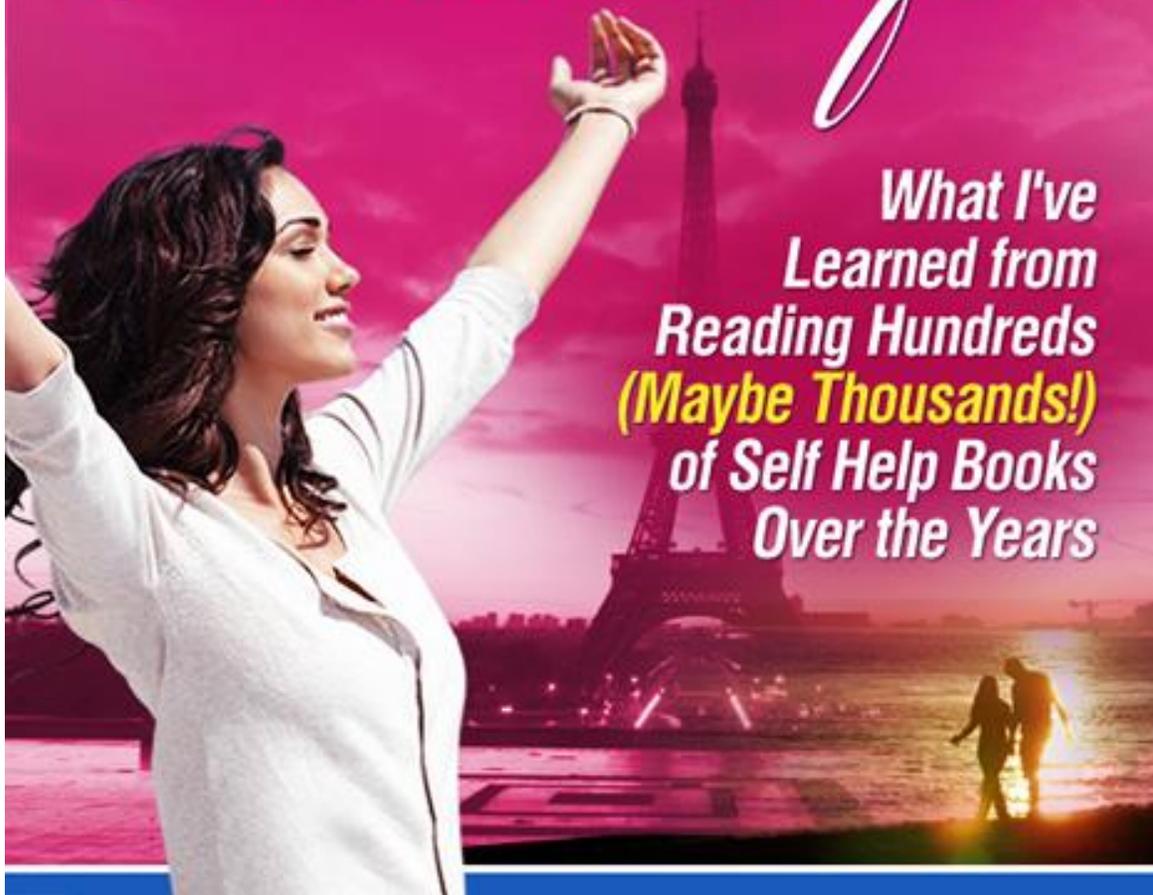


Self Help Goddess, **Mary Knebel's**

Secrets to Creating Your Ideal Life

**What I've
Learned from
Reading Hundreds
(**Maybe Thousands!**)
of Self Help Books
Over the Years**



www.selfhelpgoddess.com

Secrets to Creating Your Ideal Life

By Mary Knebel

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Preface

Thank you for reading *Secrets to Creating Your Ideal Life!*

It is my intention to share with you here some of the most effective techniques I have learned over the past fifteen or so years in reading hundreds (possibly thousands!) of self help books, in hopes of inspiring you and helping you to create your ideal life.

What Is This Ebook?

For as long as I can remember, I've always had an enormous passion for creating my ideal life. On this journey to making my dreams come true in my own life, I've been drawn to various books and resources that have helped me significantly. I've gathered several tips and much wisdom along the way, and you will find these resources among these pages. It is my desire to share that knowledge with you here, in sincere hopes that what I'm sharing with you will allow you to go out there and create the life of your dreams.

The journey to making your dreams come true is a personal one, and will vary from one individual to the next. However, I absolutely believe 100% that everyone has the potential and ability to create their ideal life, no matter what that entails for them. I truly hope that by the time you have finished reading this ebook, you will feel not only as if you have been introduced to new ways of thinking about the world around you, but will also feel that you really *can* have your ideal life. That is probably the reason I love reading self help books so much, because they fill me with a sense of confidence that I can accomplish anything I desire.

Whether you enjoy reading self help books or not, this ebook will describe to you some of the most effective techniques out there to help you make your dreams come true, starting NOW.

Perhaps you are wanting to:

- attract more money
- create a fulfilling career
- form satisfying relationships
- find your soulmate
- have better health
- go on exotic vacations
- lose weight or create your ideal body

Whatever your dreams may be, you will find tools and techniques in these pages that will steer you in the direction of making even your wildest dreams come true. I always say, the wilder the better!

Everything in this ebook has been tested over and over again by me, in my own life, and has helped me achieve remarkable results. I have only included tools and techniques that I have personally used and that have helped me; if not, you won't find them here.

Obviously this ebook does not contain all of the self help tools and resources that are out there, because there are far too many to list in one place. Instead, this ebook is meant to provide you with a sampling of some of the theories, tips, and techniques I have discovered and put to use over the years, in an attempt to motivate you and inspire you to begin creating the life of your dreams.

If you are new to the arena of self help, then I hope this information will serve as a starting point for you to dig even deeper into the world of personal growth, which has proven to be so rewarding for me over the years. If, on the other hand, you are a seasoned self help "junkie" like I am, then I hope this ebook will serve as a helpful refresher of the powerful techniques that are out there.

Although some of these concepts may already be familiar to you, I've tried to present them in a way that will really resonate with you and allow you to understand them on a deeper level than ever before. In other words, I show you how to actually *apply* these concepts in your life to get the results you're after. I've had to learn how to take the wisdom I've found in various self help books and translate that into real results in my life, and you'll find that information here. I know these techniques work because I've applied them in my own life time and time again.

For additional self help tips and resources, please visit my website at www.selfhelpgoddess.com. I've dedicated that site to finding, reviewing, and recommending the best self help books and resources that are out there to help others create their ideal life. This has been a personal passion of mine for years, and I'm excited to now have a place where I can share with you what I've discovered. You will also find additional resources on the Recommended Reading page at the end of this ebook.

Writing *Secrets to Creating Your Ideal Life* has allowed me to really get in touch with and re-visit some of the most powerful methods I've used over the years to make magical things happen for me in my life. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to write this, and I sincerely hope you will enjoy reading this as much as I've enjoyed writing it!

Chapter One: Introduction

Who Am I?

My name is Mary Knebel and I'm known on-line as the Self Help Goddess, because I love reading and reviewing the best self help books and products that I can get my hands on and passing that information onto others.

Ever since I was a little girl, I remember having a fascination with creating my ideal life and seeking out resources that would allow me to do that. From a very early age, my dad encouraged me to read as much as I could. We would go to the bookstore often, and we had an agreement whereby he would buy me any book I wanted so long as I would read it. I'll admit, sometimes the book I picked out would be the latest *Babysitters' Club* book. Many times, however, I picked out self help or spiritual books that were way above the normal reading level of an 8-year-old! For some reason, that's always been what I've been drawn to. Even to this day, when I go into any bookstore I head immediately for the self help section and get excited to see what books are waiting for me there.

Throughout high school and college, I continued reading every self help book I could get my hands on. I really loved reading this literature, and even today when I come across the books I read back then it brings back so many positive memories. Reading these books growing up made me feel like anything was possible, that I could be whoever I wanted, and that life was like one big Sears catalogue, just waiting for me to pick what I wanted!

While devouring as much self help and spiritual literature as I could over the years, I also began to notice that I had a particular knack for making things happen in my life exactly the way I wanted. Things and experiences I wanted just had a way of falling right into my lap, often times with very little effort on my part. I had my fair share of difficulties, but on the whole I had a pretty easy time making things happen exactly the way I wanted them to and it was as if I had some sort of "magical touch."

As my college years came to a close and graduation approached, it was time for me to figure out "what to do with my life." I interviewed with several consulting firms looking to hire bright-eyed, bushy-tailed college graduates, but I was just wasn't interested. For some reason, the only thing that excited me was moving to France!

Besides self help and personal growth, France and speaking French are my other main passions in life. I'm a true Francophile and love all things French. I had spent the second semester of my junior year in college in Aix-en-Provence (a small town in the south of France), and just *had* to go back. I didn't have a job lined up, or a place to stay, or even an idea of what city I would live in once I got there. All I knew was that I had to go! Armed with several of my favorite self help books for inspiration and guidance, as well as a healthy dose of youthful naiveté, I boarded a plane for France! (Note: When you only have a limited number of suitcases to take abroad with you, packing and carrying around 20 or so heavy books is NOT your best bet!).

As I tell you the story of how things unfolded for me in France, you will begin to understand what I mean about everything falling into place for me. It was when I moved to France that I really began to see that I had a special knack for making things happen, which I attribute directly to all the knowledge I have gained over the years by reading self help and spiritual-based books.

The one thing I had planned for my adventure in France was a month-long stay at an immersion school in the south of France in the French Riviera. French came naturally to me and I had studied it in school since kindergarten, so I already spoke it pretty well. I was planning to stay in France for about six months, though, and figured that if I was going to stay there that long I might as well commit to becoming fluent in the language once and for all. This had been a childhood dream of mine, and I was ready to check it off my list!

I arrived at the school in the French Riviera, in a charming seaside town called Villefranche-sur-Mer. I honestly felt like I had died and gone to heaven! I remember thinking to myself that if I never did anything “meaningful” for the rest of my life, I would be satisfied just by having lived in this town for a month. The town is built on a hillside along the ocean coast between Nice and Monaco, and was just about the most magical thing I had ever seen. Celebrities like Tina Turner and Elton John own vacation homes there, so you can imagine just how wonderful this place is! It is a port town right along the water, so yachts and cruise ships would pull up daily and unload their passengers to browse the quaint stores and restaurants overlooking the shore.

The French immersion language school I was attending was in this town, and I was so lucky to call this place my home for a month. While at the school, I made some great friends who ended up being very instrumental in my decision to move to Paris following the immersion course. Attending the school was the only thing I had planned for my journey to France. After that, everything was up in the air and I just assumed I’d figure it out as I went!

Following my stay in this wonderful town and my studies at the French school, I decided that my next move would be to Paris. Again, nothing was really figured out for my journey but a series of “coincidences” and following my intuition led me to end up in Paris, where I assumed I’d stay six months or so before returning to the US.

When I arrived in Paris, I immediately found a small studio apartment to rent in the middle of the city. It was my third or so day in Paris and only the first apartment I visited, but it was exactly what I needed. The owner was an Australian lady who was returning to Australia for two months, so I decided to rent the apartment for two months while I figured out my next step!

During that time, I found a job at a real estate rental agency that specialized in finding rental homes for Americans to stay in while vacationing in Paris. They needed a bi-lingual receptionist for three months, and I fit the bill. Talk about being forced to master the French language in a pinch! For anyone who speaks a foreign language, you know that speaking on the phone is quite tricky because the words all sound alike at first. Not to

mention I had to learn new vocabulary relating to the various neighborhoods in Paris, rental home terminology, etc. It was a steep learning curve, but I was up for the task. In the meantime, the Australian woman was returning back to Paris after her two months in Australia and I would need a new place to stay. No problem! An American woman I had met at the language immersion school was living in an apartment in Paris and offered to let me move in with her indefinitely. The apartment was in the absolute center of Paris on the Ile St. Louis, the smaller island in the middle of the Seine River.

I was having a ball living and working in Paris, to say the least. My three-month job at the rental agency was coming to a close, though, and because I had taken about a month of downtime between the language school and working, my six month timeframe of staying in France was quickly winding down. I began to get this aching feeling in my chest telling me I absolutely had to stay longer and figure something else out, but what would I do? Not to mention I would need a French company to sponsor me in order to get a longer visa than the student visa I had previously been working under.

