

# **Sparking Your Success:**

**Unlocking Your Potential  
Greatness**



**Mark Matteson**

Copyright © 2017 Mark Matteson all rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission from Mark Matteson.

**Limit of Liability and Disclaimer of Warranty:** The author has used his best efforts in preparing this book. Every attempt has been made to source all quotes. He makes no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of this book's content and specifically disclaims any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales representatives or written sales materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for your situation. You should consult with a professional where appropriate. Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages.

Interior Book Design: Fracica Enterprises, Inc. [www.fracicaenterprises.com](http://www.fracicaenterprises.com)

## 1. Self Help

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

## What people are saying about this book:

*“Mark has a wonderful, almost folksy way, of cutting through the clutter and getting to the heart of a subject. His book is a fun read. He challenges the reader to look at life and business and to go beyond what’s easy. I was happy to share it with my sales team!”*

-Chuck Lencheck - Senior Vice President - Service Partners

*“Mark Matteson continues to reinvent the landscape for business success. This is a must read for our millennials.”*

-John Zilla, Regional VP Col Webb

*“Mark has a knack for getting to the heart of an issue because he sees things from a unique perspective. He uses a combination of humor and humanity to help people break through the barriers they have created to achieve success. This new e-book may change your life...”*

-Lauri Rollings, Executive Director, Plumbing Mechanical Sheet Metal Contractor Alliance

*“Mark has a unique and insightful way of offering principles of success that combine his experiences through story telling as well as his timely sense of humor. “Sparking Your Success” is a must read for anyone that has a desire to reach their potential. This book will certainly inspire growth while also providing ideas to implement in your daily life. Thank you Mark!”*

-Coach Ken Lolla, University of Louisville Men’s Soccer

*"I have had the genuine pleasure to know Mark for several years and consider him a friend and mentor. He truly is a "spark" in the lives of those he touches. I believe in helping people to achieve their full potential – myself included! "Sparkling Success" refreshed me on past learnings and inspired me with new ideas to push myself and those around me to become our best selves."*

-Ryan Kalmbach, CEO Johnstone Supply Fresno,

*When I read Freedom From Fear about 15 years ago I contacted Mark and told him there was more useful material in fewer pages than any book I had ever read, and I am a student of personal growth material. Well, he has done it again! Sparking Your Success is a short read packed with useful, timeless information. Thanks Mark for continuing to publish books that change lives.*

-Rick Busby, President, Busby's Heating and Air Conditioning, Augusta, GA

*"Mark does an incredible job of connecting with his readers. He does this through his own personal stories and life experiences. He writes as if he knows exactly what is bounding around in my head. I also truly appreciate how each chapter ends with a series of questions for the reader to think about and answer – this book is really a tool that you can refer back to regularly."*

-Tom Jackson, CEO, Jackson Systems, Indianapolis, IN

*"No one wants to meet a lesser version of themselves after they die only to realize the person they could have become had they not squandered their potential, seized opportunities, taken a few risks, and lived with passion and love full out. Mark Matteson provides a 13-chapter roadmap you can read in less time than it takes to make and eat dinner to ensure your life does not pass and end with regrets, empty promises, unfulfilled dreams, unrealized goals, or wasted talent. Thanks for making the process digestible and doable for all. I cannot wait to share your message."*

~Drew Cameron, HVAC Solutions and Energy Design Systems, Pocomson, PA

*“The artist must create a spark before he can make a fire and before art is born, the artist must be ready to be consumed by the fire of his own creation.”*  
-Auguste Rodin

*“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”*  
-Albert Schweitzer

# ***Table of Contents***

Introduction .....	7
Chapter 1 - Potential .....	10
Chapter 2 - Awareness.....	13
Chapter 3 - Comfort Zones.....	17
Chapter 4 - Self-Talk .....	21
Chapter 5 - Habits .....	24
Chapter 6 - Attitude .....	30
Chapter 7 - Goals .....	36
Chapter 8 - Hour of Power.....	44
Chapter 9 - Job, Career, Calling (Extra-Mile).....	48
Chapter 10 - WINS! .....	52
Chapter 11 - Consistency .....	59
Chapter 12 - Other-Centered Philosophy .....	64
Chapter 13 - Helping Others.....	69
Afterward.....	73
About Mark Matteson .....	74

## Introduction

*“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”*

-Albert Schweitzer

You are the only one that truly understands what sparks your own success. For some of us, getting cut from a sports team will do it. Others, it's a well meaning friend or relative or coach that tells us we can't or shouldn't do something we really want to do. What motivated you as a teenager will in all likelihood motivate you as an adult. It's a matter of getting in touch with your inner locus of control. Your inner drive. Your WANT To vs. your HAVE To. For whatever reason, be it nature or nurture, if you tell a "Matteson" we can't do something we really want to do, it sparks something in us to prove you wrong. My father had it, I have it, my boys have it. How about you?

In this little e-book, I will attempt to give you the tools for change. This information has come from 59 years of experience, trial and error, success and temporary setback. You will find a simple series of steps to unlock your potential. A proven method of assisting you in realizing your own personal or professional greatness. If you read this all the way through (it should take the slowest reader an hour

or two to finish!) it will change your life and you will never be the same.

Now let's get started "Sparking Your Success." From a little spark may burst a giant flame of achievement. With patience and persistence, even the smallest act of discipleship or the tiniest ember of belief can become a blazing bonfire of a consecrated life. In fact, that's how most bonfires begin, as a simple spark. Think of this book as a box of magic matches. If your flame goes out, you need only light another match to enjoy the warmth of your own bonfire...

Perhaps the best way to get the most out of this book will be to:

- 1) Read it all the way through the first time like a novel to understand the overview.
- 2) The second reading, take one chapter at a time with a pen in hand and your trusty journal (or simply print and bind).
- 3) Invest 20-minutes a day reading each chapter slowly, writing down answers to the questions and reflecting upon each lesson. When an "Ah-ha" happens, capture it on paper!
- 4) Take some kind of action. "Faith without works is dead."
- 5) Share it with someone you love. It's called "Dual-Plane Learning" You will insinuate the information into your subconscious and make it your own.
- 6) Revisit it again in a few months and calibrate your progress.



- 7) Celebrate your WINS and begin the process over again as you reach and achieve the goals you have set for yourself.

Let's begin. After all, it's so warm by the fire...

## Chapter 1 - Potential



*“The spread of civilization may be likened to a fire; first, a feeble spark, next a flickering flame, then a mighty blaze, ever increasing in speed and power.”*  
-Nikolas Tesla, Inventor, Pioneer

Just what exactly are you capable of? Are you manifesting all that is in you? If we are honest with ourselves, the answer, for most of us, is no. Potential is like an iceberg. 90% of it is unseen. The world only sees 10% or less. Margaret Mead once said, “Most human beings operate on less than 5% of their potential.” Let’s see if we can push your iceberg a little higher above the waterline for all the world to see.

Born in 1860, artist Grandma Moses spent decades living the rural, agricultural life that she would later feature in her paintings. She only began devoting

herself to art when she was in her seventies. In 1938, an art collector discovered her work. Completely self-taught, Moses soon became famous for her images of country life. She died in 1961 at the age of 101. In 1905, Moses returned to New York State with her family. She and her husband operated a farm in Eagle Bridge, New York. Moses later began dabbling in painting, creating her first work on a fire-board in her home in 1918. She occasionally painted after that, but she didn't devote herself to her craft until much later. Moses suffered a great loss in 1927 with the death of her husband, and she sought ways to keep busy in her grief. By the mid-1930s, Moses, then in her seventies, devoted most of her time to painting. Her first big break came in 1938.

She had some of her works hanging in a local store, and an art collector named Louis J. Caldor saw them and bought them all. The following year, Moses had some of her paintings shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in an exhibition of unknown artists. She went on to have her first one-woman show in New York as well as had her picturesque works displayed at Gimbels, a famous New York department store, the following year. To celebrate her 100th birthday, New York governor Nelson Rockefeller declared September 7, 1960, as "Grandma Moses Day." He repeated the honor the following year to mark the artist turning 101. By this time, however, Moses was in ill health. She passed away on December 13, 1961, in a medical center in Hoosick Falls, New York.

During her career, Moses created roughly 1,500 works of art. Her paintings still remain popular today and provide a glimpse into America's pastoral past. According to an Associated Press report, President John F. Kennedy remembered Moses as "a beloved figure from American life." He also said that "The directness and vividness of her paintings restored a primitive freshness to our perception of the American scene."

