as "having the power to move heavy weights or to perform physically demanding tasks."

You've all seen the strong man competitions and it's interesting how we associate physical power with strength. We pick on the

nerdy kids at school who read books because they aren't strong in body, they're easy targets for bullying. Sure, it's good to be in great physical shape, but when we get older that strength goes away.

When we're young, vibrant, and strong in our body, it's amazing how much emphasis we put on those qualities. As we get older, we're not able to do the things we did years ago. The body gives out, it doesn't perform like it used to. If we put all of our trust in having a strong body, we're bound to be disappointed because it inevitably wears out.

What does this have to do with relationships and communication? If we think that this body we live in is really who we are, we are under a false assumption of what truth is. That's why people get really depressed. There was time when I was in solid shape. I worked hard and was very physical.

Now that I'm 63, I've got a belly and I can't do the things I used to do. I had a friend of mine share something funny about when you have a belly, he said, "Dean, you can always tell when I'm on the level because my belly's in the middle."

Because this body begins to fail you. When I lean down to grab a pencil, it's amazing how different my balance is. My mind, however, is strong, it's youthful and energetic.

If you just put your focus on the sexual aspect of your relationships, you're missing the mark, because it's all about fulfilling the need of your partner. Intercourse is communication, remember? If you think that communication is all about you being heard, that they need to listen to *your* day, but you're both in that mindset, you miss the point. You miss the part of satisfying each other's needs.

When we focus solely on the body, it will turn us astray. It will lead us down the wrong path. Sometimes you see people who are 80, 90, 100, some are in wheelchairs and can't walk. They get depressed because they were used to their bodies working a certain way. If you put all of your trust in what your body looks like, you're going to be disappointed when you get older because gravity takes over.

If we have a strong body and our whole focus is on strength, in that sense, we are lost. The bible tells us the same thing in John 6:63 ***"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life."***

Let's shift gears now to the mind. Stephen Hawking is an example of someone with an incredible mind. If you've ever read a biography of his life, it's truly horrendous what happened to his body. One thing led to another and he wound up in a wheelchair, having to use a computer to speak. But look at how his mind was so active. He understood how powerful the

mind could be and used his mind to explore some of the world's greatest mysteries and change science forever.

Going back to the stick figure illustration, the mind is pure activity, it's where imagination comes from, where dreams are born. The mind is where technology is born in our society. We're constantly moving to these different levels of inventions because people use their minds and tap into a power far greater than they are (whether they want to admit that or not). People fall off the deep end when they make themselves the highest power.

The mind is the spiritual essence of who we are, and the brain is the chemical switching station. They say, the deeper the groove, the stronger the habit. The physical is the manifestation of the activity in your mind. Think about strengthening that. It's important to exercise and eat well, sure. But, if you think about having a strong mind, and how important that is, you're going to communicate in a stronger way. As we exercise our mind, we can tap into our youth, into those ideas we have that are not just fairytales or dreams.

What is your dream? What do you really want in life? How do you communicate with yourself?

So, if you think about being strong in body, it's important, but if you put all of the eggs in that basket you will be let down. Paul said, in Romans 12-2, ***“Do not be conformed to this world, but***

be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God.”

Christ said, let this mind be in you. Think about the mind of God, about the mind that made the universe, that made us. He said, *“whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” ~ Philippians 4:8*

So, it’s important to have a mind that is strong. But how do we develop this strength? We know how to exercise and walk, to hire a trainer to get your physical body in shape but how do you transform your mind? What are you going to do to exercise your mind?

Think about the six intellectual faculties. We’ve heard the terms, but we don’t use them; those are mental muscles. The first one is perception. Perception is how we view ourselves; that translates how we view the world. How we see the world is how we see ourselves. Our perception can change in a matter of seconds. At one time, people thought that the earth was flat and now we can’t even imagine such thing to be true.

Let’s shift your perception. Imagine a huge beam, about 18 inches wide, a foot thick. Now, imagine that I put the beam on the floor with a thousand dollars on the other side of the beam. I

invite you to walk on top of the beam with me and collect that money. Would you do it? Of course!

Now, let's put the beam up on top of some chairs and up the ante to \$2,000. Will you walk it alone? Sure, I can do that!

Let's take the same beam and put it on the top of two, 50 story buildings. It's winter, it's cold and it's very windy. If you've ever been on top of a skyscraper, you know that they bend and wiggle. Now there is a million dollars on the other side of the beam. As you look down, the people below look smaller than ants. What do you do then?

That beam is full of ice and you don't have a safety line. Will you do it now? Probably not. The majority of people will not go across, and those who say they would are probably bluffing.

Let's shift it again. Let's take one of your children, or grandchildren, and put them on the other side of the beam, where the building is on fire. The little one is climbing up on that same beam because they see you and you're waving your arms saying, "Don't come across" and the child doesn't understand. What are you going to do? A woman will say, every time, "I will cross the beam to save that child."

That's one of the six intellectual faculties. Think about your relationship in the bedroom and your communication. Think about your perception there. When you feel stuck, it will never

change, things will never get worked out. But, guess what? I just showed you that your perception can change in an instant. **There is no such thing as a permanent condition when it comes to relationships.**

The next intellectual faculty is will. Go back to the physical body. If I put my hand up and push on your hand, you will instantly push back. We call that will power, but that's not what we're talking about. The frontal lobe of your brain is concentration, the ability to focus and to concentrate. Back when JFK was president and the Russians started the space race, that's when he said, "ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country."

At the time, Wernher Von Braun, was the head of NASA. JFK asked him the question; "what will it take to put a man on the moon and bring him back safely?" Werner didn't say, more money, more experience, more astronauts, he said, "you need the will to do it." That had never been done before, but it didn't stop them.

Growing up, some of us had horrible communication, or no communication. That's been your perception your whole life, and when you step into a new place, it feels impossible. It's all about the ability to be single minded with your goals, to stay concentrated and focused. We give up too easily and throw in the towel when it gets too hard.