Before long, I had my answer! My dad came to Paris on a business trip, and while he was there we were invited to a dinner party at the home of a friend he had met several years earlier. She was an American attorney married to a Frenchman, and was working for an international law firm. It just so happens that the law firm she worked for needed a bilingual translator to translate various legal documents, and was looking to hire someone who had recently graduated from college. They would sponsor my visa for a year and a half, and take care of all the necessary arrangements. Problem solved!

For the next year and a half I stayed at this law firm translating documents of all sorts, mainly from French to English. I achieved French mastery like I had always wanted, not to mention had the absolute time of my life exploring the City of Lights.

At the end of the year and a half at this firm, I decided to move back to the US. I had been in France for a total of about two years by that point, and was starting to get homesick. All of my friends in the US were experiencing things that I couldn't necessarily experience because I was living in Paris, and I knew it was time to go back.

Just as everything had worked out so magically for me in France, the same was true when I moved back to the US and descended upon Washington, DC. True to form, I didn't have a job lined up or an idea of what I was going to do, but this time I did have a place to stay! A friend from college was living in a townhome in Arlington with two other girls, and was looking for a fourth person to rent the extra room. Once again, mission solved.

As you can see, for being a 22-year-old fresh out of college with no real plans lined up, I had a remarkably easy time finding my way around France. Things came to me right on cue, people appeared at the right times, and everything worked out exactly as I needed it to. I began to understand that I truly did have a special knack for creating magic in my life.

Throughout this ebook, you will be learning the exact same secrets I used to create my miraculous two-year journey in France, as well as countless other experiences in my life that have unfolded the exact same way.

I sincerely hope you enjoy it!

Everyone Deserves to Be Living Their Ideal Life

Before we dive in and explore the specific techniques I'd like to share with you, let me start by asking you a few questions:

- 1) What specifically drew you to this ebook?
- 2) Does it excite you to know that you can have your ideal life?
- 3) Are you ready to begin creating your ideal life now?
- 4) Do you truly believe with all your heart that you can live your ideal life on a daily basis?

How you answered that last question actually has a lot to do with whether or not you will ultimately achieve your wildest dreams and live your ideal life. In order to get the most benefit from the methods found in this ebook, you'll want to start with a foundation of truly believing deep down that you can achieve your ideal life.

As you will see in subsequent chapters, your thoughts and beliefs create your reality. What you are thinking and feeling directly impacts what you experience in your life! Therefore, if you don't truly believe deep down that you can make all of your wildest dreams come true, that's the first place you'll want to place your attention along this journey.

Personally, I believe that anyone who is truly committed to making his or her aspirations come true has that potential, if certain steps are followed. That doesn't necessarily mean that it will be easy, or that you will never have challenges or obstacles to deal with ever again. However, if you are living a life in which you are happy, fulfilled, and deeply satisfied on a regular basis, those challenges and obstacles will seem more like "adventures" or "opportunities for growth."

Let me ask you again:

"Do you truly believe with all your heart that you can live your ideal life on a daily basis?"

If the answer is yes, let's get started!

Chapter Two: What Do You Really Want?

Once you believe that you can in fact create your ideal life, the first step in doing so is deciding what you want. Well, d'uh! You'd be amazed, though, at how many people neglect this step and then wonder why things aren't working out for them. So many people think they have no control over their lives and must accept whatever is handed to them. If their parents were poor, they assume they have to be poor. If their parents were unhappy in their careers, they think they will experience the same unhappiness in their careers.

I can assure you, however, that you DO have control over your life and you CAN create exactly what you want! By the time you've finished reading this ebook, I hope you will truly believe that you can create your ideal life and that you will be inspired to take the steps to do so. Keep reading, and you'll figure out how.

Decide What You Want

Right now, stop for a moment and ask yourself: "What do I want out of life?" or "What does my ideal life look like?" The question is not about what you think you can have, or what you think you deserve, or what your parents want for you, or what society thinks you should have. Rather, what do YOU really want?

This is where it can get tricky. So many of us gave up dreaming a long time ago because we became convinced we would never be able to make our dreams come true. We pushed our deepest desires way down and can barely even remember them today. As children, we had very active imaginations and could dream as far as our imaginations would take us. Sadly, most of us have abandoned those days of make-believe and have succumbed to the "real world," where bills are due and food has to be put on the table.

For those of us lucky enough to remember our dreams, unfortunately they are often still attached to negative messages we've heard over the years like:

- "How will you make money doing that?"
- "You're not any good at that!"
- "No one's ever done that before, so what makes you think you can?"

Or my personal favorite:

- "That's a stupid idea!"

As a result, most of us stopped believing in our dreams a *long* time ago because people around us told us we would never achieve them. Worse yet, they may have even made us feel like achieving them would be extremely difficult, if not downright impossible.

Be sure to include as many details as possible in the description of your ideal life. This is the life of your wildest dreams, so really get into it! For example, who is with you? What are you wearing? How do you spend your free time? What does your ideal day look like? What are the dominant feelings you experience on a regular basis?

Go ahead and add some juicy details to your ideal life here:

Great job! If you need more space, feel free to continue doing this exercise in your journal and add as much detail as you can. You should do this exercise regularly, as more details of your ideal life come to mind.

How was that exercise for you? Was it exhilarating, uplifting, and exciting? Or was it scary, nerve-racking, and anxiety-provoking? For some people, that exercise can be really difficult, especially if your current life looks nothing like that. If you're married with a family and your ideal life consists of moving to the Spanish countryside and writing a novel, your mind may be flooded with thoughts of, "How am I ever going to do this?" "There's no way this could ever happen." "I may as well just give up now." Don't despair! Keep reading and I'll show you how to make your dreams come true, even if it seems totally far-fetched and unattainable from where you're at now.

If you're convinced that you have no idea what your dream life entails, answer the questions below in your journal and see if they help you get in touch with your deepest desires:

- What is something you could do for hours at a time and not notice the time passing?
- What would you do with your life if no one was watching?
- What were some of the activities you enjoyed doing as a child and miss doing today?
- What talents and skills do you have that come naturally to you?
- When you were a child, what did you dream of being or doing when you grew up?
- If you could possess any superpower in the world, what would it be?
- If you could be any superhero in the world, who would you be?

Get the idea? Everyone has dreams and aspirations, even if they're lodged deep down inside of you. If they're buried below the surface and you've long since forgotten about them, let's bring them up and take a look at them!

Take some time over the next few days to really think about what your ideal life looks like. Don't judge it or ask yourself whether or not it's possible. Just get in touch with what your biggest desires are, no matter how attainable (or unattainable) they seem right now. Jot notes down in your journal and see what you observe.

Also, pay special attention to the dreams you have at night while sleeping and see if anything comes to you regarding your ideal life. If you notice anything interesting, be sure to write this down in your journal.

Now that you have an idea of what your ideal life looks like, you'll want to refer to that image often while reading this ebook. It will be easier to understand the concepts if you have something to relate them to, so choose one thing to focus on from the image of your ideal life that you can refer to while going through this ebook.

Example: Buy a home in the Spanish countryside
Write a best-selling novel
Get married and raise a family

Write yours here:

Follow Your Intuition

Before we move on, I'd like to take a minute to discuss the power of following your intuition and checking in with it regularly. I truly can't emphasize this enough!

Your intuition is your inner knowing, your inner guidance, or your gut feeling. It's that inner knowing, where you just "know" something, without being able to explain how you know or where that feeling comes from. A lot of times it may not make any sense to you at all, but you just have this inner knowing or inner feeling.

Have you ever driven a different route to work one day for no reason at all, only to find out later there was a horrible accident on the route you normally take? Or maybe you've been dying to reconnect with an old friend for a while, but haven't done anything about it. Then one day out of the blue you're driven to go to a different store than you normally do, and you run into your friend there! Think about all the times when you just received a gut feeling about something that turned out to be true. You didn't know where it was coming from, but you just knew. That was your intuition speaking to you.

When deciding what your ideal life looks like, you want to be sure to check in with yourself and see what your inner guidance or intuition is telling you. A lot of people who try to make their dreams come true wonder why it isn't happening for them as quickly as they would like or at all. The reason is that they never took the time to check in with their intuition and see if the direction they were headed in was actually the direction their inner guidance was leading them in.

Your family or society may be telling you that your ideal life consists of becoming a doctor or lawyer, or getting married and having three children. But what do YOU want? What direction is your intuition leading you in? Your intuition is your inner guidance and it always knows what's best for you, even if you can't see the bigger picture.

I'll admit that following your intuition is sometimes not as easy as it seems. Your intuition may be telling you to do something that seems scary or uncomfortable from where you're standing now. It may be trying to break you out of your comfort zone, which you may not feel ready to do. You always want to follow your intuition, though, because it knows way more than you do!

I like to think of intuition as our way of receiving messages from God or Source, who sends us intuitive nudges to keep us going along our life path. Without these nudges, how would we know what to do and where to go?

Everyone *has* intuition; it's just a matter of whether or not you actually listen to and follow it. The more often you can tune into it and follow its guidance, the better off you'll be.

When I moved to France as described earlier, I had no idea how things would turn out. I didn't have a job or an apartment lined up, and I definitely didn't know anyone over there. From where I was standing and on the outside, it looked like a ridiculous idea! Why would a 22-year-old just move to France with nothing set up? I followed my intuition, though, which was telling me to move over there and figure everything out once I got there. As it turned out, everything worked out better than I ever could have predicted in my wildest imagination! Opportunities appeared out of nowhere, I met people who steered me in the right direction, and things unfolded as if I was living in a dream.

If you're not used to working with your intuition, take some time to get to know what it feels like and how it communicates with you. Your intuition normally speaks to you in "gut feelings" or inner nudges, rather than complete sentences. The messages often seem unexplainable or out of nowhere, rather than practical or logical. The trick is in deciphering which messages are from your intuition and which messages are coming to you out of fear or negative programming you received as a child.

If you can learn to follow your intuition on a regular basis, the path to making your wildest dreams come true will be much easier! You will be lead to the right people, the right resources, and the right circumstances at precisely the right times. As I mentioned above, your intuition can be thought of as your connection to Source, which can see the big picture while you cannot.

Following your intuition is not only important when deciding what your ideal life looks like, but it's also important to check in regularly with your intuition to make sure you're on the right track. As you begin to take action and take steps in the direction of your dreams, you will want to consistently be in touch with your intuition to make sure you're on the right path and make any adjustments, if necessary.

Decide What Steps You Can Take Now

Once you've decided what your ideal life consists of, figure out if there are any steps you can take right now to bring you closer to that life. Sometimes there are some really easy things we can do right this second to get our dreams in motion!

Take some time and list things in the space provided below that you can start doing now to head in the direction of your ideal life:

Example: Enroll in a Spanish class in a local university

Read a book on how to submit a book proposal to publishing houses

Join an on-line dating website

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

You know what to do next. Do those things now! Don't delay another day in taking action towards making your wildest dreams come true. If you're reading this ebook it means you're serious about creating your ideal life, and that journey can start as early as today. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, so take a step today! No matter how small that step is, you can start today to accomplish your goals and desires.

Taking Action

A quick note about taking action: In this ebook, I will be talking not so much about taking specific action steps toward making your dreams come true, but more about getting in the proper mindset to do so. There are countless good books out there on goal-setting which walk you through the process of taking concrete action towards achieving your goals, and I will not be discussing much of that here. However, this is not to under-emphasize in any way the importance of taking action in order to get results in your life. In order to make anything happen, especially significant results, you have to take action!

Many books being published today make it seem like all you have to do is sit on your couch and think about something, and then a magic genie in a bottle will appear and make all of your dreams come true. While it's true that sometimes things can and do appear out of the blue, it is usually a result of the *right mindset* and the right action steps being taken in combination that produce great results in your life. For example, even though everything eventually worked out for me in France, I still had to actually get on a plane and move over there, not knowing whether or not things would ever fall into place. As a result, this ebook will mainly be talking about getting yourself in the proper mindset to make your dreams come true, and tools and techniques that will allow you to do that.

For me, it's a given that if you want to make things happen in your life, you have to take action. Taking action becomes a lot easier, however, once you take steps to get your mind in the right place. Those are the techniques and tricks I'll be sharing with you here.

"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can do it, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now." - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Chapter Three: Understand the Law of Attraction

There has been a lot of buzz in the past few years about the law of attraction, ever since the movie “The Secret” was released. I knew about the law of attraction long before that, but the truth is that the law of attraction has been around since the beginning of time. In fact, it’s the way the Universe works! Some of the most famous philosophers ever have mentioned the law of attraction in their writings, even if they don’t specifically refer to it as that. Even the Bible mentions the law of attraction in several places.

See if you've heard these phrases before:

- “Birds of a feather flock together.”
- “As a man thinketh, so he is.”
- “You reap what you sow.”