It's never too late to start anew. Grandma Moses proved that. So did Ray Kroc at 53 years young when he first approached the McDonald Brothers in San Bernadino, CA about franchising their system of making hamburgers.

No one told Colonel Sanders he couldn't sell his recipe for making chicken at 65 years young.

What area of your life would you like to improve?  
Why is that important to you?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Chapter 2 - Awareness



*"I think it's imperative to follow your heart and choose a profession you're passionate about, and if you haven't found that 'spark' yet, if you're not sure what you want to do with your lives - be persistent until you do."*

-Steve Kerr, Championship NBA Player, and Coach

How good are you at your present job? What percentage of effectiveness are you operating at currently?

I am constantly amazed how stupid I was two years ago and the cycle keeps repeating. When we have a shift in awareness, everything changes. I was a better parent when our second son came along. Why? Experience. As parents we do the best job we can until our awareness changes. So just what are the factors that affect our current awareness?

The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance. My mentor Jack Canfield once said, “By taking the time to stop and appreciate who you are and what you've achieved - and perhaps learned through a few mistakes, stumbles and losses - you actually can enhance everything about you. Self-acknowledgment and appreciation are what give you the insights and awareness to move forward toward higher goals and accomplishments.”

Let us not look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but around in awareness.

“A king and his troops were going through a forest. The King saw an old man cutting trees. Taking pity on him, he asked the Minister to give that old man an acre of sandalwood trees. The Minister took care of that instantly. A couple of years later, the King and his troops were again passing through the forest and in fact, they were passing by the area where there were sandalwood trees given away to that old man. The king noticed that most of the sandalwood trees were gone and in one corner the old man was there. He was burning a couple of sandalwood trees. Upon talking to him, the Minister found out that he was burning those trees to collect coal BECAUSE that is what he does – sells coal and makes money.”

This is a simple story about awareness. Sometimes we have riches right in front of our eyes but if we can't see them as such, they are not riches to us.

So, the question is: Which “sandalwood trees” are you burning in your life because you want to “sell coal?”

In 1993, when my boys were seven and four years old I began a new nightly ritual. After I read to them and we said our prayers, I asked them two simple questions each night:

- 1) What was the most FUN you had today?
- 2) What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

After a year of this simple process I began to learn what was truly important to my boys. Christmas night in 1994, I asked Evan, who was five years old, “What are you looking forward to tomorrow?” He paused for a moment and replied, “Playing with the box the refrigerator came in!” A little surprised, I said, “What about the Nintendo?” (It was a \$150!) “Oh, yes, I will play with that too. But that box, I am going to put my sleeping bag in it and spend the night!” Shocked, I replied, “Like a homeless guy?” “Whatever...” was all he said. That night, we both slept in the box. It was a shift in awareness for me. Until we ask the right questions, our awareness remains the same.

Awareness comes from a simple three step process, “Bad Judgment, Experience, Good Judgment.” Capturing the lessons in our journals is a great way to learn the lessons so we can make new mistakes.

I teach sales people to ask two simple questions after every sales call.

- 1) What went well on that call?
- 2) What can you improve and or do better next time?

How about you? Are you capturing the lessons along the way? What can you do to shift your awareness?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Every human has four endowments - self awareness, conscience, independent will and creative imagination. These give us the ultimate human freedom... The power to choose, to respond, to change.*  
-Stephen Covey



## Chapter 3 - Comfort Zones



*“Move out of your comfort zone. You can only grow if you are willing to feel awkward and uncomfortable when you try something new.”*

-Brian Tracy, Author, Speaker

Everything you want is just outside your comfort zone. Your comfort zone can be likened to a thermostat. Whether you have a fancy NEST stat or the old round style dial kind, it's job is to maintain a range of comfort or “Dead-Band” of four degrees Fahrenheit. If it is set at 70 degrees the stat will keep the temperature between 68-72 degrees. That is its job.

Each of us has a “Set-Point” that controls our performance and behavior.

If you are in sales and your comfort zone is to earn \$80,000 a year, if you hit your goal in October, it's amazing how much creative effort goes into activities and behaviors that avoid making any new sales

the rest of your year. If you are a golfer who enjoys a 10 handicap, and you shoot a 32 on the front nine, and your friend tells you your score, you will magically slice into the woods, drop one or two in the pond, put your next shot into the sand for a bogie or double bogie until you add up your score for the second nine...50! Amazing isn't it?

What if you have been doing things all wrong your whole life? Take tying your shoe. I recently learned for 59 years I have been tying my shoes wrong! What? Oh, yes. My good friend, Pat, recently told me about a video he saw on TED Talks. Having deep and abiding respect for Pat's judgment, I proceeded to watch Terry Moore's delightful and insightful YouTube video that has 1,148,737 hits. It is three minutes of a simple metaphor that could change your life!

Do you remember the scene in the movie, *The Empire Strikes Back*, when Luke Skywalker is in the swamp with Yoda? When instructed to use his mind to raise his ship out of the swamp, Luke replies, "All right, I'll give it a try." In a disgusted tone, Yoda sighs and says, "No! Try not. Do or do not. There is no try!"

It was Super Bowl weekend, 1971. I was 14 years old. The Miami Dolphins were trying to beat the Dallas Cowboys. I read an interview with Larry Csonka in *Sports Illustrated*. "We worked all year long to **get** to the Super Bowl." His teammates used the same word in interviews: GET. Words trigger pictures, bring about emotions, and create expectations. The

result? They were crushed 24-3 by a Cowboy team that **expected** to win it. The next season, the Dolphins went 17-0 and won it all. That is what Larry Csonka told me in 2005 over dinner one night in Phoenix. We were both speakers at the same event. The concept is called “Goal Setting THROUGH not just TO!” The words we use matter.

Super Bowl Weekend 1972, I invested \$45 in a two-day seminar by Bob Moawad. I missed the game. Instead, I learned: how to write out goals onto 3 x 5 cards; the importance of good mental management; using the right words to describe what you want; stretching your comfort zones; how to improve your self-image, self-esteem; and the confidence that comes of knowing and believing you deserve good things if you set exciting goals, visualize the outcome, and work both hard and smart in between. Thanks to Bob, I never use the word TRY.

What can you do today to step outside your current comfort zone at work?

What new hobbies or skills can you develop that will force you out of your comfort zone?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“As you move outside of your comfort zone, what was once the unknown and frightening becomes your new normal.”*

-Robin S. Sharma, Author, Speaker

## Chapter 4 - Self-Talk



*“A man is but the product of his thoughts; what he thinks, he becomes.”*

-Mahatma Gandhi

We all need reminding that words are simply tools. They can build or destroy, empower or shred, inspire or kill our dreams. What words do you habitually use and why? They lift us up or drag us down.

Would you allow someone to come into your house and dump a bag of week-old garbage in your living room and then leave? Absurd, isn't it? Yet, don't we do just that when we allow someone to gossip, criticize us, be sarcastic, shout or swear at us, or lie to us?

We have 60,000 thoughts a day rolling around in our brain, and 75 percent of those thoughts are negative. Why? We allow “garbage” in. Television, ra-

dio, billboards, Internet, people, books, and magazines are constantly bombarding us with negative messages. We choose to let it all in. What if you monitored your input for one day? What if you took a media break for a week as a test?

What do you say when someone asks you, “How are you?” What is your habitual response? I was on an elevator in Dallas about to give a presentation to 600 people from John Deere. I asked a fellow who got on, “How are you today?” He sighed as if he were trying to get every molecule of air out of his lungs, hung his head, and said, “Okay, I guess.” He didn’t bother to ask me back. I felt sorry for him. He didn’t understand the effect his words and attitude were having on his day, week, month, year, and life.

When I ask the question, “How are you today?” in my public seminars, I hear: “Not bad for a Monday,” “Fair to middling,” or “Fine” with a tone that tells me otherwise.

What if you chose a different response for a week? How about: “Fantastic!” or “Tremendous!” or “A notch above Awesome!” Does that make you feel uncomfortable? I understand. How about: “Really good!” or “Grateful” or “Great.”

Personally, I am fond of what my friend, Doug, at ninety-two years young used to say: “I am so old, I don’t even buy green bananas anymore!”

My personal favorite is “Fluctuating...between fabulous and incredible, but I haven’t had my coffee yet, so I expect it to get better!” and “The best is yet to come!” That is how I sign every book I sell. That is now a strong belief that I hold close to my heart. Why? **R**epetition, **E**motion, **T**ime. **R.E.T.** I have written that phrase thousands of times. Guess what? John Lennon was right. “It’s getting better all the time.”