The next faculty is reason. This is where we have the ability to look at something and reason it to look like a good idea or reason it away. Here's the thing about reason, in our reasoning faculty, when a child is two or three, when they kick the ball into the busy street, they don't have the reasoning ability to understand that the cars can hurt them. What do they do? They run out after the ball.

Around the age of 6 or 7, our reasoning skills begin to emerge. We become great politicians or salespeople, trying to reason with our parents for things we want. Many times, we'll use it in a way that holds us back. So, when you're going to do something new, or when you want to have better intercourse, and you begin to step in that direction, things fall apart. Our inner reasoning factor will say "it's not going to work".

Intuition is another intellectual faculty (remember these are mental muscles). Many of us have heard of these before but we don't exercise them. Intuition is the gut feeling, like not wanting to walk down a dark alley. Discernment is a word that intertwines with intuition, it's the ability to judge well. Sometimes when our intuition kicks in, we'll say, "hang on, I need to take a minute to judge this correctly."

Relationships are that way, red flags will pop up but we ignore them. Wayne Dyer says, prayer is when we talk to God, intuition is when God speaks to us. Man has a plan, but God directs his

steps. I want God to direct my steps and I thank god whenever I see the light shining on my path. God speaks to us in our heart and in our lives.

The fifth faculty is imagination. Einstein had a phrase carved in the corner of his desk that said, “imagination is more powerful than knowledge.”

We must go back to that invisible space, to go back to that invisible thing you want to see happen. Call it a dream, if you will. The way it’s going to be developed and will manifest itself is up to you. When you tap into your imagination and focus your will, your reasoning will also change. This is because you are changing your perception,

Take a moment and look around. Right now, I’m in my office. I see my printer, my tables, chairs, and rugs. Everything I see was originally a thought in the imagination of someone. These things did not exist before they were imagined. The way has always been here, but it took a person with imagination to tap into it, just like when we put a man on the moon.

You’ll say, “you don’t understand, my relationships can never change, people never change.” So, stop trying to change other people and change yourself instead. Start seeing yourself as being in possession of what you already want. The reason people don’t get what they want is because they don’t ask.

This brings us to our last mental faculty; memory. Here's the interesting thing about memory. We have a perfect memory. And you are probably thinking, "Dean, I don't have a perfect memory, I can't even remember where I put my keys."

That has nothing to do with true memory. There's not such thing as memory damage, there's only brain damage. We lose solidness within our brain. Memory, however, is absolutely perfect.

Let me share an example. You can be walking down the road and all of a sudden, a smell drifts over to you. It smells like cotton candy, and it takes you back to a place when you were little, when you held your mom's hand and you could smell the cotton candy at the carnival. You can take yourself right back to that place in an instant. Why? Because memory is perfect. We just don't realize it because we don't exercise our mental muscles.

You've seen people who have memorized whole books, who use their mental faculty to a super sharp point. People have memorized the bible. Have you ever memorized a quote? If you think hard about it, you can probably still remember it. I can still remember what my phone number was as a child. Memory will always be with you, you can always pull it out, it's perfect.

As you begin to exercise your mental muscles, as you change your perception by certain things you do, where your

communication can change, picture yourself with a healthy relationship, with healthy intercourse. What does that look like? What does that feel like? Use your imagination to the point where that's all you see. That's how things are made.

Tips to Take Away

1) Think about the word strength, what does it mean to you?

If it's all physical strength, just you and your body, think about the most important piece to strengthen. It's still your mind/your spirit. How do you develop that?

2) Do something different. Think differently. Change your life, change your thoughts. How do I change my thoughts? How often do you read the word of god, or even read at all? You might want to step back and start to read something like this book, something about intercourse, do something different.

3) Think about the six intellectual faculties. Ask yourself, which one do I need to work on to strengthen, to have better communication skills? Is it your perception, how you think about yourself? If so, a great book to read is *Psycho Cybernetics* by Maxwell Maltz. It's a great read and will help you with your perception and self-image.

4) Do we believe the lie, or do we believe the truth? There was a time that I believed the lie that I was dumb, that I couldn't learn. The truth is that God put genius in me. We just must tap into that, to step into our true form. Ask yourself what is truth?

“So, let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”

~2 Corinthians 9:7

“Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more.” ~H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Chapter Six – Give

Different Ways to Communicate

When we examine communication, we often think about talking to one another. When you're communicating with friends, or family, chances are you're using words. Most people understand that there are lots of different forms of communication, but we don't really think about them on a deeper level.

Take body language, for example. If I'm mad, my body will communicate that to whoever I'm around. When you walk in and your body language says you're mad, your spouse says, "what's wrong?" and you snap "nothing's wrong." They know it's a lie because your body language says otherwise.

It's interesting to be aware of body language, to think about how that works, not only in our home, but at our jobs as well. If we have a bad attitude and we're at work, that same attitude is going to spill into our working relationships. People pick up on our vibes even if we don't think that they understand us.

Think about your attitude. Attitude is an interesting word, it means "a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's behavior."

We've heard about attitude for most of our lives. As kids, people would tell us "if you had a better attitude you wouldn't get into so much trouble." Sports coaches would say "have a better attitude and I'll let you play." Your wife might give you *the look* and say, "you know, if you had a better attitude, you might get lucky in the bedroom."

If you lined up a hundred people and you asked everyone what attitude means, you'd get 95 different answers. Attitude expresses itself through the body and through the communication of the words you say, and through your posture. Whether you have a good or bad attitude, it comes across.

Here's something you can apply to your life that will change how you look at the world. **Your attitude is made up of your thoughts, feelings, and actions.** If you were to draw a circle around those three words (thoughts, feelings, and actions), understand that you are 100% responsible for everything in that circle.

