

# THE SECRET TO SELF-MOTIVATION

**M**otivation makes things happen. Where there's no will, there's no way. Self-motivation is the key to success. Most people have at least some desire to achieve an elevated level of success no matter where they are in life. It could be to live in a nicer house, to drive a better car, to be promoted in the company, to earn a larger salary, to have a more enjoyable marriage, experience a more lavish lifestyle, or leave a lasting legacy for their family. Without a clear vision of success (for you), you won't be able to pinpoint your destination. And if you don't know where you're headed, how will you know when you arrive?

Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Other translations say the people throw off restraint, self-control, or self-discipline. The late Myles Munroe put it this way, "The key to your future is finding a vision that imposes self-discipline on you."<sup>117</sup> Discipline comes from having a clear, compelling vision of what success means to you. Vision simplifies life, controls your choices, and shows you your destination. When your vision is clear, if something doesn't line up with your idea of success, it's easier to resist.

You can't live the life of your dreams if you never dream of it.

Likewise, you can't live a successful life if you never define what success means to you. You see, success is a personal thing. What motivates one person may be radically different for someone else. Until you define what living a successful life means to you, you'll struggle with staying inspired to fulfill your daily habits.

*Merriam-Webster* defines success as “the fact of getting or achieving wealth, respect, or fame,” but this interpretation doesn't totally describe it for me. Throughout this book, I referred to the habits of successful people. In most cases, if not all, the reference of success typically meant someone who's earned millions if not billions of dollars, authored bestselling books, run large companies or even nations, and basically, lives a rock star lifestyle. However, if you ask these individuals their definitions for success, many will admit that the stuff they have accumulated and the achievements they have attained aren't what make them feel accomplished.

Look at some of the definitions for success from some well-known, *successful* people:

- Coach John Wooden, the winningest coach in college basketball history: “Success is peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming.”
- Acclaimed author Maya Angelou: “Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.”
- Spiritual teacher Deepak Chopra: “No. 1, the progressive realization of worthy goals. No. 2, the ability to love and have compassion. No. 3, to be in touch with the creative source inside you. And no. 4, to ultimately move from success to significance.”
- Billionaire Sir Richard Branson: “The more you're actively and practically engaged, the more successful you will feel.”
- Prime Minister Winston Churchill: “Success is going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm.”
- Inventor Thomas Edison: “Success is 1% inspiration, 99%

perspiration.”

- Bill Gates: “It is also nice to feel like you made a difference— inventing something or raising kids or helping people in need.”
- John Paul DeJoria, co-founder of John Paul Mitchell: “Success isn’t how much money you have. Success is not what your position is. Success is how well you do what you do when nobody else is looking.”<sup>118</sup>

In Zig Ziglar’s last book, *Born to Win! Find Your Success Code*, he shares his definitions for success:

**What Success Is:**

1. Success is knowing that you did a great job when you close the door to your office at the end of each workday and head for home.
2. Success is having a home and people to love who love you in return.
3. Success is having the financial security to meet your obligations each month and the knowledge that you have provided that security for your family in the event of your demise.
4. Success is having the kind of faith that lets you know where to turn when there seems to be no place to turn.
5. Success is having an interest or hobby that gives you joy and peace.
6. Success is knowing who you are, and Whose you are.
7. Success is taking good care of you and waking up healthy each day.
8. Success is slipping under the covers at the end of the day and realizing with gratitude that, “It just doesn’t get much better than this!”<sup>119</sup>

## MY DAILY ROUTINE

**Dr. Caroline Leaf**

**Cognitive neuroscientist, author**

### **Daily 5:**

1. Controlling my thought life: I spend around 7-16 minutes every morning gathering and reflecting on my thoughts, seeing what I need to change in my life and focusing on what I am thankful for. I use the 21 day detox process I developed in my clinical research.
2. I spend around 2 hours a day doing research—intellectual stimulation is essential when it comes to our mental health.
3. I start the day off with organic, fair trade black coffee, a good healthy organic breakfast and I make sure every meal I eat is sustainably grown, farmed, and prepared.
4. Every morning and evening I follow a specific skin care routine using organic products and spending between 30 minutes to 1 hour in my infrared sauna.
5. I make sure that I spend daily time talking to and laughing with those I love, my husband and children, and building a strong support system that is there for all of us when we are going through tough times.