Words trigger pictures and bring about emotion. They predict and perpetuate our day’s success or failure. What words are you using on a regular basis? For one week, pay attention to the words you hear others using. Write them down. Who says what? Who uses words to great effect?

What **WORDS** do you hear in the marketplace?

What words do you consistently say aloud or silently each day?

What could you substitute instead? What do you say to yourself when you lose? When you win?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Chapter 5 - Habits



*"I am an optimist. It does not seem to be much use being anything else."*

*-Winston Churchill*

*"First, we form habits, and then they form us. Good habits are hard to form and easy to live with; bad habits are easy to form and hard to live with."*

*-Norm Cousins, Author, Pioneer*

Fold your arms. Which arm is on top? Ever wonder why you do it that way? Now fold them the other way? Odd isn't it? Uncomfortable huh? Your first instinct is to go back to the way it's comfortable. Here is some bad news... "What got you HERE, won't take you THERE!" If we are going to maximize our potential, we all must examine our habits, all of them.



When I first started in sales back in 1987, I was fortunate to stumble across an amazing little booklet entitled “The Common Denominator of Success” by Albert E.N. Gray written in 1940. It changed the way I looked at my new career. It forced me to examine my prospecting habits. To read the entire booklet, click on:

<http://www.amnesta.net/mba/thecommondenominatorofsuccess-albertengray.pdf>

In a nutshell, he wrote:

*“The common denominator of success --- the secret of success of every man who has ever been successful --- lies in the fact that he formed the habit of doing things that failures don't like to do.”*

Mr. Gray goes on to say, *“As to calling habits, unless you have deliberately formed the habit of calling on people who are able to buy but unwilling to listen, then unconsciously you have formed the habit of calling on people who are willing to listen but unable to buy.”*

A few years later, I interviewed the top sales person in my industry, a man who was selling three times what I was! He said to me, “I spend time with people who will buy! The harder they are to see, the easier they are to sell.” What he and Mr. Gray were both telling me was, “Find the ‘Economic Buyer’ and develop a relationship with him or her.” Guess what? When you are new in sales, that is really hard. You

will be way out of your comfort zone. You can only pick the low hanging fruit so long.

Quality is not an act, it is a habit. Aristotle took that one step further when he said, *“Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”*

William James, the father of American Psychology and the most popular professor at Harvard at the turn of the 20th Century wrote: *“Why should we think upon things that are lovely? Because thinking determines life. It is a common habit to blame life upon the environment. Environment modifies life but does not govern life. The soul is stronger than its surroundings.”* He went on to say, *“The great thing, then, in all education, is to make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy. It is to fund and capitalize our acquisitions, and live at ease upon the interest of the fund. For this we must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, as many useful actions as we can, and guard against the growing into ways that are likely to be disadvantageous to us, as we should guard against the plague. The more of the details of our daily life we can hand over to the effortless custody of automatism, (Habit) the more our higher powers of mind will be set free for their own proper work. There is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision, and for whom the lighting of*

*every cigar, the drinking of every cup, the time of rising and going to bed every day, and the beginning of every bit of work, are subjects of express volitional deliberation.”*

My late great mentor, friend and publisher, Charlie T. Jones was good friends with Og Mandino. In his classic best selling book, “The Greatest Salesman in the World” Og said, *“I will form good habits and become their slave. And how will I accomplish this difficult feat? Through these scrolls it will be done, for each scroll contains a principle which will drive a bad habit from my life and replace it with one which will bring me closer to success.”* There it is. Displacement. As long as habit and routine dictate the pattern of living, new dimensions of the soul will not emerge.

Psychologists have taught us it takes 21-35 days to form a new positive habit but only 2-3 days to form a bad one! Here is my short list of positive habits to adopt. To get into the shallow end of the pool, consider one new habit that you could make your own. Once you have made that one a habit, go back over the list and chose one more. Your life will explode into change.

- 1) Eat half portions of your current diet. Most Americans eat way more than we should.
- 2) Exercise at least four times a week. Choose something you CAN and WILL do. Spin, Yoga,

Basketball, Weight Training, Swimming or simply Walk 20-30 minutes a day.

- 3) Make a Gratitude List before you go to bed at night. Write down five things you are grateful for.
- 4) Plan Your Day the night before or first thing in the morning. What are the six most important things you need to do tomorrow?
- 5) Review Your Goals twice a day, AM and PM. Say them aloud or write them out or visualize (more on that later...)
- 6) Read a Book in your field for 20-30 minutes a day. This one habit, that I began in 1982, completely changed my life and income.
- 7) Keep a Journal or Diary for WORK. What did you learn today? Capture Your Wins!
- 8) Associate with Positive People and stay away from mean or negative people. Are they Speedboats pulling you forward or Anchors dragging you down?
- 9) Pray and Meditate daily. Find some quiet time each day. Turn off the i-phone, TV, Radio, internet and be still.
- 10) Spend Time in Nature. Go the beach, walk in the woods, climb a mountain, go off by yourself for some reflection.
- 11) Keep Your Word to yourself and others. Integrity. It's okay to say no.
- 12) Do More than you are paid for. Find ways to add value. Go the extra-mile in all your endeavors.

One of my earliest mentors was the late Dale Carnegie. A brilliant man and an expert on the human condition wrote, *“Feeling sorry for yourself, and your*

*present condition, is not only a waste of energy but the worst habit you could possibly have.”*

What specific habits have you adopted that are propelling you forward?

What habit could you adopt that will increase your effectiveness?

What negative habit do you need to let go of?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“Chains of habit are too light to be felt until they are too heavy to be broken.”*

-Warren Buffett

## Chapter 6 - Attitude



*“Attitude determines our altitude.”* Zig Ziglar said that at a seminar I attended in 1993. He also said, *“Every year, get a check up from the neck up!”*

For over twenty five years I have read the following quote in every seminar and workshop I have ever delivered. I have read it or had it read aloud over 1,000 times.

*“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of Attitude on life. Attitude to me is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think, say or do. It’s more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, or a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every single day regarding the Attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the past, we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. The only thing we can do is play on the string we have, and that string is our*

*Attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me, and 90% how I respond to it. I am in charge of my Attitude.”*

-Chuck Swindoll, author, pastor

I have found there are two vital aspects of attitude to adopt. I first heard them from Earl Nightingale from his “Lead the Field” audio program. It stuck. I made it my own.

Expectancy and Gratitude. A very successful client of mine once told me, “Hey, I expect to succeed. Once I set a goal, I go after it with everything I have.” The other is an Attitude of Gratitude. When you combine these two qualities, they form a magical alchemy of abundance for you and yours.

One of my favorite quotes is “Work like your mother is watching!” In the Disney basketball biopic, “Glory Road”, the coach of tiny Texas Western University, Don Haskins, is struggling with one his star players. The kid isn’t applying himself in the classroom. He is at his wits end. Without this kid’s rebounds and defense, they are simply not going to win. What to do? The next scene shows the boys mother storming down the hallway with a scowl on her face. She sits in the classroom to hold her son accountable. His grades improve. This was 1966. That team went on to win the national championship. It was his first year as a mens college basketball coach. Moreover, it was the first time in history that five African-American players started in a college game.

What if you worked like your mother was watching? Your attitude and effort would surely improve. I remember how motivated I was in my youth to please my mother. Remember the 10 most powerful two letter words in the english language: "If it is to be, it is up to me!" Mom's not here.

What if I don't feel like working? What if I am in a lousy mood? What can I do to change that? Here is my top ten ideas to change your attitude:

1. Hang around positive, upbeat people. Change your reference group. "Birds of a feather really do flock together".
2. Listen to an inspiring audio program. Download a Sales Seminar, Sermon or Motivational Talk and listen while you drive or workout.
3. Watch a 20-minute YouTube Video by a good professional speaker each morning for 30-days. How about a TED talk?
4. Read an inspirational book. (Okay I KNOW I repeated this one! Well, are you reading?) A client recently asked me for my top ten most inspiring books. Without looking at my library, here is the list I came up with. I have read all these books multiple times.
  - 1) "How to Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie (1935)



- 2) "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill (1935)
- 3) "Acres of Diamonds" by Russell Conwell (1927)
- 4) "Magnificent Obsession" by Lloyd C. Douglas (1929)
- 5) "The Magic of Believing" by Claude Bristol (1948)
- 6) "The Rise Theodore Roosevelt" by Edmund Morris
- 7) "On Writing" by Steven King
- 8) "Broken Music" by Sting
- 9) "How to Sell Anything to Anybody" by Joe Girard
- 10) "Freedom from Fear" by Mark Matteson (Hey, what kind of author would I be if I didn't list at least one of my own books!?!)