You are responsible for your thoughts, how you think. You're responsible for your feelings, how you feel about something, good or bad, and about your actions.

Here's the thing, the moment you step outside of the circle you lose the game.

This is the part in life where we go, “the reason why I am the way I am, is because of other people, other circumstances, etc.” You can continue to do that forever. We blame other people, circumstances, and environment for our problems instead of taking responsibility.

Let’s work on changing your attitude by examining the different ways we communicate through sight, sound, and body. Take, for instance, you’re late for an appointment and you get behind somebody going slow. When you get to the appointment and the boss looks at you and his foot is tapping, his arms are crossed, that guy is screaming at you without any words.

You’ll say, “the reason I’m late is because I got behind somebody who was slow, and they made me late.”

No, it’s your fault. Maybe you left too late or spent too much time checking Facebook when you woke up. So, you step outside of your circle of responsibility and say it’s someone else’s fault.

When you begin to understand attitude, you start to release control. You can control your thoughts feelings and actions., You can’t control your environment, other people, or circumstances but you **can** control how you respond to those things.

Take a thought, for instance. Set this book aside for a moment and do the following. Close your eyes and think about something

really pleasant, a happy thought of some sort, maybe a vacation you really enjoyed. Put yourself somewhere where you're feeling the breeze, the sun on your face.

How does that make you feel? How will that make you act? It will make you feel calm and relaxed. You will be happy, more pleasant to be around, simply because you are thinking about being calm and relaxed.

I was talking to a client of mine and he told me about how happy he was at a certain place and how he had planned on visiting that same place for vacation. But, on the way home from the work the day before, he was thinking about all of the things he had left to do before vacation. Within a moment's time, he shifted his feeling and emotions to being stressed out about losing control, just because of his thoughts.

But, get this, as he walked through the door and his wife met him, she looked at him and said, "Wow, are you ok? You seem really troubled."

He relayed that message to his partner without saying a word. "Troubled" is the key word because he was troubled by losing control of the situation he was leaving behind at work to go on vacation.

Think about your actions. We know our thoughts will create an emotion, a feeling. If you take a moment and study how you

think, it's amazing how you can change your perception in an instant; for good or for bad. The gentleman in the example went from excited to troubled in just a few minutes on the drive home. He could have easily stepped into an even worse head space if he had focused on his frustration.

So, the next time your kid starts to act out and they're throwing a tantrum, think about where that's coming from. Your kid is expressing his attitude. Maybe he didn't think it was fair for him to clean up his room, or to go to bed earlier than his siblings. Frustration creates emotions inside of us and we begin to act out.

What's another way to communicate other than body language, or talking? Maybe through our ears. Is that communicating? Maybe we communicate something that we heard, and we react to that.

Here's an example, maybe your spouse or your boss said something, and you took it completely the wrong way. You heard it differently than how they said it. But, because of the way we heard it, we start to overanalyze, we start to obsess over it in our mind. We translate things in our own language and often wind up misunderstanding other people's intentions.

Take insecurity. If you're insecure, or if you have a low self-esteem, or if you don't have a great self-image, and someone says something to you, it's going to pass through your internal filter. It's going to a place where you're going to dissect that

phrase through the filter in your mind, to interpret it into another language. The interpretation might not be wildly different than the original wording, but all of a sudden, it creates a negative emotion and then here comes the action. All of us have gone through things like this.

Most of my life, I've been pretty misunderstood. People don't get me, and that's ok, and even today I have to be really careful about it. If I have an idea or opinion, and people start to debate with me, I instantly think that people are taking me the wrong way. So, I begin to think to myself, "they're attacking me."

Have you ever felt that way? Sure! But, it's important to understand that they really aren't attacking you, they're just voicing their opinion. However, because we want people to always agree with us, it can be a very frustrating experience.

How about communicating through touch? If you think about politicians, there are so many different ways to shake a hand. There's a handshake to convey deep caring, respect, and even dominance. There are many ways of communicating through touch. If we contemplate intercourse as a sexual encounter, think about the touching and the messages that you're sending to one another. Think about all of the things those touches convey to your loved one.

If you consider a young man and he has a sexual encounter with a woman, most of the time he will be immature and totally self-

centered. He will carry this attitude into the bedroom. Then, when they engage in the act of lovemaking, the young man will achieve his satisfaction and think, “yes, that was awesome!” Meanwhile his partner is likely thinking, “You’ve got to be kidding me. What about my needs?” So, as she communicates to him about what she needs, a lot of times the young men will get defensive.

In the kind of work I do, in coaching, speaking, and training, my intention is to raise people’s level of awareness. Part of my coaching program is teaching seven levels of awareness. If you want to better your communication skills and how to better have intercourse effectively (and by that, I mean communication), you have to raise your level of awareness.

So, what does awareness mean? It’s a kind of unveiling, of revealing. If I have something in my hand and I put a book in front of that item so that you can’t see it, you wouldn’t have a clue of what I was hiding. When I take the book away, you can see the color, size, and texture, whereas before it was hidden to you.

Here’s the frustrating thing about life and communication. There are so many different things that are hidden. That’s why we get the same results over and over again.

The first level of awareness is animal instinct, the fight or flight response. It’s the lowest level of awareness. People who live in

back alleys and in cardboard boxes are a great example. If you walk up to them and try to speak to those people, a lot of times they either run away or yell at you.

We don't have to be homeless to have the same response. If you're wanting to own your own business and after a few years I see you as Wal-Mart greeter, and I ask, "what happened?" you'll be offended, will probably fight back, thinking I am saying something insulting.

The 2nd level is mass consciousness, where you follow the crowd. Think back to your middle and high school days. If everyone's doing it, it must be ok. But, then you get in trouble and your dad said, "what are you doing? You know it's wrong, why'd you do it?"

You say, "I don't know."