You can see from this list that success is defined many different ways, unique to each person.

The secret to self-motivation begins with finding *your* definition of success. It will be the fuel to get you up in the morning and the drive that keeps you awake at night. You must have a reason to succeed. Why is it so important to you? What will you lose if you don't keep going? I want to help you answer these questions in a way that ignites your desire to become disciplined and self-motivated.

Let me show you how I discovered my own definition for success and how it's kept me motivated all these years.

## **1. Define a successful life for you.**

Mark Twain said, "The two greatest days in a person's life are the day you were born and the day you discover why." I believe once you define success on your terms, it gives you a clear picture of where you need to direct your attention and the steps you need to take to get there.

I like to explain this process as if you were handed a bag of 10,000 little puzzle pieces without the picture on the box. You have no idea what these little cardboard chips are supposed to create. Is it the Eiffel Tower? A cupcake with buttercream icing? A field full of daisies? What is this bag of nonsense? However, your job each day is to get up, go to the kitchen table and try to figure this puzzle out. Day after day, you have no idea what you're creating, but you keep working tirelessly to discover the mysterious image. Over time, you would get frustrated, bored, irritated, and lethargic. Why? Because you don't even know what you're doing. Ahhh, but once someone hands you the picture, it all starts to come together. You put the photo in sight and begin finding the pieces to match the image in front of you.

That's what happens when you define success for your life. You develop an image of what your life should look like when you come to the end. You imagine your great-grandkids describing your legacy, your values, your heritage. In fact, Stephen Covey, author of the bestselling book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, defined success in a way that I personally connect with: "If you carefully consider what you want to be said of you in the funeral experience, you will find your definition of success."<sup>120</sup>

## The Assignment of a Lifetime

Let me share with you a personal story that I shared in my first book, *Make Your Dreams Bigger than Your Memories*, of how this unusual act impacted my life for more than three decades and helped me pinpoint my definition of success.

“Class, I want you to get out a sheet of paper and write your full name at the top,” said my high school English teacher, Mrs. Sawyer. “Underneath your name, write your birthdate, and last night’s date.” We all obeyed the instructions; however, we were totally unclear as to what this assignment had to do with diagraming sentences and reporting on current events. Then, she gave this chilling directive, “Now, I want each of you to write your own obituary.”

*What?* I thought, as the entire class of young, healthy, 17-year-olds looked around at each other completely confused and a little creeped out by this morbid assignment.

“What would people say about you at your funeral?” Mrs. Sawyer bluntly asked. “Give it some thought,” she said. “What would your parents say about you? How would your siblings describe you? How would your closest friends describe your personality? How did you spend your time? What were you known for? Who did you help? What would your pastor say about you?”

After she got our minds thinking about all these compelling questions in a way we had never done before, she added this twist, “Class, before you start, I don’t want you to write what you’ve done up to this time in your life. I don’t want you to write how your friends and family would currently describe you. I want you to write what you *want* to be said about you at your funeral someday.”

You see, this awkward and startling assignment was the result of one of the high school students, who was my friend, losing his life the night before. There was a great sense of loss and sadness in the atmosphere on the school grounds. We were at a loss for words and still in shock at his

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sudden, accidental death less than 12 hours prior. Her directive had us on the edge of our seats. If a 17-year-old classmate could lose his life in a tragic, freak accident, what made us any different? What if that had been me who fell out of a truck, by accident, and was run over in front of the school grounds? What stories would people be sharing about me this Friday morning?

My deceased friend, Paul, didn't get another day, month or even year to make any more decisions with his life. He only had the short 17 years he was given on earth to live it the best way possible, and I'm glad to say, he did.

This assignment was more than thought-provoking; it was life-changing, destiny-pointing, and discipline-provoking. More than thirty years later, I obviously still think about Mrs. Sawyer's English class that September morning in 1985. As we completed our assignment that day, Mrs. Sawyer held out her hand to collect the obituaries and made this statement, "Students, you have not only written your obituaries, you've written your dreams...now, go live them."

Wow! What a profound and life-altering assignment. But it's not for high school students alone; it's for you. It's for anyone and everyone who wants to live a life designed to succeed on purpose. It's for anyone who longs to make the years matter and the days count. It's for you today to trigger self-motivation like never before.