If you've read or heard any of these phrases before, then you're already familiar with the law of attraction! Whether you've been aware of it or not, the law of attraction has always been at work in your life and will continue to be in force for the rest of time.

[Note: Throughout this ebook I will be referring to the Universe to represent God, Source, or a Higher Power. Whether or not you believe in God or a Higher Power, the Universe can represent whatever you believe is responsible for creating the world and everything in it.]

What is the Law of Attraction?

The law of attraction can be defined in the following ways:

- “Like attracts like.”
- “What you focus on increases.”
- “Energy goes where attention flows.”
- “That which is like unto itself is drawn.”

In a nutshell, this means that whatever you are focusing on or feeling will expand in your life. Another way of saying this is that the law of attraction multiplies whatever you are thinking or feeling and creates more of that in your life.

Quantum physics has scientifically proven that everything on our planet is composed of energy. This includes our bodies, our thoughts, even the chair you are sitting on right now. Even if something looks solid (like a table or your computer, for example), it is still composed of energy particles just like everything else in our world.

Why is this important? Because if everything is composed of energy, *including our thoughts*, this means that the thoughts you think are energetically influencing what happens in your reality. Therefore, because we can consciously choose our thoughts, we can choose thoughts that will allow us to attract those things in this world that we want to attract!

Sounds good, right?

Wants vs. Don't Wants

The catch is that the law of attraction is operating in our world and in your life, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, whether you are aware of it or not. Whatever you are thinking and feeling is always "heard" by the Universe, for better or worse. The Universe doesn't distinguish between "good" and "bad" things, because it has no way of telling the difference between the two. It just assumes that if you are focusing on something, you must want more of it!

I like to imagine the Universe as a giant copy machine that is always hooked up to you, no matter where you are or what you are doing. Whatever it "sees" in you, in terms of your thoughts and feelings, it copies and reproduces in your life. It simply takes your thoughts and feelings as instructions or directions for what to create or "copy" in your life. The Universal giant copy machine thinks that because you are focused on "x" and spending so much time thinking and feeling that, you must want more of that thing in your life. Off it goes reproducing that quality in your life.

Another way I like to think about the law of attraction that helps me understand its power is to imagine that the Universe is like a giant GPS tracking system and has sensors attached to you wherever you go. Whatever you are thinking and feeling at a given time is tracked by the Universe, and the Universe understands that you want to create more of that in your life. Then off it goes to help you line up the circumstances to create more of whatever you are regularly thinking and feeling.

This is great news if you spend the majority of your time focusing your attention on things you would like to have more of in your life; unfortunately, most of us spend a large majority of our time focusing on things we are trying to get rid of or avoid in our life.

For many of us, when we think we're focused on something, we're actually focused on the *lack* of it. Let's take money, for example. When many people first learn about the law of attraction, they wonder why it's not working for them to attract more money because they think about money all the time! The catch is, when you think about money are you basking in the feelings of having a million dollars or are you worrying about how you're going to pay your rent this month? Usually we're thinking about how we don't have as much money as we would like. It doesn't count if you think to yourself, "I'd really love to have more money," and then your next thought is something along the lines of "I really hope they don't turn off my electricity this month!"

Consider this simple equation:

Thinking about not having enough money = not having money

Thinking about having enough money = having enough money

Let's take a look at another example, this time with regard to weight loss. If you're overweight and trying to lose weight, chances are the majority of your thoughts are focused on being overweight, feeling fat in your clothes, looking in the mirror and being disgusted with what you see, not having very much energy, etc. Even though you may think you're thinking about losing weight, you're actually thinking about how awful it feels to be *overweight!*

Again:

Thinking about being overweight = being overweight

Thinking about being skinny = being skinny

Mother Theresa said you cannot support peace by organizing anti-war rallies. The same is true with the law of attraction. You can't create wealth by focusing on poverty, or create a skinny body by focusing on how overweight you currently are. Instead, focus on what you want to create and get into the feeling place of having it already be that way in your life.

If you are already thinking thoughts that are focused on what you want to create, keep it up! However, if the majority of your thoughts are focused on fear, lack, and scarcity (most people focus on these), then you'll want to start changing what you focus on unless you want to create more fear, lack, and scarcity in your life.

To learn how to change your focus and activate the universal law of attraction in a positive way, keep reading.

Living the Law of Attraction

Thanks to the movie "The Secret" and talk show hosts like Oprah Winfrey and Larry King, many people have recently learned about the law of attraction. Yet so many people who have tried to consciously implement the law of attraction in their lives are asking themselves why it's not working for them. The reason is because they're not really *living* the law of attraction on a daily basis, day in and day out. I was aware of and studying the law of attraction long before "The Secret" came out, but it still took me years to actually "get it."

Just knowing about the law of attraction and consciously working with it in your life to create the results you want are two very different things. In fact, this is what separates the people who are already living their ideal lives and those who are still wondering when things will start to happen for them.

Let's take a deeper look at how to consciously use the law of attraction to create positive results in our lives.

The three basic steps of the law of attraction are:

- 1) Ask
- 2) Believe
- 3) Receive

This has been described in many different ways, but I like to define it as:

- 1) **Ask** for something you want
- 2) **Believe** you already have it
- 3) **Receive** it into your life

Sounds simple, right? It is! It is very simple and easy to understand, but much harder to implement on a consistent basis.

Asking

The first step in the law of attraction is always asking for what you want. This is why I had you do the exercise in Chapter Two to figure out what you really want out of life, because you can't ask for something if you don't know what it is!

Asking is actually the easiest part of the whole equation because we're constantly doing it on a regular basis. We are always asking for new things in our life, just by thinking about them and wanting them. In fact, we are asking the Universe for things all day long.

For example, you may think things like:

- "I really love her shoes. I wish I had a pair just like them."
- "I'm hungry. I think I'll make a salami sandwich for lunch today."
- "I'm so tired of not having enough space in my apartment. I want to buy a house!"

All day, every day, we are observing things we want and feeling a desire to have those things in our lives. Asking is really just the act of wanting or desiring something.

Here's the catch: The Universe assumes that you are asking for and wanting more of whatever your attention is on. And because the Universe wants to fulfill all of your desires, it goes out and creates whatever you are "asking" for. Therefore, whatever you are thinking and feeling on a consistent basis is what the Universe produces for you in your life.

Because it can be difficult to track your thoughts and find out what you're thinking (i.e. "asking for") on a daily basis, it helps to write out detailed lists for those things you are really wanting to attract into your life. This not only helps you clarify what you're looking

for, but it also gives you a visual reminder of what you want your thoughts to be focused on in order to attract whatever you are trying to create. If you catch your thoughts veering off to something that is not on the list, simply steer them back to thinking thoughts that *are* on the list!

Think of something you want to attract or achieve in your life, and write out a list of everything you want that thing or situation to have. You can also write a letter to God or the Universe, explaining exactly what you want your ideal life to look. Be sure to include as much detail as possible so the Universe knows exactly what you are asking for! Saying you want a new home, for example, doesn't really get the job done. Instead, you want to describe the new home in a lot of detail, i.e. how many stories it has, what type of neighborhood is it in, where is it located, is it old or modern, what does it look like, etc. As with everything I'm describing in this ebook, the more details and description you can include, the better.

A few years back I was looking for a condo to purchase in Washington, DC where I live. In order to figure out exactly what I was looking for and let the Universe in on the details as well, I compiled a detailed list of what my ideal condo would resemble. I included qualities like, within walking distance from a grocery store, brick interior walls, recently remodeled with new appliances, close to a metro, etc. When I finally did find my condo, it fit my list to a T! The only thing that slightly differed was that I had asked for a washing machine and dryer in my actual unit. My building doesn't allow that, however, the laundry room for the building is literally right outside the door of my condo! I am the closest person in the entire building to the laundry room, so I was willing to negotiate with that requirement. I still live there today, and absolutely love it.

You can write out detailed lists to describe your desires for anything you want in life: a mate, a new job, an outfit for a special occasion, a new car, a specific amount of money, new friends, new boss, co-workers, etc. The list goes on and on!

Believing

Once you've asked for something (expressed a desire for something new in your life), the next step in the law of attraction process is to believe that the thing you are desiring is *already* a part of your life. This includes thinking and feeling NOW the way that you will think and feel once you have that thing in your life (the new job, the new relationship, the new home, the hot body, etc.). This part can be especially tricky because you have to feel now the way you will feel will once you've achieved specific results in your life, before there's a reason to feel that way!

If I could sum up the law of attraction in one sentence, I would say that in order to consciously use the law of attraction you need to feel NOW the way you will feel once you've attracted whatever it is you're trying to attract. Remember, the law of attraction always matches what you are feeling and produces more of that in your life. Therefore, after you've decided what you want, figure out what it would feel like to already have that

thing in your life and feel that way NOW. You want to convince the Universe that you already have the thing you are desiring.

So think about what you want, and imagine what it would feel like if that thing was already a part of your life. For example, how will it feel once you've sailed around the world, or launched an on-line business, or held your first gallery opening? If you are hoping to attract a new relationship, how will you feel once your new partner is in your life? Loved? Appreciated? Supported? Accepted for who you really are? Get in touch with the feelings you hope to have for each of your desires.

Let's do a quick exercise now involving the goal you described in Chapter Two that you are going to focus on throughout this ebook. Ready?

Copy the dream you would like to come true:

Now spend a few minutes thinking about how you think you will feel once you've achieved that dream.

Will you feel happy? Elated? Successful? Free? Intelligent? Giddy? Outgoing? Confident? Proud? Relieved? Loved? Accepted? There are a ton of options to choose from, and it will feel different to everyone. Look within and find the feeling that you're really searching for and that you think will come from accomplishing that goal or dream.

List those feelings here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Once you've determined how you will feel, you need to begin to find ways to create that feeling in your life now so that the Universe can match that feeling and bring you your desired goal or outcome. If you will feel loved and accepted, how can you create that feeling in your life now? If you will feel successful, how can you get in touch with that feeling now?

One of the ways to start feeling these things now is to find areas in your life where you already feel this way. For example, if your ideal life consists of sailing around the world and you think doing this will make you feel successful, liberated, and accomplished, find ways in your life where you already feel these feelings. Maybe you feel successful at work, or when you complete a 5-mile jog, or help your children with their homework. Maybe you already feel liberated in your current life when you take a drive in the countryside, or when you have an afternoon to yourself and can do anything you want. Find as many places in your life where you already feel the feelings you are hoping to experience from accomplishing your dream, and keep your attention on those feelings as often as possible.

If it helps to think of times in the past when you felt these feelings, feel free to do that as well.

Sometimes you may have to generate the feeling in your body for no reason whatsoever, and that's okay! Just use your imagination to focus on what it would feel like to have already achieved your goal, and keep your attention there as often as possible.

Another way to think about the law of attraction has to do with the difference between wanting and having something. Would you rather want something or actually have it? You'd rather have it, of course! However, sometimes we get stuck in the feeling of wanting it or not having it (lacking it), which just leads to more of the same, i.e. not having what you really want.

Our job as deliberate creators is to *feel* things into existence in our lives. If we can feel it now, it has to come into our lives. It has to, because it is law! Decide upon something you want to create in your life, get into the feeling place NOW of what it would be like to already have that thing in your life, and feel that way as often as possible. This is especially important when you start to notice you're getting frustrated that something you've asked for hasn't arrived yet. When this occurs, simply shift your focus and start feeling the way it will feel to have it.

Receiving

The final step in the law of attraction process is receiving, where the thing you are wanting actually shows up in your life!

If you've clearly asked for what you want, have gotten into the space of feeling that the thing you are wanting is already a part of your life, then receiving that thing is truly a piece of cake. However, we tend to make things pretty difficult for ourselves and don't always allow things to come into our lives as easily as they could.

In order for the receiving part of the law of attraction equation to work, you need to let go of trying to figure out how or when the thing you are wanting is going to show up. It is the Universe's job to figure out the details about the specific desire, not yours. Your only responsibility is to begin thinking and acting as if that thing is already a part of your life. Based on the law of attraction, Universe must then deliver it to you in order to match your thoughts and feelings. It has to, it is law! Just as you would not question gravity, you should not question the law of attraction. It is law, and it must work, every single time.

Many people talk about allowing as part of the receiving process. Allowing something just means actually letting that thing into your life. You'd be surprised at how many people ask for a desire, but the minute it shows up in their life they do everything they can to push it away! It usually has to do with not feeling deep down like you deserve the thing you are wanting. Allowing means to actually be ready and prepared to let that thing into your life.