5. Grab your journal and make "A Gratitude List". What are five things you are grateful for today? If that doesn't change your attitude, list five more.
6. Decide to be an Optimist. Optimists live longer than Pessimists do and have a better time along the way. Make a list of your WINS. Past success in any area of your life. Reflect on past success.
7. Remember you live in the greatest country in the world. We have so much to be thankful for. The poorest person in this country lives like a king compared to many third world countries.

8. Cut back on television. I canceled cable ten years ago. It was one the best things I ever did. Moreover, STOP watching the news!
9. Ask for help. Call a friend or mentor to talk it out. Be honest. Be vulnerable. When I share my troubles I cut them in half.
10. Listen to positive, upbeat music. As I write this I am listening to “99 songs from Mozart”. He was a genius. You could do worse.

Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan Chase said, “It’s not my net-worth, it’s my self-worth.”

Courage is not the absence of fear, its the master of it. Negativity makes a person look at the land of milk and honey and see only calories and cholesterol. How bad can this day be? You and I are on THIS side of the grass.

Get to work. Your mother IS watching. I know mine is...from heaven.

What are you willing to do to change your attitude?  
Write down five things you are grateful for?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

My Gratitude List

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.” -Maya Angelou, Poet, Philosopher*

## Chapter 7 - Goals



You may never have heard of Earl Nightingale. He died in 1989. He was and still is one of my mentors. He was a pioneer in the field of non-fiction audio recording. He recorded a record (LP) entitled “The Strangest Secret in the World.” <https://youtu.be/UygnXqoKrC4> - I have listened to this at least 50 times. I own it on [audible.com](https://www.audible.com) and have the transcript. It can, if you let it, change your life. Mark Victor Hansen (of “Chicken Soup for the Soul” fame) is purported to have listened to it 500 times! Here is an excerpt, submitted for your approval.

*“I want you to write on a card what it is you want more than anything else. It may be more money. Perhaps you’d like to double your income or make a specific amount of money. It may be a beautiful home. It may be success at your job. It may be a particular position in life. It could be a more harmonious family. Each of us wants something. Write down on your card specifically what it is that you*

*want. Make sure it's a single goal and clearly defined. You needn't show it to anyone, but carry it with you so that you can look at it several times a day. Think about it in a cheerful, relaxed, positive way each morning when you get up, and immediately you have something to work for – something to get out of bed for, something to live for. Look at it every chance you get during the day and just before going to bed at night.*

*As you look at it, remember that you must become what you think about, and since you're thinking about your goal, you realize that soon it will be yours. In fact, it's really yours the moment you write it down and begin to think about it. Look at the abundance all around you as you go about your daily business. You have as much right to this abundance as any living creature. It is yours for the asking."*

First we work on goals, then they work on us. "Without a vision, the people perish," it says in the old testament. This is not new information.

Mr. Nightingale goes on to say, *"The moment you decide on a goal to work toward, you immediately are a successful person. You are then in that rare and successful category of people who know where they are going. Out of every 100 people, you belong to the top five. Don't concern yourself too much with how you are going to achieve your goal. Leave that completely to a power greater than yourself. All you*

*have to do is know where you are going. The answers will come to you of their own accord.”*

Goals add years to our life, and life to our years. It gives our lives meaning and purpose. 68% of American men in this country are dead within 18-24 months of retirement. Why is that? Nothing to look forward to! Men derive meaning from work (evidently women have other things to give them meaning like grandchildren and friends, they are so much healthier!)

One of my favorite stories was also a favorite of the late President John F. Kennedy. It goes like this:

*A wise old farmer asked his fourteen year old grandson to help him with a long overdue project, to remove the boards from a six foot high fence that needed repair one Saturday morning. He laid out exactly WHAT he wanted done and WHY it was so important, as any good leader would. The HOW was up to his grandson.*

*He checked back on his grandson an hour later only to find the young man standing there wearing his favorite cowboy hat staring at the imposing task. Not a single board had been removed. “What’s wrong Johnny?” the grandfather asked. Looking down at his cowboy boots in shame, he replied, “Well, this fence is so high and its going to take a lot of work and time for me to get all the boards down. I am having a hard time getting started,” tipping his favorite hat back on his young head in frustration.*

*With that, the farmer grabbed his grandson's cowboy hat and threw it over the fence.*

*“Hey, why did you do that? That’s my favorite hat!”  
“Johnny, as I told your father when he was your age, in order to get your hat back, you are going to have to take down a few boards. Once you get going, you might find you have to take down a few more. At that point, you may decide to stop for the day. That’s okay because you can come back tomorrow, throw your hat over the fence again and take down a few more boards. Eventually, before you know it, the job is done.”*

Wanting is not enough. We need to take action!

All of us need something to look forward to. Goals give us just that.

In her extraordinary book “Grit” Angela Duckworth describes Warren Buffett’s simple “3-Step Goal Achievement Process”.

- 1) Write Down At Least 25 Career Goals in your Journal*
- 2) Circle the Five Highest Priority Goals*
- 3) Take a good hard look at the other 20 you did NOT circle. These you avoid at all costs. They take your eye away from the goals that matter.*

He goes on to say, *“Any successful person has to decide what to do in part by deciding what NOT to do. You need one internal compass.”*

I was walking through the brand new state of the art Student Center at the University of Louisville preparing to deliver a Team Building Seminar for the Women’s Crew Team. The head of facilities asked me if I needed anything. I entered her office and was introduced to two students, a young man and young woman. I smiled, shook hands and then did a double take. “Kelsi Worrell? How was Rio?” You see, this young lady had just returned from the Olympics where her 4 x 100 Medley Relay team had won the Gold Medal! Kelsi Worrell, a four time NCAA Champion and Honda Cup Award winner is the first Louisville Cardinal to win a swimming medal of any color. In short, She is a Golden Cardinal. I congratulated her on her success and asked her if she wouldn’t mind answering some questions from the Women’s Crew Team for 10-15 minutes. She graciously agreed to.

I lobbed a couple of easy questions to get her started and from there the questions flowed like Niagara Falls. It was a wonderful 20-minutes. She is so humble and kind. Here are the highlights:

## TEAMWORK

She was quick to point out how great her teammates were and that any success was the team’s success. It’s the Window and Mirror Principle. When



it comes time to assume the credit you look out the window and give it away to your team. When it comes time to place blame, look in the mirror.

## JOURNALING

She said that she was proud to report she kept a journal all 36 days in Rio. It helped her capture the WINS and SETBACKS (she placed 9th in a solo race) providing her with objectivity, perspective, and recall.

## INTENTION

She set very specific short and long-term goals for herself. She visualized achieving those goals every day for years. She celebrated her WINS to give her confidence and analyzed her TEMPORARY SETBACKS to gather up the lessons they provided. She was very focused. She possessed a burning desire to succeed.

## HARD WORK

Sacrifice. Reps. Discipline. It meant giving up things that most women her age enjoy and take for granted. Delayed gratification. It was time in the pool every day, competing against the best in the country. "YOU just have to put in the time every day, one day at a time. You have to earn it!" she said with a smile.

## MEASURE

Where performance is measured, performance improves. She knew exactly how many kicks per pool length were required. By measuring her progress she was able to improve the little things that cut her time down.

## GRATITUDE

She shared that she knew it was a privilege to be in the Olympics and also said she knew she wasn't going to be able to swim forever. "All this is temporary, so it's important to enjoy the journey. Soak it all in." She was genuinely thankful for the opportunity to compete at the highest level against the greatest athletes in the world.

## FAITH

She is very spiritual and gave the credit to her mother for infusing the faith in God required to push through setbacks, frustrations and injuries. She is so sincere and genuine. Smiling constantly, yet with a large measure of humility and grace.

It's clear she has an incredible future ahead of her. I told her as much. "Your future is so bright, it burns my eyes." I thanked her for making the time and the extraordinary women's crew team were pleasantly surprised by her impromptu Q&A. It added so much to our time together. It was also a wonderful rein-

forcement of the principles I had been sharing, almost like an echo. The difference was, the words and principles were coming from a “Golden Cardinal”.