When you come to the end of your life and you look back, what do you want people to say about you? How would they describe you? What would they say you did during your time on earth? Did you make a difference in any one's life? Were you focused on making an impact? Did you do all the things you said you would do? Did you live a full life? Did you have a vision before you? Did you fully enjoy the value of each day?

Or did you live a life of regret, visionless, going through the motions without much thought about your purpose? Did you waste

days watching television, gossiping, scrolling through social media for countless hours, pushing the snooze button, and letting opportunities pass you by?

Twenty years after that life-changing moment in high school, I returned to that assignment as I sat at my keyboard and began writing my new, revised obituary. I sat in my guest bedroom in 2006 with nothing but a laptop and a head full of questions, ideas, thoughts, and dreams. I wrote my full name at the top with my birthdate underneath (but no “expiration date” attached...I’m not prophesying anything!). I began writing exactly how I want to be remembered as a person, a wife, a mother, a daughter, a friend, a leader, and a world changer.

I wrote big, audacious, crazy, out-of-the-realm-of-possibility paragraphs that immediately brought up questions like, “How in the world...?” and “Who do you think you are?” But I didn’t let that stop me from dreaming. I let my imagination soar and my aspirations exceed what I was currently capable of doing.

Something remarkable happened. It caused a flame in me to ignite and come alive like no other exercise I had ever done before. It was a completely different mental challenge than writing down my goals for the year of paying off debts and losing five pounds. When you imagine coming to the end of your life and your closest family and friends are describing how you lived it, you’ll want them saying more than, “She finally paid off that student loan!” No, this exercise will awaken dreams in you that you never thought possible.

What you’re doing is defining success for *you*. As creepy as it sounds, you’re writing what you want printed in black and white on the back pages of your local (or global) newspaper for all the world to read. Why not write something that inspires others to get up off the couch, make a difference with their lives, and truly live their definition of success.



## **It's Your Turn**

Now, it's your turn. Write the obituary you want to have written about you. Use the same journal you're using during your prayer and meditation time. You don't have to write this all in one sitting. You probably won't. Take your time with this. It may take days or weeks of thinking and rewriting, scribbling or deleting. Think as big as you can. Dream as far as you can. Imagine as broad as possible. You are setting the course for your destiny with every word.

With extreme humility and enormous gratitude, I can honestly say that nearly everything I wrote in my far-fetched obituary in the year 2006 is nearly all achieved. Don't worry. That doesn't mean that my time is up. It simply means that I've revised my eulogy, added paragraphs to my life, and stretched myself even further to live out everything Jesus died to give me. And He wants that for you, too.

Earl Nightingale famously said, "First, we have to define success and here is the best definition I've ever been able to find: 'Success is the progressive realization of a worthy ideal.' A success is the school teacher who is teaching because that's what he or she wants to do. A success is the entrepreneur who starts his own company because that was his dream—that's what he wanted to do. A success is the salesperson who wants to become the best salesperson in his or her company and sets forth on the pursuit of that goal. A success is anyone who is realizing a worthy predetermined ideal, because that's what he or she decided to do...deliberately."<sup>121</sup>

You get the chance today, right now, to deliberately decide your own definition of success, and then hold yourself accountable for living it. In essence, go write your dream obituary...and then live it.

## **2. Define an unsuccessful life for you.**

As equally important for fueling your motivation, you need to paint a

vivid picture of life with no improvement beyond today. As discouraging as it sounds, this exercise can be quite motivating.

I will never forget in 2009 when I was contemplating my future and nearly allowing fear to stop me dead in my tracks.

I had gotten comfortable as the CEO for my father's ministry for the past six years. I loved what I was doing serving him in ministry. What once stretched me beyond my capacity had become a position I eventually held with more ease. I thoroughly enjoyed working behind the scenes, meeting with my teams, brainstorming, ghostwriting, and sitting behind my beautiful black desk in Crowley, Texas. But I knew God was calling me to minister and to reach more people than my co-workers at staff meetings within the four walls of our headquarters. I had been ministering a bit, but I had reached a crossroads in my life where it was either go halfway or go all-in.

God doesn't let us get too comfortable for too long. He's constantly stretching us to new heights. But comfort and convenience run the lives of unsuccessful people. The thought of stepping out of my comfort zone to minister on stage, to write books, and to be in the public eye in a greater degree was frightening. I felt a tug inside that I needed to launch my ministry on a wider scale, but the thought of hiring my own staff, paying salaries, buying equipment, leasing offices, not to mention opening myself up to more criticism, more opinions, and more exposure was paralyzing me with fear.