Once you've clearly stated your desire, your job is to line up your thoughts and emotions with already having whatever it is you want to attract. After that, your job is done. You can let go, forget about it, and enjoy your life. It's just like placing an order in a restaurant. Once you've decided what you want to eat and have made your order, you know your food is coming to you and you forget about it until it arrives. You don't keep asking the server where your food is, or wonder if you deserve it. Instead, you know that it's on its way and you wait patiently for it to arrive. You know that if you keep bugging your server and asking where the food is, it ends up taking even longer!

As I mentioned earlier, working with the law of attraction does not mean you can stop taking action towards making your desires come true. Action is required! What consciously using the law of attraction does is allow you to get your mindset prepared for success in such a way that action steps seem obvious to you, and not like big, scary steps that seem next to impossible.

Your only job is to focus on feeling as if the thing you are wanting is already in your life. At that point, the action steps you need to take will become obvious to you, and taking action will seem like the most natural thing in the world. In fact, it's a good idea to not take action towards achieving your goals until you've worked with the law of attraction to line up your thoughts and feelings with what you're trying to achieve. This will insure that when you do take action, it will be that much more effective!

Examples: Using the Law of Attraction

Here are a few examples to illustrate how to go about consciously using the law of attraction to create the life of your dreams.

Example #1: Let's assume you've decided you want a promotion at work and have been working extra hours lately in hopes of obtaining recognition from your boss. In addition to putting in the extra hours, you also want to focus on feeling now what it will be like once you have that promotion. Spend time focusing on what it would be like to really have that new job and see yourself in that new role. Imagine what your new office will look like and what new responsibilities you will have. Visualize the meetings you will attend as part of your new position, or what sort of projects you will be working on. Feel what it would feel like to have that extra salary in your life, and think about ways you will be able to use that added income once it's arrived! You can imagine your family taking you out for a celebratory dinner at your favorite restaurant to congratulate you once you've gotten your promotion. Really get into imagining and feeling what it will be like once you receive the promotion that you're looking for. Practice feeling like it is already here NOW.

Example #2: Imagine you are single and you've decided you would like to attract a new relationship into your life. Right now you are probably spending the majority of your time feeling lonely, thinking about how all of your friends have significant others but you, or how you're convinced that you will never find anyone and will surely end up alone. Instead, shift into believing mode where you start to believe and feel as if the thing you are wanting is already a part of your life. In this example you can do things like focusing on the

types of activities will you do with your ideal partner once he/she arrives, what he/she will look like, what personality characteristics he/she will have, how he/she will treat you, etc. You can imagine the sort of dates you will go on together, the conversations you two will have, and the vacations you'll take as a couple. Instead of focusing on the fact that you're single and that your partner is not here yet, use your all-important mental energy to focus on what it would feel like if this special person was already a part of your life!

Example #3: Let's say you recently started a coaching practice and you've decided you want to attract an abundance of new clients. Up until now your focus has probably been on the fact that your phone isn't ringing and that you have no new clients or leads on the horizon. If that's the case, shift your focus to thinking and feeling what it would be like to have an abundance of clients now. Visualize your phone ringing off the hook with new clients wanting to hire you, checking your inbox and seeing tons of emails from potential new clients, or receiving invitations to speak at various conferences. You can even imagine having a conversation with a friend or loved one and telling them how well your coaching practice is going and how much fun you're having with it!

I'll be honest, this will probably feel very strange at first because it goes against everything we've been taught since we were kids. We've been taught to always observe reality the way it is or the way it used to be, rather than focusing on how we would like things to be. Keep at it, though! You will soon start to see changes in your situation, and once that happens you'll want to keep doing it.

For additional information regarding the law of attraction, I recommend visiting the website of the original teachers of the law of attraction, Abraham-Hicks. Their website is www.abraham-hicks.com.

Chapter Four: Choose Your Thoughts

Now that you've seen how powerful the law of attraction is, wouldn't it make sense to *consciously* choose your thoughts and feelings on a regular basis in order to create what you want? One of the most important things I've learned on my entire self help journey is that we are in charge of our thoughts, and can actually choose them at any time we want. When I really grasped this and figured out how to use this to my advantage, it was as if a whole new world opened up to me before my eyes!

If you're like me, it can take a little convincing at first to believe that our thoughts really do create our reality. Let me show you a few examples of how this is so.

Our Thoughts Create Our Reality

It has been cited in numerous books throughout the years that our thoughts create our realities. As you saw above in the chapter on the law of attraction, what we are consistently thinking and feeling is reproduced in our life by the Universe over and over again. If we are thinking about it, Universe assumes we want more of it and goes about creating circumstances in our life that match up with what we are thinking and feeling.

I don't want to get into too many specifics about how our thoughts create our reality because it's too complex a topic for this ebook. Rather, it's important for you to just accept that this is true and has actually been proven scientifically by quantum physicists who study energy particles and have observed thoughts in their energetic state.

Here are a few simple examples to help you understand how our thoughts create our realities on a general level. While reading these examples, keep this equation in mind:

Thoughts → Emotions → Actions = Reality

Basically, thoughts lead to your emotions, which lead to your actions, which equal your reality.

Let's say you're dreaming of leaving the corporate world and launching an on-line business, but your thoughts are focused on the fact that "it's really difficult to succeed in business and is much safer to work in a 9-5 job, no matter how unhappy you are." Even though your idea for an on-line business may be a really profitable one, it's hard to compete with thoughts like, "I won't ever succeed opening an on-line business." "How am I going to pay the bills and keep a roof over my head?" "What will my family and friends think of me?" Part of you wants to launch a new business and express your talents, but your thoughts focusing on the worst are just causing you to feel lots of anxiety and fear and keeping you stuck. Chances are with thoughts like these you're not going to take a chance to start a new business.

Another example is to assume you're single and are hoping to find your life partner or soulmate. Your negative thoughts may be telling you things like, "There are no more good men/women out there." "All of my relationships have failed in the past, so what makes you think this one will be any different?" "I'm too old to attract anyone." "I will be single and alone forever." Again, part of you desires to go out and meet a special someone, but part of you is holding yourself back as a result of all those negative thoughts you're holding onto. Even if you're invited to social gatherings where potential love interests are likely to be, you may not even attend because your thoughts are saying, "What's the point? I won't meet anyone anyway." With thoughts like those, it's easy to see how you keep yourself from finding a potential partner to be in a relationship with.

Now, let's refer to this equation again:

Thoughts → Emotions → Actions = Reality

Regarding the above examples, can you see how the thoughts the person is thinking lead to their emotions, which lead to their actions (or lack thereof), which results in their reality?

In example #1, it looks like this:

<u>Thoughts</u>	<u>Emotions</u>	<u>Actions</u>
"I won't ever succeed." "How am I going to pay the bills?" "What will my family think of me?"	→ Fear/Anxiety	→ Not opening a new business

In example #2, it looks like this:

<u>Thoughts</u>	<u>Emotions</u>	<u>Actions</u>
"There are no good men out there." "All my relationships have failed." "I'm too old to attract anyone."	→ Hopelessness	→ Not trying to meet new partners

In both examples, the person's thoughts lead to specific emotions, which lead to specific actions, which created the person's reality.

Now that you've seen how our thoughts create our realities, let's change gears for a moment and focus on how it is possible for us to choose our thoughts.

We Can Choose Our Thoughts

Think about it. Most people think that the thoughts we think are automatic and come from who knows where. Well, let's be honest, most people have probably never even thought about where our thoughts come from! If you have actually considered this before, you still probably came to the conclusion that you don't know where our thoughts come from.

Until we learn to consciously take control of our minds, our thoughts and beliefs are what were programmed in us at a very early age by our parents, teachers, pastors, television programs, society at large, etc. As young children we were just trying to absorb as much as we could about this new world we found ourselves in, and just accepted as truth whatever we heard from the people around us. We began forming thoughts and beliefs in order to make sense of our lives and our worlds, and up until now have accepted them as fact.

The truth is, however, we can choose our thoughts! And once you've come to accept that our thoughts do indeed create our future and our realities, the fact that we can choose our thoughts means we can literally create anything we want in our lives. If our thoughts create our realities and we can choose our thoughts, then that means we can choose our realities! If a thought comes to you and doesn't line up with what you are trying to create, you can simply change it and replace it with a thought that DOES match up with what you are trying to create in your life.

It's Not the Situations, It's Our Thoughts About the Situations

Last year I attended the Breakthrough to Success conference with Jack Canfield. Known as America's #1 Success Coach, he's also one of the co-authors of the wildly successful *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book series. At the conference, we did a particular exercise which was very powerful in illustrating to me that we can choose our thoughts and tell our minds to focus on whatever we want them to.

This was the exercise: We were paired up with partners and instructed to tell them how terrible our childhoods were. We were not allowed to say anything positive about our childhood at all, just how dreadful and miserable it was. Believe it or not, this was pretty easy for everyone! Some of the stories were more tragic than others, but everyone had a relatively easy time describing their childhood from a negative stance.

Then we were asked to tell our partner about our childhood, *the same childhood*, from a positive angle. We could only talk about how wonderful it was. This was really difficult for everyone! My partner, who must have had a pretty rough childhood, could barely come up with anything at all and wanted to skip forward to her college years. After a little prodding, though, she was able to come up with something positive to say about her childhood: that she survived it and had become a very strong woman because of it. Hey, that's something!

Whether or not we were asked to talk about our childhood from a positive or negative angle, everyone was able to find evidence to support either scenario. People who had come to the conference believing they had a terrible childhood were able to find positive aspects about their youth, whereas the people with even the most traumatic childhoods were able to find and appreciate positive things about the way they were raised.

This exercise was very powerful for me because it demonstrated that our minds can be steered in any direction we choose. Basically, your mind will focus on whatever you tell it to! Whether you tell it to look for the positive or the negative in a situation, it can always

find it. This shows you how important it is to choose thoughts that are focused in the direction of making your dreams come true.

Here's another example: Awhile back a friend of mine got upset because he was reading a newspaper article about how the recent economic recession was causing real estate prices to go way down. He owns several rental properties and assumed this would mean he would lose a lot of money during the recession. I had just read a story myself, though, about how there are actually a TON of people making a killing during the recession, especially in the area of real estate! People who work with foreclosed homes, for example, have benefited significantly from the tough economic times and have really made a lot of money. I told my friend that he could just as easily find a story about people making money during the recession as people who were losing money, and that therefore he should carefully choose where to place his attention.

Since our thoughts lead to our reality, it makes sense to spend the majority of your time consciously focusing on those thoughts that support you in what you are trying to create. We are in charge of our thoughts and can choose where we place our attention. You can choose your thoughts and literally get your mind to focus on whatever you tell it to. If we don't consciously choose where we place our attention, our mind will just go on auto-pilot and focus on what it wants to, which is usually negative or based on early childhood programming. Depending on what thoughts and beliefs you received as a young child, this may or may not be a good thing.

Become Aware of Your Thoughts

The first thing you want to do in this process of choosing your thoughts is become aware of what you are thinking. Awareness is always the first step to creating change.

Stop right now and pay attention to the chatter going on in your mind. What thoughts are you thinking right this very moment? Are your thoughts positive or negative? Are you focused on how this information is truly life-changing and you can't wait to implement it? Or are you telling yourself that this is nonsense and that you will never really get ahead in life? (Maybe you're not thinking about the material in this ebook at all, and instead are focused on what you're going to eat for dinner tonight!).

Let's do an exercise with the goal you listed in Chapter Two. Write down the goal that you've been focusing on throughout this ebook:

Next, focus on the dream that you wrote above and list all the thoughts that immediately come to your mind regarding that dream:

Example: I can't just quit my job and move to Spain!
What if no one likes my novel and wants to publish it?
What if my soulmate doesn't exist?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

You want to get all of your thoughts about this goal out onto paper, so use your journal if you need additional space to list any thoughts that come to mind when thinking of this goal.

Look at the thoughts you listed above. Now that you've got them down on paper, take a really good look at them and ask yourself whether they are leading you in the direction of making your dreams come true or whether they are leading you away from your dreams. Are the majority of the thoughts you wrote down above positive or negative? Do they fill you with a sense of hope and inspiration about making your dreams come true, or doubt, hopelessness, and fear? Do they lead you towards accomplishing your dreams, or lead you away from them? Do they make it seem inevitable that you will create results, or next to impossible?

If the majority of the thoughts you think when you focus on your goal are positive, then you are probably well on your way to making that dream come true in your life. If the majority of your thoughts are negative, however, we have some more work to do!