What are your Five Top Goals?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.”*

-Jim Rohn, Business Philosopher, Speaker, Author

## Chapter 8 - Hour of Power



*“Very little is needed to make a happy life; it is all within yourself, in your way of thinking.” -Marcus Aurelius*

Each of these chapters fit into the next one, like a jig-saw puzzle. They are all connected. By now, I hope you have those five goals that are most important to you. Now it's time to choose ONE. Going back to Earl Nightingale's advice, settle on the most important one, as a kind of test for thirty days. I have been conducting my own Hour of Power for over 10 years. I have taught this simple concept to thousands of people around the globe. It works.

- 1) Rewrite Your #1 Goal on a 3x5 card as if it were already true in Goal Achievement language:  
Personal, Positive, Powerful and Present tense:

*“I AM a ruthless manager of my time. Organized, Disciplined, Effective!”*

- 2) Now list 5-10 Reasons WHY you want that goal. Reasons will pull you to the future. Forget the HOW. That comes in time. Just remember R.E.T. (Repetition, Emotion, Time).
- 3) Bombard Your Subconscious with that goal. Choose one modality that fits you. All that is needed to change your self-image (your internal thermostat regulator) is the formula:  $I \times E \times R = N/R$  (Impression x Emotion x Repetition = New Reality!) It's a daily discipline: Write it out in your journal, Say it aloud, Visualize it happening, or Record it and play it as you walk or workout at least 2-3 times a day for 90-days. Slowly your corresponding comfort zone will change, as will your attitude, behavior and habits. People, opportunity, books, ideas will come flowing into your sub-conscious in the form of hunches. Pay attention. Write them down. Act on them. Like your own personal GPS, the HOW will come.
- 4) Invest in Your Own Hour of Power: 20-minutes of Reviewing your #1 Goal, 20-Minutes Planning your Day listing The Six Most Important Actions Items for the Day, 20-minutes Reading a book in alignment with that goal.

The Hour of Power is simple but not easy. Let's assume you have a goal that is important to you. You

have made a decision. You have even written it down. It's about working smarter, not harder.

The Hour of Power is a Good New Habit. This process and discipline will keep you on task. 30 days later, you have probably read two books, thought about and imagined your #1 Goal and planned your work; worked your plan. This simple habit will change your personal and professional effectiveness.

I had dinner with the late Paul J. Meyer one night in Austin TX. He was a brilliant man and wildly successful first in Insurance, then in teaching others how to succeed. He said to me, *“Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort.”*

My late mentor Charlie T. Jones said thousands of times (now I am) *“You will be the same person as you are today in five years but for two things, the books you read and the people you meet.”* Reading books of substance that are in alignment with your goals will accelerate your progress in ways you can't imagine now. They will change your awareness, maximize your potential, stretch your comfort zones, shift your attitudes, allow you to achieve your goals in a fraction of the time!

In Alan Lakein's fantastic book, “Getting Things Done” he wrote, *“Planning is bringing the future into*

*the present so that you can do something about it now.”*

When is the best time for you to do your Hour of Power? AM or PM?

Why not try this for 30-days as a test?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.” - Dwight D. Eisenhower*

## Chapter 9 - Job, Career, Calling (Extra-Mile)



A pastor was walking past a church that was having the foundation laid. There were three masons laying bricks. He asked the first man, “What are you doing?” He stopped working, looked up with a frown and said, “I am laying bricks...” The pastor walked a few steps and asked the second man the same question, he replied, “I am building a church,” with a Mona Lisa smile. The pastor walked a few more steps and asked the third mason the same question. He stopped working, smiled, wiped his brow and replied, “I am building a house of God!”

This old parable makes a simple but powerful distinction. The first man had a **JOB**. The second man had a **CAREER**. The third man had a **CALLING!**

There is absolutely nothing wrong with have a good job for 35 years like an old friend of mine from school. But when I asked him how he enjoys Boeing



he said, "It pays the bills." There was no joy. It's what his father did. The second phase of this transformation implies a driven person who wants to get ahead. That is certainly noble. But to advance to the third phase, one must believe that your work has meaning and purpose. You must love the work, the study, every aspect of the business. Whether self-employed, or working for someone else, the third category changes the way you look at work and life.

I was writing an article one Sunday at my favorite coffee shop in Edmonds, WA. A woman interrupted me and said, "You are working on a Sunday?" I stopped typing and replied, "It's Sunday?" I'm self-employed. When I call in sick, I know I'm lying! I love what I do. I was 32 years old before I uncovered my calling. Writing and Speaking are part and parcel to *"Assisting people to maximize their potential. I seek to spark success in others and inspire them to achieve their goals, enjoy balance and peace of mind; to discover a life imagined. To allow their passion to become their purpose."*

I love the writing of Emerson and Thoreau. They were friends and related to one another by marriage.

Thoreau wrote:

*"Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after."*

*“What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lives within us.”*

*“If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.”*

*“If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.”*

Emerson wrote:

*“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”*

*“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”*

*“Shallow men believe in luck. Strong men believe in cause and effect.”*

*“Once you make a decision, the universe conspires to make it happen.”*

My oldest son Colin is one of the top recruiters at Amazon in Seattle. He sends me inspirational videos every week. I am grateful for the relationship I have with my grown sons, all three, Colin, Evan and Larod.

Here is the most recent one. I hope you like it half as much as I did.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGgci-JeCHUM&sns=em>

What were you put on this earth to do?

What do you have a passion for?

How can you turn your passion into purpose to serve others and make a difference in the world?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“I don't know what my calling is, but I want to be here for a bigger reason. I strive to be like the greatest people who have ever lived.”*

-Will Smith, Actor, Musician

## Chapter 10 - WINS!



*“Thinking: the talking of the soul with itself.” -Plato*

After you invest the time to try all the things that we have covered so far, eventually you will enjoy a WIN! Let me share a very personal WIN with you. After this particular event occurred, I was inspired to write the following story that was used for my free monthly newsletter. To sign up for my e-zine, go to [www.sparkingsuccess.net](http://www.sparkingsuccess.net) Writing this inspired me to take it much further, as this little story grew into the book I will be releasing in the fall of 2017 entitled, *“Freedom from FAT!”* also available on my website.

*Have you ever heard this phrase: “The jig is up!” I researched its meaning: A ruse or trick that has been discovered; the game is over; the time of reckoning is here! (A JIG is a sporty or lively dance.)*

*For me, the jig was up October 2, 2009. I was conducting a Team Building Seminar in Boston. I went back to the Marriott and went for a swim. I stepped on the scale for the first time in years...301! "What?! That can't be! The scale must be broken!" (Rational-Lie #1). I put my hand on the counter and eased up onto the scale, like sneaking up on it gently would somehow change the outcome!? 302! "What! That's crazy!" (Rational-Lie #2). I went to the front desk and asked for a tape measure. I put it around my waist. 46"! "No!" (Rational-Lie #3). I sucked in my gut and tried it again. 45-1/2"! "Something's wrong here!" (Rational-lie #4). I then made a big mistake. I went back to my room and took off my shirt and looked in the mirror. I could hardly believe my eyes. I was fat!*

*When the police arrest you, they take two pictures, front and side (at least, this is what they tell me). When I looked at the pictures I had just taken, I freaked out! Fat guy in a little coat! (Think Chris Farley in "Tommy Boy"). At that moment, the jig was up. The dance was over. A day of reckoning was here. A rising from deep down inside began to emerge. I had not been this angry at myself since the 8th grade when I was cut from the Junior High School Basketball team. My reaction was the same, five stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Acceptance, Action!*

*I grabbed a 3x5 card and wrote down, "I feel free at 253! I am proud of my 36" waist. I love to work out*

*five times a week!” On the back of the card I wrote down five reasons I wanted that goal:*

- 1) My children would be proud of me*
- 2) I would live longer*
- 3) I would have a great seminar story*
- 4) I would look and feel better about myself*
- 5) I would prove to myself I could do it*

*I made up five 3x5 cards with my new #1 Goal and put them everywhere: On the dashboard of my car, in my journal, on the mirror where I shave, in the book I was reading, on the toilet tank in my home office bathroom. I began to say that #1 goal aloud 10-15 times a day with positive emotion. “We become what we think about.” It became my “Magnificent Obsession”, my mission. The next few months a process emerged. I call it **D.A.S.H.***

**D = DECIDE**

**A = ASK**

**S = STUDY**

**H = HONE**

## **DECIDE**

*Every great accomplishment in my life began with a DECISION. This I would do, come hell or high water! This was going to happen no matter what! I committed the goal to paper. I attached deadlines. “How much by when?” I set goals in six month increments. Waist Goals! “42” in three months!” 38” in six months!” “36” in twelve months”.*