But you do, it's because your peers do it. Think about the coffee pot culture at work or at a party at a friend's house. Listen to the language. Most people are typically saying the same thing, about the economy or about the weather, or about big political topics. We all jump on the same bandwagon but it's how we respond to those big issues that really matters.

The 3rd level of awareness is aspiration. This is where most people get stuck. After you've moved through the first two levels, you start to have ideas.

Aspiration is hoping for something, wishing for something. Nothing really happens here but you're thinking about "one day my dream will come true". This is where you wish, where you're watching television, dreaming about getting the perfect partner or winning the lottery.

Then, the courageous few will step out and say to themselves, ***"I'm going to take action."***

Those people are stepping into the 4th level of awareness, individuality. This is where all hell breaks loose. This is where you start to step in the direction of the dream. You decide to take that trip or write that book, and the fear starts to grip you because you realize that you don't actually know what to do. So, you return to the safe zones in your life, you fall right back into aspiration or mass consciousness or animal instinct because now you've failed. Nobody likes a failure, or at least that's what you think, but you have to fail in order to grow.

But, if you conquer the fear, you step into the next level of awareness. The 5th level is discipline. A martial arts master used to carry a cane and hit people on the back of the leg if they did something wrong. A student of his said, "that's not discipline that's training a circus animal. Discipline instead, is giving yourself a command, and following through with that."

When I heard that, I thought it was so powerful. We usually associate discipline with a bad thing but, at its essence, it's simply following through on a command for your own good.

You say, I'm going to follow my dreams, no matter what, and I'm going to put one foot in front of the other until I get there.

Think about Walt Disney. Disney was fired from a newspaper for lacking imagination and having no original ideas. He went bankrupt multiple times and, as he was building Disney Land, there was a time when all of his artists walked out on him. Think about how disciplined he had to stay to remain true to his goal. Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team and, after he was cut, he locked himself in his room and cried.

What possessed these greats to get back up and keep trying, was the next level of awareness. Experience. They had a dream, a passion, and wouldn't give up. Oprah Winfrey was demoted from her job as a news anchor because she wasn't well-suited for television. Think about these people who had the courage to move from aspiration to discipline to experience. I love to read stories like these. Steve Jobs was unceremoniously removed from the company he started. Einstein wasn't able to speak until he was almost four years old and his teacher said, he wouldn't amount to much. The Beatles were rejected by Decca recording because the studio believed that they had a terrible sound and had no future in show business.

But, because of their persistence and their passion, they moved through these levels and entered the seventh and final level, mastery. This area is where circumstances, environment, or people, don't control you anymore. Fear doesn't grip you, it's still there, of course, but you move beyond it. Fear knocked on the door, faith answered it, and no one was there.

So, ask yourself this question. What level are you at right now? The response I normally get is between three and four. That's where people are trying to move from thinking about their dreams to achieving their goals. If you think about the stick figure from the earlier chapter, and you start applying these things, you can change the way you think, the way you feel, and the way you act.

This chapter boils down to is giving. **The greatest thing we can do is overcome obstacles in our lives to then help other to overcome obstacles in their lives.** Giving is a place where you can come in communication. Ask yourself, how can I give myself, how can I step into this thing called intercourse and really understand the different way to communicate? How can I give to my partner, to my kids? How can I give myself away and use my gifts in a way that God intended? You're not doing this just for yourself, you're doing this for other people.

Tips to Take Away

1) Study the different styles of communication and how we respond to one another. Think about how you enter a conversation, many times we have that communication before we ever open our mouths to speak. We're thinking about different scenarios before we speak, whether we are mad or glad. Different things will trigger different responses.

2) Go back to: what is attitude? This is the thing that really freed me up, when I began to understand what attitude was, that I could control thoughts, feelings, and actions, I was granted freedom., Nothing is more stressful than trying to control things that you cannot control. Let go and let God.

3) Consider the levels of awareness. Think about where you're at right now, what level are you at. If you're at a 3 or 4, think about what it will take to move you from 4 to 5. Once you have an awareness, we have a model and some tools to apply to our lives because now you know how to move to the next level. So, if you're going to move from 4 to 5, that you're moving from action to discipline.

4) The ability to give is the most important process in this chapter. Scriptures say whatever you sow, you reap. If you sow corn, you won't reap peas. So, if I sow a seed of not giving, I'll

get nothing but if I sow a seed of giving, I reap abundance. We enter a realm of quantum leaps when we learn how to give.

“A smile is the light in your window that tells others that there is a caring, sharing person inside.” ~ Denis Waitley

“That the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.” ~ Philemon 1:6

Chapter 7 – Share

I've been a business coach and a peer life coach since 2006. I've had the privilege of working with hundreds of clients. I must say, after having coached for so long, and having worked with so many different people, I've gotten really good at intercourse.

Remember what intercourse is: the art of communication with an individual or group.

A lot of times when I'm working with a new client, I'll ask them the question, "have you ever had a coach before?"

Usually they say, "no, and I don't know what it means." So, they ask, "can you explain it to me?"

I answer, "a coach doesn't really have the answer."

When I say that, they look at me in disbelief.

I have two different modalities. One is mentoring, and one is coaching. I have owned my own business for 30 years and, growing up, my family ran a successful bakery. Business is in my blood and when it comes to mentoring, I can share examples

of what I've found that works, or doesn't work, and I can bring the answer in for them.

Coaching, on the other hand, means that I don't have the answer for them. I ask empowering questions to help them find the answers. Watching that and seeing the revelation, when the light goes on, is amazing. It empowers them to such a level that it moves them to a place where they can fully appreciate the value of coaching.

When most people think about coaching, they think about sports. But a coach in a typical sporting example, is actually more of a mentor. Most coaches played sports in their youth and can show people how to play. But, they also empower players by asking questions and drawing the best out of them. It's a blend of mentoring and empowerment. They know the attitude of winning, that it takes perseverance to get through.