Keep this in mind: Your mind can only hold one thought and focus on one thing at a time. Therefore, because we can choose our thoughts, you should always choose to put your attention on a thought that will lead you in the direction of making your dreams come true.

Focus on Why You Can vs. Why You Can't

The easiest way I've found to line my thoughts up with what I'm trying to create is to focus on thoughts about why achieving my goals is possible, rather than why it is not. The mind (and society) has a habit of focusing on all the reasons why it will be difficult to accomplish your goals, but with a little effort you can redirect the mind to consciously look for reasons about why you can achieve or be something rather than why you can't.

Let's go back to the examples I referred to earlier in this chapter:

Example #1: Let's say you're dreaming of leaving the corporate world and launching an on-line business, but your thoughts are focused on the fact that "it's really difficult to succeed in business and is safer to work in a 9-5 job, no matter how unhappy you are." Even though your idea for an on-line business may be a really profitable one, it's hard to compete with thoughts like, "I won't ever succeed doing that." "How am I going to pay the

bills and keep a roof over my head?” “What will my family and friends think of me?” Part of you wants to launch a new business and express your talents, but your thoughts focusing on the worst are just causing you to feel lots of anxiety and fear. Chances are with thoughts like these you’re not going to take the chance to start the new business.

Now that you’re reading this ebook, though, you’re learning that your thoughts create your reality and that you do have control over what you think and what you choose to focus on. From now on, you know you have a choice over whether to keep thinking your current thoughts or select new ones that work more to your advantage in creating your ideal reality.

In the future when those negative thoughts about failing in business pop up, you can replace them with more positive thoughts that support your dreams, like:

- Several people have left the corporate world and started on-line businesses, so it’s possible for me to have success doing that;
- If money gets tight, I can always get a part-time job on the side to help out with the bills;
- My uncle left his corporate job and launched a new business and he didn’t starve, so there’s no reason I will;
- I’m really creative and will find lots of ways to make my new business a success;
- In today’s unstable economy, it makes sense to go into business for myself rather than working a 9-5 job that I may get laid off from at any time;
- My parents or friends can help me out with money if it gets really tight for a while.

Do you see how you can replace the negative thoughts with more positive thoughts that allow you to align more with accomplishing your goals?

Let’s look at another example.

Example #2: Perhaps you’re single and are hoping to find your life partner or soulmate. Your negative thoughts may tell you things like, “There are no more good men/women out there.” “All of my relationships have failed in the past, so what makes you think this one will be any different?” “I’m too old to attract anyone.” “I will be single and alone forever.” Again, part of you desires to go out and meet a special someone, but part of you is holding yourself back as a result of all those negative thoughts you’re holding onto. Even if you’re invited to social gatherings where potential love interests are likely to be, you may not even attend because your thoughts are saying, “What’s the point? I won’t meet anyone anyway.” With thoughts like those, it’s easy to see how you keep yourself from finding a partner to be in a relationship with.

Have no fear! Because you’re learning how to take control of your mind, in the future you can wipe out those negative thoughts when they pop up and replace them with positive thoughts that are more in line with achieving your ideal relationship, like:

- Everyone who's in a couple today started out single at some point, so being single is only temporary;
- I've been in relationships before with men/women who enjoyed my company, so there's no reason I can't find someone else who will;
- I've found partners before with some of the qualities I'm looking for; now I just have to find the right one who has *all* the qualities I'm looking for;
- It only takes that one special person to be in a relationship, and I can find him/her at any time;
- There are millions of people all over the world joining on-line dating services right now looking for someone to be in their ideal relationship with, maybe me!
- Other people in my area have found partners to be in relationships with, so I can too.

Do you get the idea?

Some good examples of thoughts that focus on why you can achieve something vs. why you can't are things, like:

- Focus on others who have accomplished what you are setting out to;
- Think of ways in the past you have achieved a similar type of goal or dream;
- List all the strengths you have which will allow you to make this dream come true;
- Think of ways you will survive even a worst-case scenario if your dreams do not unfold according to plan.

Using your dream that you have been focusing on throughout this ebook, list reasons below about why it is possible for you to accomplish this dream:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Great job! This can be a bit challenging at first, but really stretch your mind to come up with reasons about why your goal can become a reality. This is life-changing work you're doing here!

Now, for the last step in this process and to really take it to the next level, you are going to take the negative thoughts you listed about your goal earlier in this chapter and reframe them so that they are positive and support you in achieving your dream. You can use some of the positive examples you used in the exercise directly above. Do that here:

Example: Negative thought = I'm too old to find my soulmate.

New Positive thought = My neighbor who is ten years older than me found her soulmate last year, so that means I can, too!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Once you've come up with a list of reasons about why it is possible for you to achieve whatever it is you're trying to achieve, you want to start repeating these reasons to yourself often. Whenever you catch one of the old negative thoughts popping into your head, quickly replace it with a positive belief about why you can achieve your goals! Repeat these reasons to yourself as often as you can until they begin to stick permanently in your mind.

Be forewarned that it can take A LOT of effort at first to consciously direct your thoughts, and at times it will definitely be easier to let your mind think the old thoughts it is used to thinking. Stick with it, though, because the results are definitely worth it! If you have to, tie a rubber band around your wrist and flick it every time you catch yourself thinking a negative thought. Once you catch yourself thinking a negative thought, you want to then immediately replace that thought with a positive one that leads you in the direction of creating your ideal life. In the beginning it will take a lot of attention and awareness to really figure out what you're thinking, but rest assured that it gets easier with time.

Many of these thoughts you've been thinking have been there since childhood, so it will take some work to dislodge them. If you keep at it, though, eventually you will start to see results. I would say it takes a good 3-4 weeks of consistent, daily, focused effort to start seeing results. It takes twenty-one to thirty days to form a habit, so make sure to stick with this for at least three weeks, preferably more.

Those first few weeks can get very intense, and at times your mind will put up every possible form of resistance in can to get you to stop doing this. Keep replacing the negative thoughts with positive thoughts, though, because eventually the positive thoughts will begin to take hold and they will start to pop up automatically rather than the negative ones. Once that happens, the results you are getting in your life will begin to change right before your very eyes, just like magic!

It can be helpful to keep a “Journal of Positive Evidence” while in the process of changing your thoughts, to record any evidence you notice that your new thoughts are starting to take effect. For example, if you are trying to change a negative thought from “Members of the opposite sex never notice me” to “Members of the opposite notice me and smile at regularly”, then start to record all the different times you notice someone of the opposite sex looking at you or smiling at you. It may be few and far between at first, but eventually you will begin collecting lots of evidence that your new thoughts are taking hold. At this point, your attention to it will begin to multiply the evidence and lead you to attract even more! Once this happens, your negative thought is well on its way to being permanently replaced with a positive one.

Do this exercise for all areas of your life that you are trying to improve and watch as a brand new life begins to unfold all around you.

Question Your Thoughts

If you’re having trouble turning any negative thoughts into positive thoughts, I recommend a technique for questioning your thoughts called “The Work,” by Byron Katie. It involves asking your thoughts or beliefs a series of four questions, which allows you to really look at them and see what is tripping you up about them and not allowing you to accomplish your goals.

The four questions are:

- 1) Is it true?
- 2) Can you absolutely know that it’s true?
- 3) How do you react, what happens, when you believe that thought?
- 4) Who would you be without the thought?

You basically find a thought or belief that is not serving you, and ask yourself the series of four questions about the thought. Regardless of the answer (there are no right or wrong answers), this process allows you to see where you’ve bought into untrue thoughts that are holding you back from achieving your dreams. Personally, I don’t even have to go through the entire four-step process to achieve powerful results. Normally it’s enough for me to just write the thought or belief down, question whether or not it’s true, and then find examples to support that in my life.

Rather than go into the entire process here, I encourage you to visit Byron Katie’s website at www.thework.com for a complete explanation of The Work.

I recommend doing this in writing so you can see your thoughts and beliefs on the page in front of you. Doing this exercise in your head is not as powerful as writing it down. I actually keep a small notebook in my purse so I can do this exercise whenever I want, even if I’m not at home. Sometimes just seeing the negative thought or belief in writing shows you how silly it is, and you can drop it instantly!

Tell A New Story

To take the process of choosing your thoughts a whole step further, begin telling a new story about your life all together. In order to change your reality or whatever you are currently experiencing, you need to start telling a new story. Right now you are telling a story of how things are, whether you realize it consciously or not, and in order to create change you need to start telling a new story.

Tell this new story to anyone who will listen! If you have a friend, family member, or significant other who will play along, tell them your new story about your ideal life as if it has already happened. If a telemarketer calls, go ahead and tell them your new story! Not too long ago I heard about a couple that won the lottery multiple times. Each time before they won their prize, they had actually been telling anyone who would listen that they had *already won* the lottery! They would tell the man behind the counter at the gas station, the waitress at their favorite restaurant, etc.

If you don't have anyone you trust or feel safe telling your new story around, be sure to at least tell this new story in your head. Take a walk and talk to yourself about wonderful your life is, how fulfilled you are, how well everything is going, how much money you have, etc.

If you want to try this in writing, try Pray Rain Journaling, which I describe in detail in the next chapter.

Don't Listen to Critics

You always have a choice when it comes to your thoughts, and the same applies regarding whom you listen to. No matter what you are trying to achieve in life, there will always be people who support you and encourage you to go for your dreams, and people who bring you down. Even the most successful people out there have encountered harsh critics along their paths to success. The key is to remember that you always have a choice regarding whom you listen to and what you pay attention to, just like with your thoughts.

Say you have a sister or friend who just can't get behind your plan to release a CD. It's not that they don't think you're a good singer, but they just don't think you have a chance of making it big-time since the market is already so saturated with people trying to break into the music business. Guess what? You don't have to listen to them!

Chances are that you do have a friend, a significant other, a parent, a colleague, a supervisor, *someone* who believes in you and will tell you to go for your dreams. Talk to them about your dreams and be willing to receive their encouragement and support rather than listening to criticism from others. If you don't have anyone supportive in your life, go on-line! Join Facebook or Twitter if you haven't already, and allow those people to support you in your dreams. I've found Twitter to be a really positive place to meet people with similar interests who support me in creating my ideal life. You can also sign up for various e-newsletters or read blogs that encourage you to go for your dreams.

If all else fails, read an uplifting book! I can tell you that much of my motivation and inspiration to continue going forward towards my goals comes from reading inspirational literature on a regular basis. Read biographies of others who have accomplished what you want to accomplish, or motivational books that flood you with a sense of confidence of being able to achieve whatever you want to achieve. Always flood your mind your mind with thoughts of achieving your goals, rather than not achieving them.

Counter-Intentions

A note here about counter-intentions: If you've been using the tools and techniques described throughout this ebook and are still not making any progress towards your goals, check in with yourself to make sure you don't have any counter-intentions that are standing in your way. A counter-intention is when we want something that's in opposition to another desire we hold.

Let's say you've been single for a long time and just can't understand why you haven't been able to attract a loving relationship, even though that's what you want deep down. It's possible that you have a counter-intention that is running in opposition to your ideal relationship. In addition to desiring a relationship, maybe you also love spending time by yourself or with good friends and are scared that being in a relationship will require you to give that up. If you believe that relationships require giving up all independence and time to yourself, then part of you is going to be looking for a relationship while part of you is going to be running away! Don't be surprised if you're constantly in a state of pushing and pulling when it comes to relationships.

Perhaps you've been trying for a promotion at work for several years, but you keep getting passed up and a co-worker always gets it. You just can't understand what is going on. Check in with yourself and make sure you don't have a counter-intention running in opposition to getting your promotion. Maybe you believe deep down that getting the promotion will also require you to work a ton of extra hours, but you don't want to give up all your free time and social life. If this is the case, part of you will always be striving for the promotion whereas the other part of you will be pulling away from that, making it almost impossible for you to get the promotion.

If you think you have any counter-intentions to creating your ideal life, make sure you clear them out so that you can continue on your path to making all of your dreams come true.

Just as we did above, list any thoughts or beliefs that come to mind when you think about what it is you are trying to achieve. Once you've done that, look at the thoughts you've written down and see if any counter-intentions jump out at you. Sometimes you can see them right away, although sometimes it takes a little more digging. If that is the case, think about the result you are trying to create in your life and ask yourself the question, "Why *don't* I want that?" or "Why *don't* I want that to come true?" If you have any counter-intentions, they will probably become pretty obvious after doing this exercise.

Once you've identified any counter-intentions you have, you want to find a way to resolve the two opposing desires you have, i.e. the one pulling you towards your dream, and the one pulling you away.