## **ASK**

*I asked middle age men and women what THEY did to lose and keep the weight off. They told me things like:*

*I cut out bread.*

*I started walking everyday.*

*I cut my portions in half.*

*I cut out sugar.*

*I bought a belt that reflected the goal. (36”).*

*I read books to learn what I needed to do (like “Fit or Fat” by Covert Bailey).*

*I joined a health club.*

*I began writing all these ideas down in my journal. I began doing what they did. What could I do? What am I willing to stick to doing?*

## **STUDY**

*I read every book I could find on the topic. I became a sponge for wellness information. I scoured the bookstores and Amazon.com. Here is the short list of books I studied. Some of them I read more than once. They are:*

*> Body for Life by Bill Phillips*

*> Younger Next Year by Chris Cowley and Henry S. Lodge*

*> Fit or Fat by Covert Bailey*

*> The Secret by Rhonda Byrne*

*> The Game of Life by Florence Shinn*

*> Creating Health by Deepok Chopra*

- >Food Rules by Michael Pollan
- >The Healing Heart by Norm Cousins
- >Healthy Aging by Andrew Weil

*Certain disciplines and strategies emerged that were contrary to what I had been doing (or not doing) the last ten years.*

*Skip breakfast and work out in the morning first thing, then wait an hour before you eat. You will change your metabolism.*

*Three things to commit to six days a week: **P-Q-E!** **P** = Portions, **Q** = Quality, **E** = Exercise! **P** = Cut my portions in half. **Q** = Salad instead of fries, grapes instead of chips. **E** = Exercise. Walk every day. Swim three times a week. I started slowly and gradually increased distance, intensity, and duration.*

## **HONE**

*Keep what works, toss what doesn't. A new philosophy emerged. I went from: "Living to eat, to, eating to live!" I changed my relationship with food. I began to look forward to going to the gym. I made new friends, began to gather ideas about working out. I started lifting weights again (it had been 15 years). I took a Yoga class. Before I knew it, I was working out six days a week, 45-minutes a day.*

*My adult children asked me to join them at the gym. My adopted son Larod said to me one day, "Dad,*



*you look great. No food tastes as good as skinny feels. Keep up the good work. I am proud of you.”*

*The result? Three years later, I have a 36” waist. I lost 50 pounds of fat. I now had a new jig.*

*Keep your word to yourself. I PROMISE! When you were a kid and you asked your parents if you could do something special, you would always follow up with the phrase You PROMISE? Take that same attitude and resolve with this new lifestyle.*

*Focus on Enjoying the journey. The best is yet to come! Age does not matter. The body is an amazing thing. It will respond to this new challenge and change in ways that are hard to envision right now. Its never too late to start.*

*Monitor your waist and not your weight. Drilling holes in an old belt is an amazing feeling. Buying a new belt because you have to is a great feeling!*

*Teach what you learn to someone else once you have achieved your waist and wellness goals. You can't keep it until you give it away!*

*How about you? Is it time for a new jig? 2018 is here. Is it time to add a WELLNESS Goals to your New Years Resolutions? A waist is a terrible thing to mind. My sincere wish for you in 2018 is to enjoy “Freedom from FAT!” If this 59 year old guy can do it, so can you! The best truly is yet to come, especially if you are fit, not fat!*

*Make a list of Five Major WINS in your life*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*I'm always looking for the creative spark. Always.*  
-Jimmy Page, Guitarist, Musician Led Zeppelin

*Without passion man is a mere latent force and possibility, like the flint which awaits the shock of the iron before it can give forth its spark.*  
-Henri Frederic Amiel

## Chapter 11 - Consistency



*“Success isn't always about greatness. It's about consistency. Consistent hard work leads to success. Greatness will come.”*

-Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson, Actor, Producer, Bodybuilder

I was coaching an AAU basketball team when my oldest son was in 7th grade. Once a month, I asked a high school senior to come speak to the boys. My logic was if I brought in a college or professional player, they might not be able to relate. My logic worked well. My boys were in rapt attention as one star after another spoke. On one occasion I asked Jamal Crawford, who at the time was the best high school player in the state at Rainier Beach High School in Seattle. His team had just won the state championship. As Jamal took the boys through a complicated ball handling drill, one of my boys asked him how much time he invested each day on drills. Jamal stopped, smiled and replied, “I practice 3-hours a day AFTER practice, every day. The key

boys, is EVERY day.” Jamal has been in the NBA for 16 years and has won the “6th Man” award twice. My guess is, he still practices 3-hours a day after practice.

It doesn’t matter what you do for work, the key to long term success is consistency.

Steven King writes every day from 0730 to Noon, seven days a week. 10 pages a day is always his goal. I interviewed Pat McCarthy, author of “The Nordstrom Way” shortly after his book came out. “Why are you so successful at sales?” I asked over breakfast. “I think it has something to do with being “Other-Centered” (the opposite of Self-Centered) and perhaps the 40 phone calls a day I make.” Years ago, I recall reading a story in the New York Times about Jerry Rice, the former wide receiver for the San Francisco 49’ers. The article profiled his off-season workout regime. He committed to working out 5-hours a day. The workout was so rigorous that he had three different workout partners for each aspect of his commitment. THREE! When spring training came about, he was already in great shape. He never got out of shape.

Comedian Louis C.K., perhaps the most successful comedian today said, *“I’ve learned from experience that if you work harder at it, and apply more energy and time to it, and more consistency, you get a better result. It comes from the work.”*

My long term musical hero, Bruce Springsteen contends, *“Getting an audience is hard. Sustaining an audience is hard. It demands a consistency of thought, of purpose, and of action over a long period of time.”*

Skate Boarder Shaun White says, *“The hardest thing about skateboarding is consistency: The slightest flick of your foot or gust of wind can send your board flying, so it's really anybody's game out there.”*

**Consistency.** The dictionary defines it as: “Conformity in the application of something, typically that which is necessary for the sake of logic, accuracy, or fairness.” synonyms: uniformity, constancy, regularity, evenness, steadiness, stability, equilibrium.

My good friend Weldon Long and I have shared stages the last few years. He has an extraordinary story. I loved his book “The Power of Consistency”; (Go to [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) to get your copy!) It’s a book anyone owning a business or wanting to improve their life needs to read. Weldon will show you how to train your mind and master the “Prosperity Mindset,” which helps overcome many of the curve balls that life can throw your way. Here are some excerpts:

- *“You never know what someone can accomplish if they want it badly enough.”*

- *“To succeed you need to nip the complaining in the bud and find a way to prosper despite challenges and adversity.”*
- *“To overcome any challenge you need to get your mind right and develop a prosperity mindset that is geared and programmed to transcend any obstacle.”*
- *“The key is to define just one or two things that ensure success and do those things consistently.”*
- *“The key to improvement is in recognizing the error of our ways, finding a better course of action, and being consistent in moving in a more positive direction.”*
- *“To be a better person, sales person, employee, or employer than you are today you need to understand how to create personal change in your life.”*
- *“Private affirmations dictate future actions.”*

If you want to be the very best at your job, career or calling, find out what the very best people DO, that you are not doing. Set goals to make those behaviors and actions a part of your daily routine. Like Weldon, Jamal, Jerry, Bruce, Dwane and Shaun, if you do, you will spark the success you need to be one of exemplars in your industry.

Remember, “Only the mediocre are always at the their best.”

What specific consistent activities are you willing to commit to?

Why not you?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“I pray to be like the ocean, with soft currents, maybe waves at times. More and more, I want the consistency rather than the highs and the lows.”*

-Drew Barrymore, Actor, Producer, Director

## Chapter 12 - Other-Centered Philosophy



Are you Self-Centered or Other-Centered? Do you talk about yourself all the time or do you ask open ended questions and listen to others?

Everyone you meet from 8 to 88 is looking for three things:

Appreciation

Respect

Understanding

In Rick Warren's best selling book, "The Purpose Driven Life" he began by saying "*It's not about you!*" There it is.

Four years ago I drove from San Antonio to Laredo, TX to speak to 900 Freshman at Texas A&M International University. What a treat. Being around young people energizes me. Thank you Dr. Ray Keck. As I drove the three hours, I listened to Wayne Dyer's audio program, "10 Secrets to Inner Peace and Success". For the last 25 years, I have



earned countless degrees from Windshield University, as I drove around this fine country. I have worked in 47 states, driving and learning, learning and driving. Here are my journal notes from one the great teachers of personal and spiritual development. Wayne was unique and brilliant. (He passed away in 2015, he will be missed) I am shocked about how much material he stole from me over the years! (Not really. So THAT's where these ideas came from...)