When I offer a free one-hour coaching session, it's often a very intimate form of intercourse. When a client first comes in, I ask them questions. I'm looking for two things. First, I want to see if they're coach-able. Second, I need to see if we connect. There has to be a connection where we can build trust between one another and move into a whole other dimension of empowerment and success.

What does empowerment mean? It's a process of becoming stronger; it's developing more confidence and gaining control of one's life and reclaiming one's rights.

If you think about your environment when you were growing up, maybe you had no rights as a kid, or you had no empowerment because you were put down a lot. Many of us don't even know who we are when we're kids. Then, you grow into an awkward teenager and then you enter into an equally awkward period of young adulthood. As you get older, you may find you have a feeling of being lost.

I had a client once who had a job for 10 years and when she lost her job, she also lost her sense of purpose. She felt like she had no self-worth. Because of her perception, she had wrapped up her true identity in that job and gave it away completely.

We do that in marriage too, don't we? Maybe the wife is constantly complaining, or the husband resents that he gave away his prime years to raising a family. It's because we've lost prime intercourse. (The more I use that, the more something will click in your mind. One day you will look at the word intercourse more as a form of communication and you will understand how powerful it is.)

When you examine a relationship and a marriage, most young couples lose their identity trying to please their partners. You wind up walking on eggshells around one another once the

honeymoon glow has worn off. The men may feel less masculine and the women feel like they have lost their sense of security and purpose. Somewhere along the line, we must become empowered again.

If you're trying to please other people all the time, you will begin to lose yourself. Maybe you grew up in an environment when one or another parent was more dominant, and you view that relationship as the norm. When we grow up and enter into relationships, that identity comes through. If we stop and ask, "who am I, who's this person that's standing here talking and sharing his stories with you?"

That's a really good question to ask yourself and as you begin to uncover that and look in the mirror, you will discover your true identity. You will begin to empower yourself. All of that comes down to a simple question. **Who are you?** When you start to ask yourself that question, you'll eventually find the answer.

So, who's Dean Storer? Am I a writer, a preacher, a mentor, a coach, a father, a husband? I'm all of those things but that's not who I am. Those are labels I've taken on. That's what I have done, but that is not the sum of my parts. I am a spiritual being, a divine creation. I have a father who's in heaven and that is God, who sent his son Jesus Christ to die on the cross for me. When I accepted that into my life, I was born again.

Remember the scripture about Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night in John 3:5.

*“How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked.
“Can he enter his mother’s womb a second time to be born?”
Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I tell you, no one can enter the
kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.
Flesh is born of flesh, but spirit is born of the Spirit....”*

I didn’t know who I was until I asked Christ to come into my life and my spirit was born again. But even then, when I was 24 years old, it took me a long time to find out who I really was, to find out my life’s true purpose. I think it’s a lifelong journey, it’s something we’re all evolving towards.

Look at Peter in the scriptures, he was a loudmouth, someone who was very spontaneous and headstrong. But Christ looked at that same man and said; *“thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.” – Matthew 16:18*

At the end of Peter’s life, he knew who he was. He understood that he was a spiritual being and he acted according to his faith.

**I’m a human being having a spiritual experience, not a
spiritual being having a human experience.**

There’s nothing like having no hope and no purpose in your life. I don’t know if you’ve ever been in that situation or if you know someone who has, but it’s a terrible thing to live always waiting

for the other shoe to drop. Those kinds of people have lost themselves somewhere along the way and they give up on the hope of ever feeling fulfilled.

As a coach, my primary goal is to empower my clients. It's in my nature to help people. Look at things like natural disasters or acts of terrorism. In times of tragedy, there is no race, there is no color. We empower one another because we want to help one another.

Contemplate the question "Who Am I?" Analyze your answer, concentrate on it, don't let it go. Be like a Pitbull, don't let it go.

Start to ask yourself even deeper questions, like "why am I here?" and "what am I doing?" Why is a really powerful question. Write out the questions and your answers. Pursue those answers.

We've all seen those movies where people lose their memories, like *Overboard* with Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn. Those stories are usually very funny, but they are also great examples of how different your life becomes if you lose your identity. In the movie, the main characters lived happily ever after but that's not always the case. Older people may lose themselves or die before understanding their truest nature.

Personally, I couldn't imagine losing my memory, not knowing my name or who I was, or who my loved ones were. So, how can

we help people discover who they are? How can I empower someone else?

You might be saying to yourself, “I just work a job, I just go home every day to my kids. Sure, in my heart, I want to help people but how?” The easiest way to help one another is to share.

Sometimes we don't think our story really matters or that our story won't make a difference. We may feel hopeless when someone tells us their stories and we can't do anything but listen. How can we help someone who wants to do nothing more than complain and get things off their chest? What if you took the time to interrupt them and took the time to ask them an empowering question instead? You don't know how to stop them or to get away from them, so try to ask them a question instead.

Take some time now to write down some empowering questions. Remember that empowerment is about claiming one's rights. Somewhere along the line, the person who keeps releasing their negative thoughts has lost themselves. You unwittingly enter into intercourse with that person whether you want to or not so, since you are already engaged, why not try to help them find some answers?

I'd like to give you some examples, but every scenario is different. Empowering a homeless man who's lost everything would be different from empowering a wife who's in an abusive

marriage. Giving money to the homeless man could potentially put gas on the fire.

You must ask if the person really wants the help and if they are really ready to change. If someone isn't receptive to help, you can wind up making things worse for everyone involved.

Remember, I'm always on the lookout for new clients, searching for coachable people. I am looking for someone who feels stuck in their everyday routine but who really wants out. Those are people you can help. Ask yourself, "do you want an answer to this question or this problem you're sharing?"

Here's an example of something I did with all of my children at one time or another. One day my daughter, Heather, called me, crying hysterically. I said, "hold on, hold on, where are you?"

And she said, "I'm outside of your house."