This is pretty simple to do actually, so you're in luck! All you need to do to resolve a counter-intention is find a desire that incorporates *both* the competing intentions. So, for example, say your desire is to have a relationship, but you also desire independence and you think that a relationship will require you to give that up. To clear up the counter-intention, begin looking for relationships in which you can be in a relationship AND maintain your independence. This might look like dating someone who also craves a lot of alone time and doesn't want to spend every waking moment with you.

To resolve the counter-intention about getting a promotion and losing your free time, resolve to get promoted to a job that allows you to be promoted AND doesn't require to work much more than you do now (or at all). Do you see how this works?

You simply need to begin focusing your attention on creating something in your life that allows for both of your competing desires to be met.

Affirmations

One more topic about choosing your thoughts before we move on to specific tools and techniques for creating the life of your dreams!

If you're at all familiar with self help techniques, and even if you're not, you've probably heard of affirmations before. Affirmations are basically just short phrases you repeat to yourself often in order to change your self-talk, or what you say to yourself on a regular basis. Affirmations can be highly effective in changing the way you see yourself, the way you think about the world, and what you think is possible in your life.

Because our lives are a mirror of the thoughts we think on a consistent basis, and the beliefs we hold deep in our subconscious, using affirmations and repeating them to yourself often can change your thoughts and beliefs, and therefore change the results in your life.

The trick to creating effective affirmations is to make sure they are short and not too complicated, in the present tense, and positive.

Your affirmations should be in the present tense, rather than the future tense. By saying something like, "I will make a million dollars," you are keeping your goal in the future, i.e. never achieving it. Remember, the Universe is like a giant copy machine that is just copying whatever you are thinking and feeling. If you are thinking that something is not here yet and is in the future, you will just get more of something that is not here yet and is in the future.

Some people have a tendency to create affirmations that are really moving away from what they want to create, rather than towards what they want to create. For example, if someone is trying to lose weight and they come up with an affirmation that says, "I'm no longer overweight", that actually puts the emphasis on being overweight. Instead, a better affirmation would be, "I'm now at my ideal weight" or "I am slim, trim, and weight only 135 lbs."

Another example of this can be found in the affirmation that says, "I've cleared all my debt." That affirmation is just keeping the mind's focus on debt, so it would be better to have an affirmation that says something like, "I am now debt-free and have \$50,000 in my savings account." You get the idea.

There are an abundance of resources on creating affirmations out there so I'm not going to go into much detail here, but some examples of affirmations that I've found to be particularly effective in my life are:

- I love and accept myself exactly as I am.
- I love money and money loves me.
- I am a magnet to abundance everywhere I go.
- I am healthy, strong, and full of energy.
- Life works out for me easily and effortlessly.
- I enjoy rewarding and fulfilling relationships with others.
- I am at my ideal weight.
- I love my life!

Once you've selected affirmations that resonate with you, be sure to repeat them often to yourself, preferably several times a day. Just before bedtime and upon waking each morning is a great time to do affirmations, as is any downtime you may have, like when you're standing in line, brushing your teeth, waiting at a stoplight, etc.

Always remember that your life responds to the direction of your thoughts, so make sure that whatever you're focused on right now is something you want to see created in your future!

Chapter Five: Tools & Techniques

Alright, now let's move onto the fun stuff! This chapter will describe specific tools and techniques you can use to make your wildest dreams come true.

Pray Rain Journaling

Pray Rain Journaling is one of my absolute favorite techniques for bringing things to fruition in my life. I love it so much because a) it's really simple, b) anyone can do it, and most importantly, c) it works! I've experienced huge results in my own life from using this technique, and I'm confident you will too.

Pray rain journaling is a technique whereby you "journal" or write about your life as if what you want to create has *already happened*. By writing about your ideal life as if it is already in existence, you are lining your thoughts and feelings up with having what you want. As we saw earlier in the chapter on the law of attraction, if you believe and feel as if you already have your dream life the Universe has no choice but to deliver it to you!

Here are the instructions:

- 1) Purchase a blank journal or notebook that you can dedicate to this practice, and label it Pray Rain Journal;
- 2) Every single day, write a page in your journal as if your dream or whatever you are trying to accomplish has already come true;
- 3) Use as much detail as possible to really describe your ideal life.

For example, if your desire is to get married and have a family, write a page a day as if you are already married. Describe what it is like to be married to your amazing spouse and to have the family you always wanted. Go into detail about your family vacations, what family dinners are like, what your home looks like, what conversations with your spouse are like, etc.

Here's an example: "I'm so excited to be married to the man of my dreams. We are happier than ever, and our relationship grows stronger and stronger each day. We just returned from an amazing vacation in the Bahamas, where we stayed for two weeks in a beachfront villa. Every morning we ate breakfast on our patio overlooking the ocean, listening to the waves crashing up on shore and smelling the warm salt water. We ate fresh pineapple every morning, which practically melted in my mouth. The pina coladas we drank every night with dinner were the best we've ever tasted! We both feel ready for children, so we are going to be making that a priority this year. I can't wait to have a family! I love how compatible we are, in all areas of our lives. I can confidently say that I am with the man I will spend the rest of my life with, and I am so grateful to the Universe for bringing us together."

If your ambition is to start your own company, write a page a day as if you are already the owner of a successful business or enterprise. Describe your ideal office (do you have an actual office or do you work from home?), the type of employees that work for you, how many hours a day you work, who your clients are, etc. Really get into it and use your imagination!

The more sensory details you can use in your pray rain journal entries, the better. For example, describe what you are eating in your ideal life and what that tastes like, the various scents and fragrances you smell, the types of sounds you hear all around you, etc. By using as many sensory details as possible, you are really getting into the feeling place of *already* having your desires and bringing those things rapidly to you!

Here comes the magic: By the time you've finished your journal and there are no more blank pages, your dream will either have already manifested or be well on its way to doing so!

The goal is to write a page in your journal every single day, although I don't actually write in my journal on a daily basis (in fact, sometimes it's more like once a month!). I've still had major results from using this technique, though, including my www.selfhelpgoddess.com website. Try it out for yourself and see!

You can use this technique on several different areas of your life that you are trying to improve, although I recommend focusing on only one area per journal. You can dedicate one journal to creating your ideal relationship, another journal to creating your perfect job, another journal to creating your dream financial scenario, etc.

The term 'pray rain' comes from a story about a community that was in a serious drought and desperately needed rain. A visitor to the community heard about the problem, and offered to do a rain dance in order to help attract the much-needed rain. When he went out and did the rain dance, however, everyone was puzzled. Instead of dancing around and chanting for rain as they had expected, it looked like he was simply standing there and not moving at all. When they asked him what he was doing, he answered he was *praying* rain as opposed to praying *for* rain. Can you see the difference?

Instead of dancing around, waving his arms, chanting, and doing a traditional rain dance, the man stood there and imagined what it would feel like if this community was already receiving all the rain it needed. He focused on feeling raindrops on his forehead and arms, feeling his clothes drenched with water, imagining that all the crops were well-nourished, that the community as a whole had plenty of water to drink, etc. He was praying rain, as if it already existed!

This is exactly what we should all do in order to make things happen in our lives: feel the feelings now of already having that which you desire to create in your life. The key to this technique is to really step into the new reality you are trying to create, and generate the feelings you would have if you were already living that new life. As we think and feel, we

create! With this technique, you are literally rewriting your future and you will be amazed with the results.

To find out more about pray rain journaling, including a great ebook written on the topic, please visit the Pray Rain Journal page of my website at www.selfhelpgoddess.com/prayrainjournal.html.

Visualization

If you're not familiar with visualization or have not been actively using it in your life, you'll definitely want to pay special attention to this section. Visualization is often the one ingredient you're missing when going after your dreams, and once you start implementing it things can start to turn around instantly!

Visualization means using your imagination to make things happen, by mentally seeing in advance what you are trying to create. Olympic athletes have used visualization for years with great success. Michael Jordan used to spend hours visualizing all of his shots going in the basket, and Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps imagined himself standing on the medal podium receiving gold medals *years* before he actually even competed in the Olympics. Professional golfer Tiger Woods visualizes all of his putts going into the hole before he ever actually takes a swing with his golf club. We all know how successful those athletes have been!

Some people think that they can't visualize, so let's try a little exercise right now. Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and imagine you're watching the Indy 500 at the Indianapolis Speedway. You're sitting in the stands and watching the racecars speed around the racetrack. Your favorite car is red with the number "51" on the side of it, and every time you see it pass in front of you after taking another lap you get excited. You can hear the roar of the engines and the cheering of the fans all around you, and you smell tires burning from the wheels going so fast around the track.

Now let me ask you: Did you see the racetrack and red race car marked "51" going around the track? Did you hear the sounds of the race and smell the burning tires? Even if you've never been to the Indy 500, you were probably able to get an image in your mind right? That's visualization! It's simply the act of using your imagination in a conscious, intentional way to create your future.

Albert Einstein, one of the most brilliant minds ever, understood the immense power of visualization when he said, "Your imagination is your preview of life's coming attractions." You can literally create your future using your imagination, and I'd encourage you to use this tool often!

You want to use as many senses as you can in your visualizations, to make the images as real as possible. For example, in the racetrack scenario I described above, you heard the sound of the cars racing around the track and the cheers coming from the crowd. You smelled the smell from the burning tires, and maybe even imagined eating a hot dog and

tasting what that would taste like. The more real you can make the images in your mind the better, so be sure to add lots of sensory images to your visualizations.

To magnify the power of your visualizations, do them right before falling asleep at night and immediately upon waking in the morning. This is when your conscious mind has its guard down, and messages are more easily received into the subconscious mind. When you are lying in bed and drifting off to sleep at night, rather than focusing on the terrible things you saw on the news or all the things that didn't turn out as planned that day, use the time instead for visualization and consciously creating your ideal future. Do this first thing in the morning as well, before your mind has a chance to start focusing on all that's coming up in the day ahead.

Some people recommend visualizing for an hour a day, but I can tell you that I don't have that much time! I've seen results just by visualizing for a few minutes at night before I go to bed, and first thing in the morning when I wake up. The key is consistency. Visualizing for an hour one time is probably not going to get you the results you are looking for. Visualizing for a few minutes every day, though, should do the trick!

Vision Boards

Vision boards have become really popular recently since the release of "The Secret" a few years back, but they've actually been around for quite some time. I remember first reading about them years ago in the book *Creative Visualization* by Shakti Gawain, and I actually made my first vision board when I was only twelve years old. (I told you, I've been reading this stuff forever!).

A vision board is a visual representation of what you want your future to look like. You create a collage or picture of your ideal life, and by looking at it often you begin to generate the feelings of already having it. As we saw earlier, if you already feel like you are living your ideal life, the Universe must bring it to you!

Here are the instructions:

- 1) Gather an assortment of various magazines that you are no longer using and don't mind cutting up;
- 2) Track down some poster board or construction paper, scissors, and either glue or tape (I recommend glue);
- 3) Go through the old magazines and cut out pictures that represent what your ideal life looks like (you can also download and print pictures from the Internet);
- 4) Assemble and paste the pictures on either the poster board or construction paper as you like.

You want to pick out pictures from the magazines that represent what you want your ideal life to look like. If your desire is to be in a happy relationship, you could find pictures of couples strolling hand-in-hand on a beach, or a couple on their wedding day. If you wish to do lots of travelling, you can cut out a picture of a plane, a home in Europe, or a ski resort.

If you are hoping for a particular-sized body, find a picture of someone who already has the body you want and place it on your vision board somewhere. I also encourage you to cut out phrases that represent something you are trying to achieve, like “blissfully in love” or “successful beyond my wildest dreams.”

Another technique that I’ve found to be helpful is to cut out pictures that don’t particularly mean anything to you at the time, but are really calling or speaking to you. One time I was doing a vision board of my own and was drawn to a picture of a chair that looked really comfortable. I couldn’t figure out how this particular chair fit into my future, but I added it to my vision board anyway. Not long after, I re-arranged the furniture in my living room so that it would be more comfortable. This is what the picture of the chair was alluding to! I also cut out a picture of flowers and didn’t know what that meant at the time, but I added it to my vision board because I liked the way it looked. Within just a few weeks, I started buying fresh flowers from the local market and realized I had been longing for that when I cut out the picture of the beautiful flowers.

To really amp up the power of your vision board, be sure to include pictures of yourself in your collage. You can put a picture of your head on a magazine cut-out of your ideal body, or go to a car dealership and have a friend take a picture of you in your dream car and put that on your vision board. Putting a picture of yourself on your vision board allows you to begin seeing yourself as already having the things you desire, and that quickly leads to the creation of them in your life.