There was a struggle between what I thought I should do versus what I wanted to do. I liked being comfortable. I liked my nest, so-to-speak, at my dad's ministry where I had grown into a leader. I felt blessed getting to serve my dad. What was wrong with staying cozy there? On the other hand, what if I missed out on what God had called me to do because I was too afraid to step out?

Finally, to end the battle in my mind, I decided to paint a vivid picture of my life 10 years into the future if I didn't change a thing. I

have to be honest with you, this exercise in my imagination was just as eye-opening and life-altering as writing my dream obituary. I added up my age 10 years into the future, my wedding anniversary, my daughter's age, as well as my years of employment with my father's organization.

On that same laptop, in the same guest bedroom where I wrote my obituary a few years earlier, I drew the opposite scenario of my life as if nothing changed from 2009 to the year 2019. I typed it in high-definition, leaving nothing out so I couldn't second guess myself any longer. I went through my routine from the moment I woke up (in the same bedroom), went to the same gym, drove the same roads, sat at the same desk, ate at the same restaurant, worked with some of the same people, and lived the exact same life.

I imagined my daughter coming to visit me (she would be out of school by then) and meeting me for lunch at my same lunchroom. I described how I felt as we caught up on each other's lives; however, I didn't have much to tell her because nothing had changed. When I imagined her hugging me goodbye, I went back up to my office, and I was embarrassed, ashamed, and felt like I had let her down because I didn't live my dreams as I always encouraged her to do. Again, it wasn't that my life was so bad, it was about knowing God was calling me to do more, but I disobeyed.

I imagined running into my former co-workers from 2009, and I was disappointed in myself. I remember typing out how I didn't want to see them because I knew that I had let them down. They knew I had potential to do more, but I had chosen comfort over my calling.

I'll spare you all the laborious thoughts that raced through my mind as I painted this picture. By the end of it, I will never forget writing these words: "Rodney and I are comfortable. We live in a nice house. I earn a good salary. We go on a Hawaiian vacation every summer. But how many scrapbooks can I make of Rodney and Terri on the beach? I'm comfortable, but I'm miserable. I know God had more for my life, but I was too scared. I'm disappointed in myself. I'm full of regret."

As I typed the words flowing out of me without much forethought, my eyes were wide open to the harsh reality that I had to shake off the complacency, face my fears, and step boldly out of my comfort zone into my destiny!

That picture of an unsuccessful life fueled me to never let that be the eulogy spoken of me at my funeral. I challenge you to invest the time it takes to sit quietly with yourself and paint a vivid, play-by-play description of your day-to-day life 10 years from right now if you don't adapt these daily successful habits.

What does your life look like as you add another decade assuming you choose to stop and settle where you are today? Are you satisfied? Are you comfortable? Are you disappointed in yourself? Do you feel that you had greater potential than what you tapped? Are you embarrassed to run into your former co-workers seeing how they moved on and went for their dreams but you're still in the same spot a decade later? What do you talk about at dinner 10 years from now? What do your children say you're doing with your life? Do they brag on you as their inspiration and their role model?

The good news is, it's not 10 years from now. It's only today, and you get to choose how you want to be remembered and how you want to live the next decade of your life.

### **3. Know your why.**

The reasons why you want to achieve something are extremely motivating in keeping you disciplined. But they can't just be superficial reasons; they need to be deep and profound as we saw when you take the time to write your dream obituary.

As much as I love vision boards and showing you how to live your dreams, I don't simply believe that a successful life is solely about reaching all your goals and checking them off. If that were the case, then why would comedic actor Robin Williams hang himself in a mansion in

Beverly Hills surrounded by goals achieved, awards earned, and money in the bank? As heartbreaking as it was to hear that news and as much as I loved watching him excel in his craft, he lacked something in his life to bring him true joy and fulfillment.

### **A Clipboard and Keys**

On July 9, 2003, I found my why. When people ask me how I stay motivated or if I ever get tired of my routine year after year, I always respond with my story of a clipboard and keys.