I said, "Well come inside."

When I opened the door, she ran inside and fell on the couch, still crying. After she got done with her emotional upheaval, we started to talk. I asked her (as I had asked all of my children in similar situations), "You know that I have two hats that I can wear. One hat is a fix it hat, and one is a venting hat. Are you just venting, or do you want me to fix it?"

That question alone has saved me a ton of stress in my relationship with my kids. If they just want to vent, they can vent and I know that they don't need my help. The majority of the time, the girls would pick the venting hat. That's much better than trying to fix something that can't be fixed. By asking that question, I empower myself and I empower them.

Now, let's put on my other professional hat. I'm also a peer life coach. That means that I'm your peer. I can relate to clients on deeper level, as someone who's been through what they've been through. A lot of times, I will share stories with those people.

Think about your story, your life. How could that empower someone else?

You might say, "I don't have an office, I don't have any credentials, I can't help anyone."

If you're a parent, think about all of the experience you've gained along the way. You want to talk about leadership, parents have some of the best skills in the world. So, as you find out who you are, and as you share those experiences, you empower other people.

Think about the art of sharing. What does it mean to share? The Webster's definition is the joint use of resources or space. The phrases, "some for me, some for you", and "sharing is caring"

are also part of our vernacular. It can also mean to give portions of a whole to others, to divide or to ration.

Now, here's an interesting twist to throw in the spokes of this wheel. Remember when you were a kid and your mom had a friend over who had a child of similar age and that kid went into your bedroom and grabbed your favorite toy? I bet you grabbed it away from him and he grabbed it back and, before you knew it, you were in a screaming match because you don't want to share your toy.

Now your mom comes in and says to you, "you need to share your toy." And you said, "But I don't want to." And she says, "but you're going to," and she gives the toy to the other kid. You're mad then, probably on the verge of a full-blown tantrum. You didn't want to share, but you were forced to, and the other kid messes up your favorite toy.

As we get older, we remember those times. We still have toys, but we still don't want to share. Would you just give your car keys to a coworker who wanted to take it for a ride around town? Think about things like that in your life. Sometimes it's hard to recognize where our knee jerk reactions come from.

How about this one. Maybe you're in sales and you're taught how to pick up the phone and do cold-calls to get business. You feel awkward and you don't want to do it. Maybe you're at a party and you're in this environment. You're supposed to mingle

and share but, your subconscious mind remembers the rule, “Don’t speak to strangers.” It feels so strange to open up to people because on a deep level, we remember that we were taught to avoid strangers.

Think back to your belief system and your culture again. Maybe it’s time to divorce yourself from some of those old ideas. We’ve all heard, knowledge is power. But what about sharing knowledge? In his book, *Think and Grow Rich*, Napoleon Hill makes the following observation, “Knowledge is only potential power. It becomes power only when, and if, it is organized into definite plans of action, and directed to a definite end.”

Sharing knowledge is sharing empowerment.

Here’s what so awesome about wanting to grow and wanting to reach the next level. When you allow someone like a mentor or coach to come into your life and ask empowering questions you will begin to understand where those issues come from. When you finally reach a level of awareness, it’s amazing.

Maybe you have money issues because your dad couldn’t give you two dollars for a snack whenever you asked as a kid. That’s the mold you were shaped in.

What do you believe? Who is God? What do you believe in relationships or marriages? What do you believe about family? What is your belief towards these questions that I’m asking you?

What do you believe about money? What do you believe about vacations, about retirement, about down time? What do you believe in sharing?

When you ask yourself questions like this, you will begin to come face to face with what you are and what you believe. So, for the longest time, remember, I thought Jesus was a long-haired hippy guy. I didn't know anything about church, I was working for my dad by the time I was eight years old. The first time someone confronted me about Jesus, I already had an idea that he was a hippie guy, someone like me. Some people believe that God is this great big, huge, person with a big cane and a white beard, who watched us at all times, waiting to punish us for our sins.

It's vitally important to examine your beliefs. The only one I know is based on Christ dying on the cross for us, but yours may be different. Think about marriage. Go back and examine your parent's relationship and you'll understand what marriage is really about. I've heard stories from women who were abused by their fathers, whose fathers were alcoholics, etc. Those same women married men exactly like their fathers. That sounds really twisted to people who grew up in healthy homes, but it happens all the time. That's their reality, that's their truth.

Think about money. Maybe you were raised in a household where your father and mother talked about people who were

rich, who only got money by being dishonest rather than by working hard. Anyone who's rich must be dishonest. So, you carry in your mind that you can never be rich or wealthy because you have to do it dishonestly.

Really begin to examine things like that. Look at your relationships and ask your loved ones about their answers to the same questions. You have to really trust those people though, you have to be careful because if a person feels threatened by a question they will attack.

So, when you really want to move to that next level, to enter this place of learning and asking empowering questions, try finding a coach that you connect with. Empowering questions can change your life and bring you to a place where you can see your dreams fulfilled.

Tips to Take Away

- 1) Understand what Napoleon Hill said about knowledge only being potential power.** It's one thing to read a book or attend a seminar, or even get a coach, if you don't put it into action, nothing happens.

- 2) What does it mean to share?** What does it mean to really share your story with someone or to ask someone an empowering question? Think of yourself as a spiritual being, as someone whose God lives within us. God will empower other people to help them overcome so that they can help others.

- 3) What does empowerment really mean?** It means to gain back one's life. To say to yourself no more, I'm not going to belittle myself. I will take SID (self-induced doubt) and tell it, you're not welcome on my shoulder anymore, I'm gaining control of my life and I'm getting back my rights.