The **embolden** titles are Wayne's. The descriptions are mine.

**1. Be open to all things and attached to nothing.**

Reject pessimism. With God and the right mindset, all things are possible. Conceive, Believe, Achieve. An open mind is a choice. When you hear something you don't like or don't agree with, try saying: "I have never considered that before, let me think on that." Remember to let it all come and go as it will be.

**2. Don't die with your music still in you.**

What a man can be, he must be. Writers, write. Speakers, speak. Do what you love and the money will follow. Be true to yourself. What is the best and highest use of your time? Follow your bliss. Khalil Gibran said, "When you are born, your work is placed in your heart." Find your purpose. Thoreau said, "If a man doesn't keep pace with his companions, perhaps he hears a different drummer."

### **3. You can't give away what you do not have.**

Each of us gets back what we give away. What we give out comes back. We are mirrors. Ridicule, criticism, blame, guilt, shame, anger, resentment and fear come back like a bird to its nest. By the same token, love, harmony, peace, joy, tolerance, respect, appreciation come back to us in equal measure. The positive emotions are a higher frequency, faster, easier. "Be IN this world, not OF it." Great things come of Love and Service to others.

### **4. Embrace Silence.**

"The greatest benefit of meditation and prayer is the sense of belonging that comes to us," wrote Bill Wilson, the co-founder of AA. Pray and wait. Say a prayer slowly, stopping to consider the meaning of the words. It's not a 100 yard dash, it's long slow walk taking in the beauty of nature. I have a choice each morning, I can say: "Good God, Morning!" or "Good Morning, God."

### **5. Give up your personal history.**

Let go of the past. Ogden Nash wrote in 1957 from "You Can't Get There From Here" a little verse that says it best: "*Here lies my Past. Good-bye I have kissed it; Thank you, kids. I wouldn't have missed it.*" Your past is over. Forgive the people that harmed you. All you get is now. Let go of the past.

### **6. A problem can never be solved with the mind that created it.**

Einstein said that. We all agree, he was a genius. If we have a challenge, we must look at it from a different point of view. We need input from others. We need a shift in attitude, awareness and emotion. We need perspective. Seek and ye shall find. Good advice.

### **7. There are no justified resentments.**

Resentments are like a snake bite. It's not the bite that will kill us, rather, it's the venom racing through our veins that does the job. Marcus Aurelius said, "The quality of your life is determined by your thoughts." Resentments return me to my old, negative ways. Moreover, it attracts more resentments. Blame has to be replaced by acceptance, forgiveness and gratitude. Would you rather be right or happy? Get past blame.

### **8. Act as if and you will become.**

William James, the father of psychology in America wrote "Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does." Imagine the goal you seek. Be a "Good" Finder! Focus on what you want, not on what you don't want. Earl Nightingale said, "We become what we think about, all day long." Action cures fear. Act as if and the feelings will follow.

### **9. Treasure your divinity**

"We are all connected to source. What digests our food, what opens the flowers runs through me." Each of us is connected to God and each other.

Gratitude and awareness changes us. My late mentor, Bob Moawad use to say, “God don’t make no junk.” Now I understand Coach.

**10. Wisdom is avoiding all thoughts which weaken you.**

By changing your thoughts, you change what manifests in your life. It’s simple, not easy. We have 60,000 thoughts a day and for most people, 75% of those are negative. Analyze your self-talk. Write it down. Is it positive or negative? We have a choice every day.

I can’t wait for my next trip to Laredo. Now where did I put that Wayne Dyer CD? I need to earn another PHD at “Windshield U”...

How can you be more empathetic?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Chapter 13 - Helping Others

### Practice Unselfish Thinking

*"We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own."*

—BEN SWEETLAND

*"When you show deep empathy toward others, their defensive energy goes down, and positive energy replaces it. That's when you can get more creative in solving problems."* -Stephen Covey

*"We are all here on earth to help others; what on earth the others are here for I don't know."* -W. H. Auden

The first time I remember helping someone else I was 10 years old. My friend down the street was two years younger than I. He received a new bike for Christmas, one without training wheels. He wanted me to teach him how to ride a "Two-Wheeler". I remember the feeling of satisfaction and joy when, after two hours of coaching, he finally got it. I had transferred the **K.A.S.H.** to him, **K**nowledge, **A**ttitude, **S**kills, **H**abits. We went around the block for hours after that. It was a great feeling.

I have been doing that ever since. How good are you at transferring skills to others?

Who were the great coaches and teachers that inspired you along the way? Those that coach, train and teach are gentleman and gentlewomen.

Have you ever met a Gentleman? Someone with class and sophistication?

Do you remember the Grey Poupon ad some years ago? “Pardon me, do you have any Grey Poupon?” I loved that ad.

Recently a very successful physician turned entrepreneur called me. We met at his magnificent home on the shores of Lake Washington, in Seattle, WA. It was a mansion. 10,000 square feet. He is a class act. A true gentleman. We conceptually agreed to work together. As I drove home I considered all the qualities he possessed.

Here is my short list. I call it, “**21 Ways to Spot a Gentleman.**”

- 1. He asks questions based on research**
- 2. He listens, truly listens to your answers**
- 3. He does not interrupt**
- 4. He refrains from trying to “One Up Me” with a better story**
- 5. He remembers the names of people important to me (my children)**
- 6. He is a pragmatic optimist**
- 7. He is naturally curious**
- 8. He avoids telling dirty jokes**
- 9. He is well dressed but not flashy**
- 10. He is up on current events**

- 11. He asks what books you have read the last 90-days**
- 12. He sits erect, has great posture at all times**
- 13. He keeps his word, to himself first, others second**
- 14. He is confident but not arrogant**
- 15. He waits until everyone else has their food before eating his**
- 16. He avoids criticism and judgment**
- 17. He is well spoken with an impressive vocabulary**
- 18. He is fit**
- 19. He avoids cursing and foul language**
- 20. He treats his wife with respect and dignity**
- 21. He is thoughtful and generous**

I realize this is quite a list to live up to. As I drove back to my office, I realized he had given me a great gift, able example. Was he successful because he had all these qualities or did he have all these qualities because he was successful? The former I believe. He was not born with these behaviors, they were honed, developed, nurtured, and crafted over time. Trial and error. Did I mention he kept a journal and jotted down things he heard me say? A true student. I came to the conclusion I have a lot of work to do.

I wonder what will become of me. I wonder how I will be remembered, what will be said of me at my funeral. I hope at least some of these qualities are mentioned.

I enjoy investing time with Gentlemen. I learn so much. "Pardon me..."

What kind of coach are you?

Did you know that sometimes we have to give it away to keep it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Ironically, being a coach on 'The Voice' and spending time with those kids, Xenia and Dia especially, I learned a lot about myself. It reminded me how lucky I am that this happened for me, and it kind of lit the spark inside me again for my love of music.*

-Blake Shelton, Musician, Songwriter, Entertainer



## *Afterward*

My sincere hope is that you found some inspiration, education and clarification in this little book. If so, tell your friends.

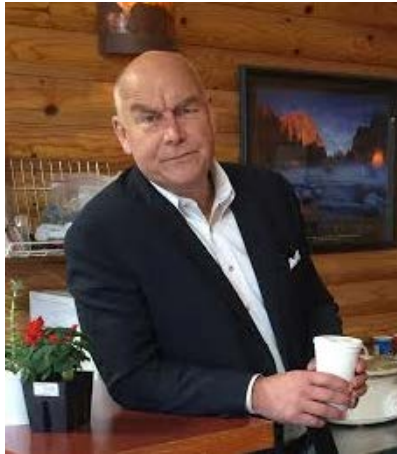
For more information, go to my website, [www.sparkingsuccess.net/store](http://www.sparkingsuccess.net/store) where you will find lots of FREE stuff and of course, e-books, books, CD's, (you can also go on [audible.com](http://audible.com) for my audio books!)

If I sparked something in you, feel free to contact me via Facebook, LinkedIn, email, voice mail or snail mail. I provide coaching or perhaps we can have a discussion about bringing me in to speak to your group, association, organization. Whether that is an inspirational keynote or tailored workshop or perhaps a seminar on a variety of topics, always tailored to you and your organization's objectives.

Remember to enjoy the journey, the best is yet to come!