It was 5:30 in the morning that hot, July day in Texas, and I was out walking in my neighborhood. I was still filled with anxiety and guilt from my past, and battling my worth and value to even have a dream in my heart. As I made my routine lap around the cul-de-sac, I prayed quietly under my breath asking God once again to forgive me for my awful sins. But this time, something happened. In a vision, I saw myself standing at the foot of the cross, and I looked up and saw the feet of Jesus. Blood was dripping from His feet and landing on the top of my head. Inside, I clearly heard the Lord speak these words to me, “I’m washing the memories away,” as His blood covered my head.

Next, the blood of Jesus flowed down to my heart, and I heard Him whisper, “I am the Healer of the brokenhearted.” His crimson blood poured all the way down to the bottom of my feet, and the Lord said, “The residue of sin is gone from you.”

The next thing I saw was a big arm reach down from Heaven and hand me a clipboard. With it, I heard these words, “This is an assignment on your life.” Then, the other arm reached down and handed me keys and explained, “And here are the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven to help you fulfill your assignment.”

What exactly did that life-altering vision mean and how could something so bizarre and imaginary fuel my motivation for decades? Well, for one, God was vividly showing me proof that the blood of

Jesus washes our sins away. He was offering me supernatural amnesia of my past! He showed me that He can heal every broken place in our lives and that we don't have to be reminded of our past ever again.

The clipboard was a clear picture proving that you and I have an assignment by God, a future, a calling, a purpose for being born. The keys to walking out that purpose are clearly written in God's Word, and I've been sharing them with you throughout this book and in each message I teach.

Since that pivotal moment that summer morning, I found a Bible verse that illustrates what I saw and provides my why for staying focused. John 17:4 says, "I glorified You on earth by completing down to the last detail what you assigned me to do" (MSG). That is the verse I am driven to accomplish. I see every person being given a clipboard from Heaven with your name written across the top, and there is an assignment God is going to hold you accountable for fulfilling during your time on earth.

In the words of John Bevere, I am "driven by eternity." My ultimate goal in life is to stand before God and say, "I did exactly what You assigned me to do down to the last detail." My mission in life is to go all over the world teaching the keys to fulfilling the life assignment on your clipboard so you can stand before God and hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Let this drive you to get up each morning and practice your disciplines and habits because it's leading you closer and closer to the overall assignment God has for your life...and He's going to hold you accountable for fulfilling it. Let this verse speak to you personally: "Perhaps this is the moment for which you have been created" (Esther 4:14).

### **3 Commands for You Today**

I love the story in the Bible of the guy laying by the pool of Bethesda.

Apparently, the sick and disabled people would lay by this pool waiting for an angel to stir the water and the first to enter would be healed. John 5 records when Jesus noticed this one invalid laying by the pool and realized that he had been in that same position for 38 years. He asked the poor man, “Are you sure you want to get well?”

Think about this. Why would Jesus ask an obviously handicapped man if he wanted to get well? Of course, this man wants to be healthy and whole, living a normal life. Why would Jesus need to ask such an obvious question? Well, the reason he asked is because *nothing had changed in 38 years!* Allow your mind to process the numbers. Nearly four decades of idleness...just waiting.

When Joyce Meyer teaches from this passage, she makes me laugh with her version of the invalid man’s whiny, self-pitying response, “Yes, but while I am waiting (for someone to come and get me), someone else always gets in front of me.” In her sarcastic humor, she says, “In 38 years, I could at least wiggle myself over to the pool and fall in!”

My question for you (and I had to answer this myself) is this: *Are you sure* you want what you say you want? Are you sure you want to be debt free? Are you sure you want to lose that weight? Are you sure you want that job or promotion? Are you sure you want to start a business or have your own ministry? Are you sure you want to open a dance studio, daycare center, orphanage, or catering business? Why? Because nothing has changed in 5 years, 10 years, 17 years, or even 38 years.

What was Jesus’ response to this sick man who had been waiting to be healed for so long? You might imagine that He said something along the lines of, “Oh bless your heart. You have been through so much. Let me help you up and get you the proper care you need.”

No, in his heart of compassion, Jesus gave the man three commands:

1. Get up.
2. Pick up your bed.
3. Walk.

In comparison, what could Jesus be saying to *you* today?

Get up! Pick up your guitar and play!

Get up! Pick up your resume and get that dream job!

Get up! Pick up your passport and go on the mission field!

Get up! Pick up your courage and open your business!

Get up! Pick up your bottom and go to the gym!