- 4) Write it down.** Ask yourself questions that are going to empower you and be sure to write them down. Write down your answers too. Pick those categories that you struggle with and ask, does this help me, does it serve me, does it empower me? If it doesn't, uncover it and begin to change it. You can rewrite your story if you only ask yourself and take action.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”~ 2 Timothy 4:7

“There is no finish line to leadership.”~ Julia Hartz

“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” ~ Hebrews 12:2

Chapter 8 - Finish

In the church I went to years ago in Arizona, we used to evangelize using what we called outreach teams. We'd go out neighborhoods and knock on doors and ask if we could pray for people. In the beginning, it was nerve-racking because I had never done it before.

I remember, so distinctly, that there was a time when we went to a middle-class neighborhood, we prayed for people and saw many people give their lives to Christ. I remember we walked across the street and I noticed immediately that the other side of the street was completely different. It had a different feel.

I didn't understand about a spiritual world at that time, I didn't understand spiritual cultures. But, I knew that when we walked across the street, something felt different. I remember knocking on the door of one home and saw how different that person lived from her neighbor.

There was a different culture across the street and it was clear that the people in this neighborhood were more impoverished. As the owner came to the door, the stench in her house was so strong it burned my throat.

As I began to witness to her, it was mind-boggling to me that her life was so different. When I returned home, I meditated on the

woman's situation and read various passages from the bible. That's when I finally understood that we live in a spiritual world.

Often, you can trace welfare recipients six or seven generations back through the system. That's because they have become prisoners of their spiritual environment. If you look at other countries, some of them are bound in poverty. We went to Africa a year ago and we found people who lived day to day in cardboard boxes, in threadbare clothes, trapped in a loop of pain and hunger.

Think about the chapters you've read, about the topics we've covered. Think about love, understanding, listening, being broken and being healed, about giving and sharing. If you boil it down again, life is largely made of pure communication. Think about your own mindset right now. When you hear the word intercourse, your first thought, even now, is probably about sex.

I think our world consists of a lot more than just the world we can see. Go back and think about your culture, how you grew up. Think about your belief. **What is it you believe in and why do you believe it? Where does belief really come from?** It's usually through our perception.

If you go back in history, brilliant people wouldn't even consider some great ideas because they didn't even imagine the goal, much less the solution. Most of the time, we don't even think about our belief systems because we were raised to think and act

a certain way. Hatred and selfishness, pride and arrogance, all have a spirit behind the words. The communication you had growing up shaped you more deeply than you know.

How does a person become a leader? Being a leader in a military atmosphere means different things based on rank. Many times, we think of a leader as someone who is a president or a mayor, or a general. But, have you ever stopped and thought about your leadership ability and what you communicate about your skills?

We need followers just as much as we need leaders but, I think, there is some quality of leadership within everyone. All you have to do is go into a situation where there is high risk, where there is tragic chaos, and you will find people rising to leadership.

Consider your relationship with your family, how you communicate (or the lack thereof). **How do you wish to be remembered at the end of your life?**

This chapter is called “Finish” for a reason. When you’re laying in your coffin, surrounded by people who loved you, what do you think that they would be saying about you? Wouldn’t it be cool to be a fly on the wall and be in that audience to witness that funeral, to hear exactly how you are going to be remembered?

Have you ever thought about doing a eulogy for yourself while you were still alive? What might people say about you in private, at the lunch after the funeral?

If you don't like your eulogy right now, you can always change things.

How did you become the person you are today? Is it just that you wake up each morning and do the same routine, going through your day, and time flies by and it feels like nothing happened? You find yourself wondering how you got stuck. All you have to do to change your life is to understand your culture, your belief, and your language.

How can someone like James Patterson write dozens of books, when someone with just as much talent might be living in extreme poverty?

I know what it's like to be homeless, to live in the woods in order to save up enough money to live on my own. How did I wind up there and how did I make it out to come here? It's all about the power of thought, about belief.

Eight years ago, I was living in Bend Oregon. Before then, I was in Flagstaff, Arizona, and before that I had lived in Montana and New Hampshire. I've traveled all over the United States and, as I traveled, I would always wind up accidentally leaving items

behind, never to be found again. I didn't have a purpose back then. I didn't understand why I was on this planet.

Think about your leadership ability in relation to your family your neighborhood, etc. How do you communicate, how do you have intercourse with your family or relatives? There again, your mind goes to that place with the other meaning of the word intercourse. But, really consider your relationships, also think about what you say about yourself. My parents never taught me about money, my environment told me that we could never do anything because we couldn't afford it. Through the communication of our own mind, that environment shapes our perception and our belief about ourselves.

Now, let's examine a topic called neurolinguistic programming. Neuro-linguistic programming is an approach to communication, personal development, and psychotherapy created by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in California, United States in the 1970s.

An expert came in to my Toastmaster's group one day with three photos of identical sunsets. He then showed us with three different types of picture frames (some were plain, some were colored, etc.). As he put the frames around each one of the pictures, the photos seemed to change and to look different than the ones beside it.

I thought "no way, there has to be a trick".

Think about us as humans. We all need the same basic things; we need heat and food and shelter. Under our skin, we are all the pretty much the same. But, in our minds, we put frames around people. It's the frames that shape how we communicate with one another and judge one another based on our frames.

In the South, there is a lot of prejudice but there is prejudice in the rest of the world too. We all laugh, cry, feel pride and hurt, and love. When you take the frames away from those pictures, they are still exactly the same.

What is the frame you put around your family? Look at the frame that we, as people, put around our government. There are so many different frames from so many groups. Their belief system is how they perceive things to be true, how they form their basic beliefs. That's why we have arguments and fights, all conflict is because my perception is right and yours is wrong.

How can we begin to understand one another? How can we make a better world? We need to start with ourselves. Let's break down the term neurolinguistic. Neuro means: reacting to nerves, linguistic is about language, and programming is about code in a computer. Many of us have heard about how they program elephants to be docile and to perform tricks. When elephants are babies, they tie their legs to a stake with a heavy chain and, as the baby grows, it finally stops tugging against the chain. When they become adults, a flimsy rope tied to a small

stake can contain a massive animal because the elephant believes, deep in its mind, that it cannot ever break free of that chain around its foot.