**Mark Matteson**  
**206.697.0454**  
**[mark@sparkingsuccess.net](mailto:mark@sparkingsuccess.net)**  
**[www.sparkingsuccess.net/store](http://www.sparkingsuccess.net/store)**

## About Mark Matteson



Mark Matteson started his career as an HVAC technician in 1976. He is one of those rare professionals who can say he is speaker, consultant and author and mean it. He has attracted clients in HVAC contracting, distribution and manufacturing as well as such organizations like Microsoft, t-mobile, John Deere, Conoco-Phillips, Aflac, and other Fortune 1,000 companies on three continents. His annual speaking commitment typically means 40 Keynotes, 20 Seminars and Workshops and 5-10 Consulting engagements around the world.

A committed writer, Mark has written five books: including the international best seller, *Freedom from Fear* that has been translated into Japanese and French. Mark is also the author of ten popular e-books: *Presenting Like a Pro*, *Sales Success Strategies*, *Customer Service Excellence*. His monthly e-newsletter goes out to 6,900 people a month since

2003. He posts Tweets and comments on LinkedIn daily.

He is interviewed frequently and has been quoted in the media. He is considered a thought leader, an idea reporter and agent of change who teaches his clients HOW TO GET TWICE AS MUCH DONE IN HALF THE TIME. He has done work internationally in Australia, Canada, Aruba and Turkey. Furthermore, he has worked in 47 states in the U.S.

He resides in Edmonds, WA with his wife of 37 years, Debbie. They have three grown sons.

**Mark takes great pride in the fact he has flunked high school English.**

## **Partial List of Utilities**

**NYSERDA**

**NW Natural Gas**

**PG&E**

**PSE&G**

**Keyspan Energy**

**N-Star**

**KEMA**

**Salt River Project**

## **Partial List of Associations**

**Pacific NW Association (OR-WA)**

**Montana Equipment Dealers Association**

**Big Iron**

**C & B Equipment**

**ACCA - State Chapters DC, WNY, KY, WA/OR  
Contracting Business Magazine  
Service Roundtable '08 '11 '13  
EGIA  
CAAG (Contractors Air Conditioning Association of Georgia)  
RPA (Radiant Panel Association)  
CWHBA (Central Washington Home Builders Association)  
AGC (Association of General Contractors)  
Colorado Contractors Association  
ACCA (TX, DC, VA, WA, OH, NY)  
PHCC (Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors)  
EAI (Excellence Alliance Inc.)  
QSC (Quality Service Contractors) Three times  
SMACNA of Washington  
CP-MCA  
CHI-MCA  
MSCA-Eastern PA/Delaware  
WW-MCA  
WMI-MCA  
New England MCA  
Comfortech '00, '01, '02, '03, '06, '08, '11, '13, '15  
National Association of Bond Producers  
Day of Excellence, Rapid City, SD**

## **Partial List of Universities and State Agencies**

**State of South Dakota  
University of Washington  
University of Louisville, KY**

**Texas A&M International, Laredo, TX Fresno Pacific University, Fresno, CA Salt River Project**

## **Partial List of Manufacturers**

**Aeroseal York-UPG/Coleman**

**Johnson Controls Inc.**

**Trane/American Standard Goodman/Amana**

**Luxaire Carrier/Bryant GE Honeywell**

**John Deere**

**Lennox**

**T-Mobile**

**Microsoft**

## ***What Clients Are Saying About Mark Matteson:***

*“This seminar was worth every penny. As a person, you are an inspiration. The standing ovation told the whole story.*

Fred Thomas VP Service – The Baker Group, Des Moines, IA

*“Thank you for your follow up from a great seminar. I am going to see to it that our time spent together improves our company. The people that get to experience your talks are very fortunate. You are a great communicator. Thank you.”*

Greg Stuck, General Manager, Columbia Specialties, Distributor of Piping, Long Beach, CA

*The reports are coming in.... they thought your seminar was FABULOUS!! You are one of a kind, they loved you. Thank you for a great 2-days. Your delivery was spot on.*

Lola Franklin, CAE - Tri-City Association of REALTORS®

*“Great job at our All-Hands Meeting. We did not want you to stop!”*

Kurt Peterson, Microsoft

*“The standing ovation and the value added book signing afterward told me bringing you out was a good investment. Thank you for exceeding my expectations! We can’t wait to have you back!”*

Rueann Emerson, AFLAC, Lexington, KY

*“I have been attending seminars for 20 years. You are the finest speaker I have ever heard.*

David Rhea, Texas Restaurant Association

*“Thank you for being prepared and our providing employee’s tools that will enhance both their personal and professional lives.”*

Ian Mackay, VP of Sales, t-Mobile, Bellevue, WA

*“During the last 5 years working with Mark Matteson has changed my thinking in regards to running a business as well as helping me grow as a leader. Where Mark can make a huge difference is that he*

*provides you the thinking to run your business successfully. And success not just through making more profits (which is a good thing!) but to develop successful company cultures and empower staff to become better people, not just better at their jobs. Mark has become a great friend and is a true visionary. He has helped my business and myself professionally, as well as led me on a continual path of learning.”*

Allan Ferguson-President-Leading 4 Growth/Omega Home Services/Service Professionals Australia

*“I enjoyed having the opportunity to meet you and to participate in your presentation. The feedback from our Sales Conference and the reviews of you & your sessions were universally positive. Congratulations and thank you. A basketball guy selling a hockey crowd. Very impressive indeed.”*

Bruce McDonald, CEO, Black & McDonald, Canada  
(The largest Privately Held Commercial HVAC Contractor in Canada)

*Mark, you are a class act! Thank you. The response to your presentation has been overwhelming. The Employees were blown away. As were the Agents. Now they get to feast on your book! Let's keep in touch about the future. GREAT JOB. Be well talk with you soon. Thank you again.*

Jim P. Conlon, VP of Sale, Security Mutual Life, NY

*Mark,*

*I would like to say “Thank You” for the message that you so eloquently and poignantly delivered to the Isaac team. The feedback that I have received thus far has been positive, inspiring and in some situations life changing. Everyone walked away with something and each of them is better prepared, because of the time we spent together.*

Eric Knaak-VP Service-Isaac Heating & Air Conditioning

*“Thank you for presenting two successful events last week for the WMMCA! Every seat in the room was filled with attentive listeners. One of the owners who attended Wednesday’s seminar responded: “The most informational & interesting seminar I have been to in 25 years!”*

Cindy Morse - Executive Director - Western Michigan MCA

*“You were fabulous. Thank you for going the extra-mile and everything you did for us at our conference.”*

Nancy Jones, Executive Director, ACCA-PHCC, Texas

*“In my experience of hosting training seminars, I have never witnessed the type of response that you generated. After two solid hours of training, you asked if the contractors were ready for a break. The crowd erupted with a resounding “NO”! You are truly a captivating, entertaining speaker!”*

Rod Toner – Marketing Director, CFM Corporation, Sacramento, CA



*“This seminar was worth every penny. As a person, you are an inspiration. The standing ovation told the whole story.* Fred Thomas VP Service – The Baker Group, Des Moines, IA

*“Thank you Mark. You were fantastic.”* George Athens, VP Sales, TD Industries, Dallas, TX (Voted 7 years in a row as one of the Top 100 Companies to Work For by Fortune Magazine)

*“Thank you for an excellent program for our company. It’s an awesome feeling to have 60 plus Sales Reps hitting the streets with vigor, enthusiasm and knowledge. You exceeded our expectations.”* Bill Reedy, CEO, Reedy Industries, Commercial HVAC Co. Chicago, IL

*“I truly enjoyed the seminar and came away with a changed perspective to approaching my job. Thank you. I feel you have the proper perspective about priorities. That alone was worth my time. I sincerely appreciate the time and preparation you have invested to enrich the life’s others through your experiences.”* Jeff Kaloustian-Outside Sales- Advanced Mechanical

*Mark, You accomplished exactly what we set out to do! Look forward to you being a part of our team.*  
Lester Wooldridge, Wooldridge Heating & Air,  
Lynchburg, VA

*I had the pleasure of hearing Mark Matteson present recently. Mark is a best-selling author and international speaker who brings a humorous flare to his audiences when speaking about customer service and self-improvement. Mark comes from the industry, he began his career 40 years ago as a commercial HVAC technician. The unique thing that Mark did that impressed me and others at the 2 day Johnstone Supply dealer meeting was that he stuck around. He didn't just give his talk and then hit the next plane out of town. He returned for follow up sessions and sat at times in the meetings when we wasn't speaking. He ate lunch with the masses and interacted wherever he could. Bring him back next year!*

Kevin Wolf- President – Laney's Inc. Fargo, ND