Get up! Pick up your license and sell homes!

Get up! Pick up your manuscript and write that bestselling book!

In other words, nobody else can do this for you. You have to pick yourself up! You have to make the decision to not wallow around another year, complaining about the conditions, waiting for somebody to help you. You have to decide not to come to the end of your life with regret. Les Brown says, “If you fall down, try to land on your back. As long as you can look up—you can get up!”

#### **4. Desire success more than any competing desire.**

**“Desire: the starting point of  
ALL achievement.”  
- Napoleon Hill**

Have you ever played that old machine at a carnival or an arcade room where it measures your passion? You squeeze the handle, and the red light goes up and down rotating between: uncontrollable, hot stuff, passionate, burning, sexy, wild, mild, harmless, or clammy. You hope it lands on something “steamy” in front of your friends! That game (as silly as it is) is designed to rate your passion. Wouldn't it be great if we could measure the passion level for our dreams as easily? Drop a quarter in the machine, squeeze the handle and see what your odds for success



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are. Honestly, I believe we can measure our passion that easily. “How?” You ask. By the results in our lives.

The number one motivating factor behind the achievement of your dreams is desire. In other words, how badly do you want what you say you want? Because your results prove it. How badly you desire a thing dictates *your behavior* and reflects the *level of effort* you are willing to put forth.

The bottom line is: if you desire something badly enough, you will get it! If you really want to lose weight, you will. If you really want to get out of debt, you will. If you really want to start a business, you will. If you really want to go on a European cruise, you will. If you really want to write a book, you will. If you really want to save \$10,000, you will. If you really want to draw closer to God, you will. It’s simple. We do what we truly desire to do.

If a guy really wants to go out with a girl, he will call. He will text. He will show up. He will do these things because he desires her. If he doesn’t desire her badly enough, he won’t call, he won’t text, he won’t show up. In other words, move on. People do what they truly desire to do. It may sound harsh, but it’s the truth.

That’s why you see a woman who’s been married for 10 years, battling with her weight for the past seven. Then suddenly, she goes through a painful divorce and within months, she’s lost 25 pounds! What happened? Her attention shifted. Her motivations changed. How did she finally get victory over her body? Desire! She strongly desired to remarry, or to make her ex jealous, or realized how valuable she was. Whatever the reason, desire is the number one motivating factor behind change. Weak desires bring weak results. Strong desires bring strong results.

We’ve discovered throughout this book that you are where you are right this minute because of you, your choices, your desires, and your level of commitment. Because of your level of desire, you have what

you have at this moment in your life. That could mean a fit body, a healthy savings account, a successful career, a strong family, and an intimate relationship with God...or not.

I know a 15-year-old girl who had a strong desire to go on a costly mission trip to Europe. She was so inspired by the vision of this outreach that she set a goal to raise the \$7,000 required, somehow-someway. She made a vision board with photos of all the European countries she would be touring (Italy, France, England, and Germany). Then, she wrote the seemingly impossible amount of \$7,000 to raise in one year's time, but she had the faith to believe and a strong, compelling desire to achieve it. She began looking for every opportunity she could find to raise money. She had a garage sale, cleaned houses, taught dance lessons, babysat kids, made clothing and sold it, asked for money, and other various jobs. This teenage girl with no full-time job raised \$7,000 in 11 months! How? Desire!

Now, think about a credit card or student loan you may be carrying for three years paying the minimum amount of \$25.00 on a \$5,000 balance that looks impossible to pay off. Why is it taking so long? Weak desires bring weak results. When you get determined to pay off your debts and start building your financial savings account, you will surprise yourself by the creative ideas you'll find to get debt-free! Strong desires bring strong results.

How do you elevate your desires to truly go after your dreams? You change your desires by changing what you give attention to. Stop looking at what you're giving up and focus on where you're going. For example, if you have a desire to start saving money, but you also have a competing desire to go shopping, then you must give more attention to your goal of financial security than you do going to the mall or browsing your favorite shops online. In other words, give attention to reading books about financial freedom, listen to podcasts, play audiobooks, look at your savings goal on your vision board, remind yourself of

people you know who were left with nothing, widows or widowers who died and left their spouses with all the bills and no savings account or life insurance. When you give your financial goal massive amounts of attention, your desire to achieve it will be unquenchable.