Think about how your beliefs frame your life. Are you still hanging on to the same belief systems? If they don't serve you, get rid of them, they're lies. But, because they have a different color of frame we call it truth.

How can you change your frame, the thing that generates the same results over and over? How can we, as human beings, overcome our programming?

When I was growing up, one of the frames my dad put around me was this. He had road rage and whenever he would drive, he believed that the road was his and everyone else needed to get out of his way. One of the things that he programmed into me is that when people would come up right behind him, riding his bumper, he would hit his brakes, making the other person slam to a stop. The other person would get mad and my dad would get into conflict with the other person.

I did exactly the same thing when I became a driver. I would get prepared, watching in the mirror, waiting until they got close enough to make them slam to a stop.

Years ago, I wanted to change that programming within me. My road rage was pretty intense, and I think that a lot of people can

relate to that. We get so frustrated. Driving is a communication skill within itself, from the honking and the gestures (with not all of our fingers).

I remember one time when I was following my wife and one of our daughters over a mountain pass in Oregon. As we were going up, another driver came roaring around me and cut off my girls. He almost forced them to ram into a ditch.

Now, obviously, I hadn't changed my frame at that point. So I took off after the guy. My pedal was slammed down hard and I barreled up the mountain after him in a blackout state. I finally caught up to him and tried to force him to pull over. That's dangerous, sure, but that's all I knew. My father created negative leadership by teaching me that road rage was normal, and I could have died by driving off the mountain.

I wanted to change that frame in my life after that. I wanted to become better at intercourse. Every day afterwards, I found that people would always tailgate me, and I had to fight the urge to brake. So, I opened myself up to suggestions. When you open yourself up to change, and change happens, that's remarkable.

So, how do you change something? I remember reading something about a person who was talking about how to deal with negative people or experiencing road rage, and they said this, "when you have a family event with a person you can't

stand, this negative response starts building in your mind. The same happens with road rage.

Soon the negative feeling takes over you can't see any positive way out of the situation. So, what you do, is imagine bubbles filling your car. Imagine that the word "love" is inside of each one of these bubbles. Think about a car full of balloons but make them bubbles of love. When you're ready, imagine rolling down your window and seeing bubbles pop all over the other person's car."

The first time I tried that, the other driver backed off. I did it again and again and every time, the other drivers would back off. Now, when I go out on the street, the only time I have road rage is when I disconnect and react immediately to a situation. I don't have any altercations, I don't have any problems with other drivers. My wife and kids and grandkids will even remind me about "bubbles of love" if I start to act irritated on the road.

So, how do you change your frame? Easy, you make a new one. How do you see yourself? What is the frame that you have around you?

Let's go back to the point where you're at your funeral or writing your own eulogy. Imagine what you'd like people to think about you when you're in that coffin. Write down how you want to be remembered. In the book, 7 Habits, they say, "start with the end in mind, and work backwards".

In business I say to imagine the lifestyle you want, the goal you want, and start planning with that in mind. If you look inside your own heart right now and you say, my gosh, I don't have anything to write, I don't have anything good to say.

Think about the qualities you have, think about your kindness. Now, put that frame around your lifestyle. Think about the communication that's going on after the funeral, eating potato salad, and talking about you. "Yeah, Bill, he was ok, he was a good guy." What do you think they might say about you instead? Step back and consider how you would love for them to talk about you, to have intercourse with you even after you're dead.

Write a fake eulogy about your life, about your best qualities.

We can change who we are. We can change our selfishness to kindness to that of giving. We can change road rage to bubbles of love. I carry bubbles of love with me to this day and, if I ever forget, I am reminded by my wonderful family.

Here it is, my final gift to you, at the end of this book. I want you to sit down in a chair, close your eyes, and be covered in bubbles of love.

Tips to Take Away

1) What does your frame look like? Is it a frame of sadness and shame or is it one of brilliant, happy, thoughts? Is it a frame of strength and leadership? Is it a frame of kindness and love?

2) Think about how you can change one aspect of your life. Don't try to change the whole package, just think about one thing you'd really like to see differently about your life. Think about how you want to end the year. What would you like to change between now and the end of the year? Move towards that, write it out.

3) Think about how you're programmed. How do you always react to something? Think about how you can change that behavior and drill down to find the "why". As you develop the "Why" you will find your true purpose.

4) Practice "Bubbles of Love". As you're driving down the road and you have people cutting you off, or riding your bumper, I want you to practice this before you get in the car. If you're in the home and your kids are watching tv and you're reading this book, I want you to practice bubbles of love. Practice picturing bubbles filling the home and release them onto your family, see

them popping and releasing love. Do this before you go out and practice handling road rage.

About Dean

Dean Storer is an international speaker and coach with an in-depth understanding of the ability of the human spirit to overcome obstacles. With very humble beginnings as the son of a baker in Washington state, Storer understands the struggles of everyday people to make a living while trying to find their dream. Having personally experienced the height of joy as well as disappointment in his personal and professional life, he leads individuals on a path of discovery into their true and unique spirit showing them the way to overcome.

Driven by a strong sense of faith in God, Storer attributes many of his accomplishments to the understanding that there is more for each and every person than what they believe to be possible. He knows that often another person's faith in you is enough to turn your life from a downward spiral of helplessness to a fulfilling and rewarding existence. Store has committed his life to the belief that every person is valuable and not only can contribute to society but can excel beyond their wildest dreams no matter what their present circumstances.

Storer has taught meditation and coached individuals and groups and frequently relates his story of overcoming Adult A.D.D. to reach his dreams.

Want to Learn More?

Pick up a copy of Dean's first book *The Make it Happen Man: 10 Ways to Turn Obstacles into Stepping Stones*

Or, connect with him online at deanstoreroaching.com