Once you are satisfied with your vision board and it is complete, hang it up or put it in a location where you will see it often. Even if you don’t consciously make an effort to make those things on your vision board come true, your subconscious mind is receiving the message that you would like to create those things and will go about making them come true, sometimes without you even realizing. Several people have created a vision board and then totally forgotten about it, only to realize several years later that everything on their vision board had come true!

If you’ve seen “The Secret” you’ve heard this story before, but it’s one of my favorite stories about vision boards and I just have to share it with you. John Assaraf is a successful entrepreneur and personal growth guru featured in “The Secret.” Several years ago he created a vision board and on it he included a picture that represented his ideal home, which he had found in a magazine. As life took over, he packed his vision board away somewhere and completely forgot about it.

A few years later when he was moving into a new home, one of his young sons was going through the moving boxes and pulled out this same vision board from several years earlier. His son asked him what it was, and John explained to his young son what a vision board was. When John looked at the vision board to remember what he had put on it, he realized that the home he was moving into was the *exact same home* that was on his vision board. Not a home that looked similar to it or reminded him of it, but the exact same home! If you’ve seen the house that John currently lives in, you know how spectacular this home is.

This goes to show you how powerful vision boards can be, so be careful what you put on yours!

If cutting and pasting is not your thing, there are an abundance of programs today that allow you to create a vision board on-line. Facebook even has an application that allows you to make a vision board for free in about five minutes. If you spend the majority of your time in front of a computer all day, you may want to consider saving your on-line vision board as your computer wallpaper or screensaver. This way you know you will see it often throughout the day.

Make-Believe Your Way There

Another technique I've found to be really effective in helping get into the feeling place of already having your desires is that of make-believe. I don't know about you, but when I was a child I played a TON of make-believe and spent a lot of time acting out various scenarios! As adults, we can still use make-believe as a tool to help us create the life of our dreams.

Playing make-believe or acting out what you'd like your future life to look like allows you to get into the mindset of already having what you would like to create. It allows you to adopt new beliefs and behaviors that you need in order to bring that thing into your life. By beginning to think and act differently, you are in essence becoming a new person, i.e. a new person who has that thing in their life!

I know this works because I've seen it work firsthand in my own life. One of the things I acted out regularly as a child was that I was living in Paris, working for a French company, and speaking French all day long. Ever since I can remember I had this burning desire to live in France and speak French fluently, so I would act out this scenario often. I would have make-believe conversations with my supervisor in French (even though I could barely speak French at the time) and act like I was living with a French host family and dating their son. I even remember having my mom subscribe me to a magazine that was entirely in French, even though I was probably only about eight years old at the time and definitely could *not* understand what I was reading!

As you know, I eventually found myself living in Paris working as a translator for an international law firm and speaking French on a daily basis. Honestly, by this time I had completely forgotten about all that make-believe I used to do, but pretty much all of it came true exactly how I had acted it out all those years ago! The only thing that was slightly different was that instead of actually living with a French host family and dating their son, I rented a studio apartment down the street from a French family that basically adopted me and it was their son that I dated. Minor details, really.

I know a coach who at one point wanted to launch a journalism career so she had business cards printed up with her name and the title "Journalist" on them. Whenever someone would ask what she did, she would say she was a Journalist and hand them one of her

business cards. Before long, she really *was* a journalist and had more work than she knew what to do with!

Here are some examples of ways you can use make-believe to create specific results in your life:

If you're trying to manifest your ideal relationship or a new partner:

- If you're a woman, try on engagement rings or wedding dresses in anticipation of your upcoming wedding;
- Send flowers and a note to yourself from your future romantic interest or spouse;
- Write a card to your future beloved that you will give to them when you meet them or on your wedding day;
- Have fake conversations on your cell phone with your future partner (no one will know there isn't anyone on the other line!).

If you'd like to find a new job:

- Role play an interview for your dream job with a friend or family member;
- Draft a short memo like the type you would draft if you already had that position;
- Buy a new interview suit and wear it often around the house.

If you're looking for a new home:

- Go to open houses and tell the real estate agents you are looking to buy a home (even if you're not);
- Visit various real estate agents' websites and select which homes you are interested in seeing.

If you're dreaming of opening your own business someday:

- Register a website domain name for a future business you plan to open;
- Design a logo and brochures for your business;
- Visit various office spaces that you could potentially house your business.

If you'd like to create more money in your life:

- Imagine that you won the lottery or received a million-dollar check from a relative you never knew you had and go shopping to pick out all the things you would spend the money on (Note: Don't actually spend any money!);
- Put a hundred-dollar bill (or more) in your wallet that you keep in there at all times and never spend. With this in there, think about it often and imagine what you would buy if you were allowed to spend this money.

What are some other ways you can begin to “play” your future reality into existence now? These are things you do long before your goal starts to take shape in your life, as a way of letting the Universe know that you are ready for that thing to start making its way to you. Even if you feel silly at first, do it anyway! I’ve seen the results in my own life and the silliness you may feel in the beginning is well worth the success and rewards you’ll experience in the long-run.

Create Your Ideal Day

Another way that you can use make-believe is to create your ideal day. This is one of my favorite exercises for creating my ideal life and I try to do it as often as possible.

Imagine that your ideal life has already come true and you are currently living it in this very moment. Your wildest dreams have all come true! Assuming that this is true, ask yourself the following questions about an ideal day in your new life:

- How do you walk?
- How do you answer the phone?
- What do you wear?
- What do you eat for breakfast?
- Etc.

Once you’ve come up with the answers to these questions, begin to act this way in your daily life now as often as possible. If you walk with a little more of a swagger or hold your head a little higher, do that now! Walk that way down the street and imagine that you are already living your ideal life. Really feel what that would feel like and embody those qualities.

If you would answer the phone any differently in your dream life, then begin to answer the phone that way now. You can try it out on telemarketers and really get into it. For example, perhaps you will answer the phone with a happier tone once you’ve achieved all your goals or will even use a different greeting all together. Start doing that now!

I explained this exercise to someone once and asked what she would eat for breakfast if she was already living her dream life. She said she would have blueberry pancakes with strawberries and syrup on top, every single weekend. I recommended she start eating that for breakfast on the weekends as soon as possible!

What are some ways you can introduce this technique into your life today? Think of other things that don’t require money that will change once you’re living your dream life and figure out how you can incorporate some of those changes into your life now.

Come As You’ll Be Party

Last year when I attended the Breakthrough to Success conference I mentioned earlier with Jack Canfield, the conference concluded with a "Come As You’ll Be Party", which was

definitely a highlight for me. The point of the party is to show up as if you were living five years in the future and have already achieved all the goals you were hoping to achieve during that five-year period. We were encouraged to truly embody the person we hoped to become.

One lady who really got into it set up a table like you would see at Barnes & Noble, and was doing a book signing of her best-selling book. Keep in mind she hadn't even written her book yet, but she had already created a cover for it and was doing book signings. She had also super-imposed a picture of herself onto the cover of O Magazine, and inside the magazine had written an article about her best-selling book that had been featured on the Oprah show. I was really impressed!

Actually, this "Come As You'll Be Party" is what made me want to sign up for the conference in the first place. I had received an email about the conference and it showed a picture of a conference attendee from the previous year at the party. He was hoping to become a famous country singer and had arrived at the party in his very own music tour bus (which he rented for the occasion), complete with paparazzi and groupies! I don't know his name so I'm not sure if he ended up becoming famous or not, but my bet is he did. If nothing else, he's likely headed squarely in the direction of making his country music dreams come true.

Throw a "Come As You'll Be Party" of your own with close friends or colleagues, and really allow your imagination to run wild! The key is to stay in character the whole time, and act and speak as if your dreams have already manifested. Before long they will have manifested in your life, too.

Book of Positive Aspects

Another self help tool I recently discovered quickly became one of my favorites. I think you'll really like it, too! It's called a Book of Positive Aspects and the idea comes from Abraham-Hicks, the original teachers of the law of attraction.

The intention of the Book of Positive Aspects is to find as many positive aspects as you can about a person or situation that is troubling you or causing you discomfort. You're not trying to turn negatives into positives, but to see the positives in a situation or person that you didn't previously see. Every situation, no matter how dire, has some positive aspects to it.

Here are the instructions:

- Grab a journal that you can devote to this (or a piece of paper) and at the top label it Book of Positive Aspects;
- Select an area in your life that you would like to improve to focus on. It could be the relationship with your spouse, your work situation, your money situation, etc.
- Once you've picked your topic, write at least fifteen positive aspects about that scenario or individual.

Dig deep if you have to, but write down a minimum of fifteen positive qualities. You'll find that it gets easier after you list the first one or two qualities because your mind can always find what you tell it to look for.

People have noticed results from using this technique literally overnight, and I've used it myself to turn around situations or relationships with others. You are shifting your focus and energy from negative to positive, and when you change your inner world your outer world has no choice but to shift accordingly.

If you want to get yourself in a super good mood, do this exercise on something that is already going well in your life and remind yourself how great your life really is!

Here's an example to get you started: If you've been struggling with money and wish you had more, list fifteen positive aspects about *not* having as much money as you'd like. You might list things like:

- I've spent more quality time with my children because we haven't been doing as many activities outside the house;
- I've learned to live without many of the material things I thought I needed before and have deepened my spiritual practice;
- I've started eating healthier because I can't afford to go out to dinner as often.

Do you see how you can find positive aspects hidden within a "negative" situation, even if you don't see them at first?

I've read A LOT of stories about how people turned around romantic relationships using this technique. If you're undergoing tension in your relationship, get out your Book of Positive Aspects and list all the wonderful qualities you love and admire in your partner. They've got to be there somewhere, or otherwise you wouldn't have started dating them in the first place!

Even if you don't tell them you're doing this exercise, they will notice the shift in your energy and begin to treat you differently. Keep writing in your Book of Positive Aspects until you notice a change for the better in the relationship. What you focus on expands, so the more attention and energy you place on positive aspects of a person means you will elicit more of those positive aspects from them. For best results, do this on a regular basis throughout your relationship to really keep your mind focused on all the positive qualities of your significant other.

This tool can also eliminate resistance you're having to a particular situation and allow things to run much more smoothly in your life. In the example above about not having as much money as you would like, use the Book of Positive Aspects to see that your situation is not all bad. Once you do this, you open up the channels to receiving more wealth into your life because you're not as stressed out about not having money. Opportunities that you may not have seized before will present themselves to you and you will be more

inclined to take action. You're not as resistant to the situation of not having all the money you desire, and this allows more abundance to flow in.

Meditation

It seems like just about every self help book or resource I come across recommends a regular practice of meditation. These books offer great advice, and then always conclude by saying that meditation is essential to truly creating a well-rounded meaningful life. I practice meditation occasionally and always feel so much better afterwards!

Meditation is the act of letting go, going within, and allowing things to just be as they are. You want to let go of everything happening in the world around you and in your life, focus on being still in the moment, open yourself to the sensations you're feeling in your body, welcome any thoughts that come into the mind and let them go, and just be with whatever is (both internally and externally). It is a process of becoming aware of what's happening in your body and all around you, without becoming attached to whatever is happening.

I recently started practicing yoga and we meditate for a few minutes at the beginning and end of each class. It really helps me quiet the mind and experience a sensation of inner peace, which is often hard to come across in my daily life!

Even if you don't start a formal meditation practice, I encourage you to take a few minutes as often as possible to just be in silence and go within yourself. Your mind will probably be rushing at first, but as thoughts come to you just observe them and let them go. Several people recommend focusing on your breath and repeating a mantra as you do so. For example, try mentally saying the word "let" on your inhale, and "go" when you exhale. Or you can say "I" on the inhale, and "am" on the exhale. Find something that works for you and has special meaning.

Once you get more comfortable and familiar with meditation, you'll be surprised at how quickly you can get into a quiet, relaxed state. Before you know it, you'll be able to do this no matter what is going on around you, even in a stressful business meeting or in the middle of a crowded, busy airport!

I'm not an expert at meditation, but if you'd like additional information there are several great meditation resources out there, including *Holosync* by the Centerpointe Research Institute which is listed on my website at <http://www.selfhelpgoddess.com/selfhelp-meditation.html>.

Chapter Six: Relationships, Relationships, Relationships

Along the path to creating your ideal life, it is important to not lose sight of your relationships, both with yourself and others. In real estate, the most important thing is location, location, location. In life, the most important thing is relationships, relationships, relationships!

The relationship you have with yourself is the most important relationship you will ever have, and you want to make sure to always treat yourself with love, kindness, and respect. The relationships you have with others are important because enjoying your ideal life is that much sweeter when you have others to share it with.