Get this phrase ingrained in your mind: You change your desires by changing what you give attention to. Desire is the motivating factor behind change. Do what you need to do to elevate your desire. Put your goals on the screen saver of your phone, the dash of your car, the screen on your computer. Surround yourself with new desires. When you desire something with great intensity, you will get it!

## **5. Don't compare your ambition with anyone else.**

It is *vital* important on the road to your dreams that you do not compare your new success habits with anyone else. You will, most likely, look around at the people closest to you and observe them sleeping in until 9 a.m. while you force yourself up before the sun. You'll witness them binge watching the latest show on Netflix while you're watching a Ted Talk. While they're dancing around in the morning, jamming out to *your* favorite beats, you're listening to another motivational podcast. While they're posting on Facebook, you're finishing off another book. While they're going to the mall, you're going to the gym. It's not fair, is it? Or is it?

I love Joyce Meyer's powerful reminder from a time in her life when she questioned why she was required to work so hard when others around here weren't. The Lord reminded her of her audacious dreams with this question, "Joyce, you've asked Me for a lot. Do you want it or not?"

I have held onto those words every time self-pity tries to consume my thought life. When I start to feel sorry for myself for all the hours I invest in my daily five while others are napping, swimming, shopping, and

surfing the web, that's when I am reminded of my *clipboard and keys* (aka my assignment).

Whatever God has called you to do, it's going to require a lot out of you. I would imagine, since you're reading a book like this, you've asked the Lord for some pretty big dreams, and it's going to require a pretty big commitment. Do you want it or not?

When you are tempted to compare your life to theirs (whoever they are), your habits to theirs, your dreams to theirs, you have to remember, God hasn't told them what He's told you. They may not share the same drive, aspiration, or self-motivation as you, so don't expect it. In fact, let it encourage you that you're not like the average person. You're no longer mediocre, second-rate, average, or ordinary. You're exceptional, phenomenal, tremendous, and extraordinary.

You're on the path to success and gearing up for greatness. God is preparing you privately so He can use you publicly.

We are reminded in Galatians 6:9, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we will reap if we faint not." All your hard work, early hours, commitment, and self-motivation will pay off. If you truly want to live the life of your dreams, it will always require four little words from you: *a little bit more!* Successful people do what's expected of them—plus a little bit more!

Charles Kendall Adams said, "No student ever attains very eminent success by simply doing what is required of him; it is the amount of excellence of what is over and above the required that determines greatness."<sup>122</sup>

The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little word: extra! William Arthur Ward's poem, "While Others Are", nails the description of the road to success:

Believe while others are doubting  
Plan while others are playing  
Study while others are sleeping

Decide while others are delaying  
Prepare while others are daydreaming  
Begin while others are procrastinating  
Work while others are wishing  
Save while others are wasting  
Listen while others are talking  
Smile while others are frowning  
Commend while others are criticizing  
Persist while others are quitting

## **6. Declare a fast.**

If you've battled for years with a lack of self-discipline, then I highly recommend that you take this issue to the Lord in prayer and declare a fast. There is something powerful that happens when we call on Heaven and make a commitment to fast before the Lord.

Especially when you've battled destructive habits (overeating, gossiping, overspending, laziness, gambling, eating too much sugar, etc.) and you want to break the habit at once, you need to consider going on a fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Pray daily and call on Heaven to give you the supernatural strength to break the power of any addiction in Jesus' Name.

Be clear on why you're fasting. In this case, it's to develop a lifestyle of discipline and good habits in your life. The type of fast you choose is completely up to you. You could go on a full fast in which you only drink liquids, or you may choose to do the "Daniel fast," based on Daniel who abstained from sweets, meats, and any drink but water. Many times, I design my own fast which involves refraining from specific foods that I crave. Jentzen Franklin says, "If it means something to you, it means something to God."

Choose a starting date on the calendar and decide exactly how long you want to fast. You can fast as long as you like. Some people fast 1–3 days, 21 days, or a full 40 days. Keep your commitment to the Lord and

to yourself. When you do, you are no longer trying to be disciplined in your own strength; you now have Almighty God giving you supernatural strength.

I highly recommend reading Jentzen Franklin's book, *Fasting*, to gain a true understanding of the reasons and benefits of going on a fast. Fasting is truly a prerequisite to experiencing major breakthroughs in your life. It is not recommended to do strenuous exercises when you're fasting all foods. So, be wise. Educate yourself in fasting, and be aware of how much physical activity you can afford to do.

Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible. Keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face. Let me give you this little piece of advice: Never again say that you are undisciplined! Think of that statement like cursing because it is cursing your own future. Start declaring, "I am disciplined in my spirit, soul, and body."

Being self-motivated is one of the most essential traits to living your dreams. Though most people acknowledge its importance, few maintain it. The fact that you are inspired to be more disciplined, to improve your routine, and to keep yourself motivated is a sign of inner strength and desire. As your discipline grows, so will your confidence and self-esteem. The most successful people in the world are self-motivated and have self-discipline.

Don't strive for perfection; strive to complete your assignment...down to the last detail.

## MY DAILY ROUTINE

**Kelli Finglass**

**Director of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders**

**Daily 5:**

1. Each evening: I layout my wardrobe, I pre-pack my work bag, my outfit, charge my phone, and load my car.
2. By eliminating any morning time wasters the evening before, I cherish my quiet time in the morning.
3. I listen to a podcast.
4. I read a devotional. I **MUST** consume something positive, energizing, or refreshing before I look at email or start social media.
5. To stay focused on my priorities and professional goals, I have categorized my days into 7 to-do lists. Anything that needs to get done hits one of these lists. I just assign it to a specific day in my reminders app in my phone.

# MORE BY THE AUTHOR

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*Dream it. Pin it. Live it.*

*Imagine Big*

*Make Your Dreams Bigger  
Than Your Memories*

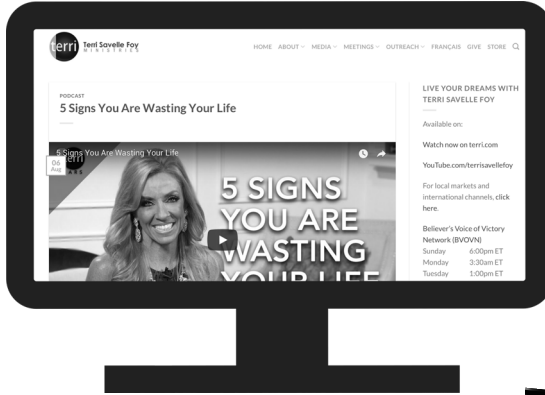
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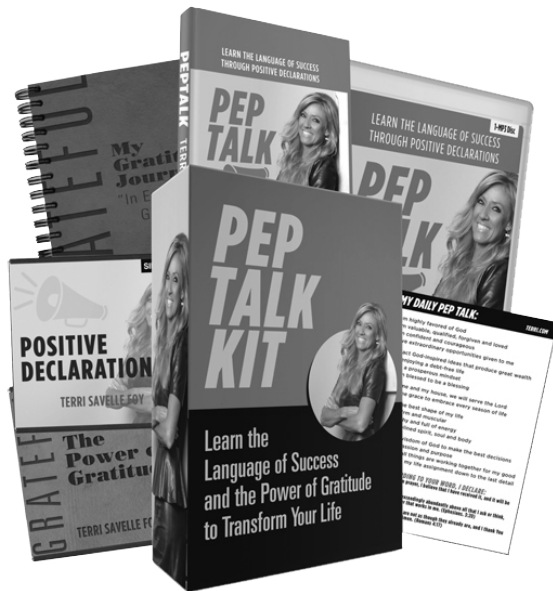
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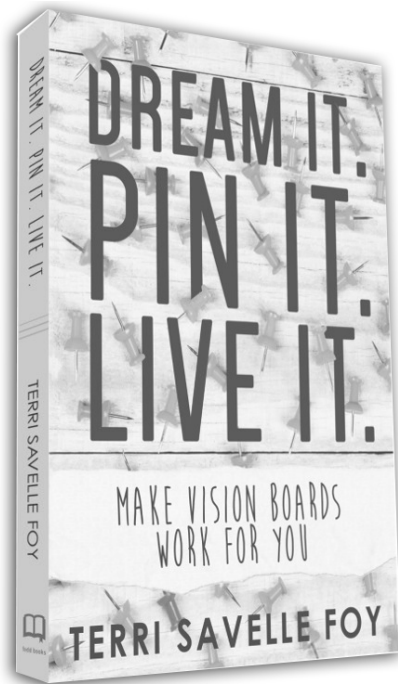


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