Develop a Strong Relationship with Yourself

Simply put, loving yourself is the key to everything in life. The Universe can only give you things (wealth, success, happiness, love, etc.) if you believe you deserve it. Otherwise, even if those things you are wanting do make an appearance in your life, you will just find a way to push them away from you because you don't truly believe you deserve them. Think about all the lottery winners who win big jackpots, but then are completely broke just a few years later. Deep down they don't truly believe they are worthy of having all that money, so they find ways to overspend and get rid of it.

Believing you deserve the good things in life starts with truly loving and accepting yourself, faults and all. This means accepting yourself *exactly as you are*, even if you want to lose 20 lbs., or don't like the current job you're in, or wish you were making more money, etc. Loving yourself does not just apply when things are going well, but loving yourself all the time, no matter what is going on in your life.

To love yourself means that you value and appreciate yourself, and recognize that you are worthy, exactly as you are. You deserve all the good things that life has to offer, just for being you! You are aware of all your strengths and positive aspects, and use them to your advantage. You are also mindful of your weaknesses and flaws, but you treat yourself kindly in spite of them. You realize that these are just qualities that you're still working on and developing.

Self-Talk

In addition to paying attention to the thoughts you think about creating your ideal life, you also want to pay particularly close attention to the thoughts you think about yourself and what you tell yourself regularly. No matter what anybody tells you in the "outside world," the thoughts you say to yourself come from inside your head and there is no filter whatsoever. Whatever you tell yourself is absorbed exactly the way you say it inside your

head! Depending on how we treat ourselves and how we talk to ourselves, we can either be our biggest supporter or our worst enemy.

What are some of the thoughts you tell yourself on a regular basis? For example, when you look in the mirror do you tell yourself you look good, or that you need to lose ten lbs? If you make a mistake, do you beat yourself up and tell yourself how stupid you are, or do you treat yourself with kindness and tell yourself that you'll do better next time?

A good rule of thumb is to not say anything to yourself that you would not feel comfortable saying to a child. If you catch yourself saying something negative to yourself like, "I'm so stupid!", then ask yourself if you would say that to a young child in the same situation. If not, you should change your self-talk to something you would feel comfortable saying to a young child, probably something that is more supportive and loving.

If you've seen the movie "What the Bleep Do We Know!?", then you're familiar with the water crystal experiments performed by Dr. Masaru Emoto. These experiments illustrated the effects of our thoughts and feelings on physical reality. Using a very high-powered microscope, Dr. Emoto showed how water crystals change shape depending on whether they are given loving messages (through spoken or written words), or negative messages like, "You make me sick."

When the water was treated with kind and uplifting words, the water crystals resembled "brilliant, complex, and colorful snowflake patterns." When harsh messages and feelings were directed towards the water, however, the crystals took on much different patterns and took on "incomplete forms or asymmetrical patterns with dull colors." To see the actual pictures, go here: <http://www.whatthebleep.com/crystals/>.

The results were quite remarkable and show how important it is to treat ourselves with love and kindness on a regular basis. If you're one of those people who looks in the mirror and tells yourself how awful you look, start getting into the habit of looking in the mirror and treating yourself with overwhelming love and acceptance! The following is an exercise which will help you do just that.

A Powerful Self-Love Exercise

The exercise is called "The Mirror Exercise" and you'll understand why. Every night before you go to bed, preferably just before you get into bed, find a mirror in your home that you can stand in front of undisturbed for a few minutes. If you're married or have a roommate, ask them to give you a few minutes to yourself because you'll want to do this exercise alone to get maximum results. This should only take about five minutes.

For the first few seconds, stand there in front of the mirror and really look at yourself, deep in your eyes. Chances are you've never done this before so it will probably feel very uncomfortable or awkward, and you may even find yourself turning away from the mirror. Rest assured that this is completely normal, and simply direct your gaze back to your eyes. As you're doing this, you want to send yourself as much love and acceptance as you

possibly can. Really look at yourself and see what you look like to the outside world. Look at your eyes, your skin, your forehead, your nose, etc. If you're standing in front of a full-length mirror, look at the rest of your body, too. (If you're brave enough to try this exercise naked, go for it! It's not required, though, to get powerful results.)

After you've really looked at yourself for a few seconds, say "I love you" out loud to yourself and then your full name. For example, "I love you, Mary Knebel." Be sure to say this out loud, and do your best to just be with any feelings that come up, whether positive or negative. They are just feelings and you can accept them as they are and allow them to be there.

Next, reflect over the day you just had and think of all the things you are proud of yourself for accomplishing. These can be big or small things, but aim to find 5-10 things you did during the day that you can appreciate yourself for out loud. For example, "I'm so proud of you for eating a healthy dinner." "I'm so proud of you for finishing the memo you said you would finish." "I'm so proud of you for reading the kids a bedtime story before bed." You get the idea.

While continuing to look at yourself in the mirror, flow love and compassion towards yourself as best you can. If it helps you to get in a loving space, you can imagine flowing pink or golden light to yourself. Next, find things that you love about yourself and acknowledge those qualities to yourself out loud. For example, "I love that you have such pretty eyes." "I love that you are such a loyal friend." "I love how creative you are." "I love how toned your arms are." These qualities can either be physical characteristics or qualities that have more to do with who you are as a person. The key is to find things about yourself that you can truly love, appreciate, and acknowledge yourself for. Dig deep if you have to, but find things about yourself you can love!

Finally, to finish this exercise, look yourself deeply in your eyes for a few more seconds and then say "I love you" and your full name one last time. Stare into your eyes and continue to flow love and compassion towards yourself as much as possible. Really be with any feelings that come up, whether positive or negative, and just allow them to be. Loving yourself means loving ALL of you, feelings and all.

That's it! As I mentioned above, this will probably feel uncomfortable or even awkward the first few times you do this. However, this is completely normal and will get much easier if you continue practicing.

Do this exercise for forty days straight, without skipping a day. If you skip a day, start over from Day One and do the forty days all over again. After forty days in a row this will become deeply imbedded in your subconscious mind, and you will notice how much better you feel about yourself and how comfortable you are in your own skin.

As a result, the world will seem to become a more loving and accepting place towards you. Your spouse will be more supportive of you, friends will want to be around you more often, your website or business will attract new visitors, and you may even start to notice that

you are more beautiful or attractive than you ever noticed before! It's your thinking that has changed the world around you. Remember, your thoughts become your reality. Therefore, the more loving thoughts you have within, the more loving the outside world will be towards you. Give this exercise a shot, and you'll probably find that you'll want to keep doing it after the forty days are up because it just feels so good!

An Exercise in Loving Others

Here's another powerful love exercise for you, although this one is focused upon loving others. Don't be fooled, though. Even though you'll be sending love to others, the rewards you will receive personally from this exercise will be tenfold. Whatever you send out into the Universe always comes back to you at least times ten (money, love, kindness, etc.).

Think of a situation that is troubling you right now that involves other people in some way. Maybe you're trying to collect on a debt that is long overdue to you, or hoping to win back a former significant other. Once you've selected a situation you'd like to improve and the specific person (or people) you'd like to focus on, take a seat somewhere and spend a few minutes getting comfortable and relaxing. You'll want to do this exercise alone and without distractions, so make sure to choose a quiet spot. Inhale a few deep breaths, tune out the world around you, and silently go within and focus on your breath.

Once you've relaxed and you feel centered, picture the person who is giving you a hard time and visualize them sitting in a chair on an empty theatre stage. It can be a group of people if that works better for your scenario. When you see the person sitting on stage and can really picture the image clearly, add yourself to the image and see yourself walk up to the person.

OK, here's the good part! You are going to visualize a conversation between the two of you, where you will discuss the situation you are experiencing with them. However, you are NOT going to express your anger, frustration, etc. to this person. Instead, you are only going to express LOVE to them. Up until now, you have probably been flowing "negative" feelings to this person, like fear, anger, sadness, etc. No matter how justified these feelings have been, they are not helping the situation. However, flowing love to someone (even if you are absolutely convinced they don't deserve it) can shift even the most painful and difficult of situations.

Go ahead and imagine a conversation between the two of you about the problem at hand, and express love to the other person in the words you speak, the gestures you make towards them, even the way you look at them. This may be extremely difficult depending on the circumstances of your situation, but do whatever you can to get into a place of being able to flow love towards this person. You are using your imagination for this exercise, so act loving towards them even if it seems impossible to do in real life. If it helps you, imagine flowing pink or golden light to this other person to really surround them in a feeling of love.

Here's an example: Say you're trying to collect money that someone borrowed from you a

long time ago. You've asked them several times for the money back, but haven't received a dime. When you think of them your thoughts are probably filled with anger over being taken advantage of, but you're going to shift those feelings to love with this exercise. Picture you and this person who owes you money sitting on the stage, and visualize a conversation between the two of you. You could be saying things to the other person like, "I just wanted to check in with you regarding the money you owe me. I know times are tough right now and I understand that you are going through financial difficulties in your family. I'm so glad I was able to help you out and loan you the money you needed, and I hope you were able to use it for what it was intended for. If you are ready and able to repay it to me now, I am open and willing to receive it. I'm sending lots of love to you and your family and hope you get back on your feet soon."

Here's another example: If you are trying to win back a significant other who has pulled away or left you for someone else, visualize the two of you on a stage having a loving conversation. You can say things to them like, "I wanted to let you know that even after all we've been through, I still love you more than ever. Our time apart has made me realize that I genuinely love and care about you, and always will. Ultimately I want you to be happy, so if that involves you being with someone else who is a better fit for you, I will understand and accept that. I truly want you to be happy. However, if it turns out that I am the best partner for you, I am open and willing to receive you back into my life now. I love you."

The key is to make these conversations as loving and positive as possible, i.e. free from the anger or sadness or free you may be feeling in response to the situation in the real world. Flowing those feelings has not worked for you up until this point, so try sending some love towards the other person instead. You do not need to tell the person about this exercise in order for it to work. They will sense a shift in the way you are treating them or thinking about them, even if they live far away. Remember, everything and everyone is energy and we are all connected.

Ultimately this exercise is really for your benefit to get you into a place of flowing positive, loving feelings towards the other person, rather than any negative feelings you may currently have towards them. Focus on creating more happiness within yourself, rather than thinking about whether or not the other person actually deserves love.

Once you've tried this exercise, watch for changes to start occurring all around you, especially if you do this regularly. You'll notice people going out of their way to be loving and helpful towards you, even people you didn't use the exercise on! Most importantly, don't be surprised if all of a sudden the person who owes you money "magically" comes up with the money to finally pay you back, or your former significant other comes to the realization that you are The One after all.

Treat Others with Kindness

We've all heard the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." No matter what happens along your journey to accomplishing your goals and creating your

ideal life, you always want to remember that people come first and to send as much love to others as you possibly can. Sure, you may be on a quest to attract your dream sports car or a house in the south of France. You never want to forget, though, that it's your relationship and connection with others that make it all worthwhile in the end. Not to mention, the people you meet along the way may have just what you need to accomplish your goals and dreams!

As you did in the exercise above, send love to whomever you encounter along your path, no matter how they treat you. Sometimes this requires just sending them love in your mind or imagination, and that's okay. Try to send as much love out into the world as you possibly can. What you send out into the world always comes back to you at least tenfold, so by sending love to others you are actually assuring that more love will eventually come back to you.

If you've ever been on the receiving end of someone who's not flowing love and kindness (and who hasn't?), then you know how horrible it can feel and how it can instantly ruin your day. Even if another person is not treating you with the respect and kindness you deserve, you always have a choice regarding how to respond and you don't have to treat them the same way. I'm not encouraging you to put up with abusive or unfair behavior by any means, but the more you treat others with love and kindness the more likely they are to treat you the same way in return.

I try to always be respectful to people wherever I go, because you never know how life will turn out. These same people may show up later in your life and be in a position to help you. One time I went on a job interview and didn't get the job. However, I had made such a positive impression on the woman interviewing me that she actually offered to help me find a job in any way she could. She referred me to some very valuable websites that eventually led me to the type of job I was looking for.

When I was living in Paris following college as described earlier, I made connections with several people that I assumed I would never see again when I eventually moved back to the US. However, rather than telling myself there was no point in making a connection with them, I reached out and established friendships with them, and some of those people actually ended up resurfacing in my life later when I moved to Washington, DC!

Learning from Others

I also think it's a good rule of thumb to learn as much from others as you possibly can. When you're on your path to creating success and you see others around you achieving their dreams faster or with more ease than you, it can be difficult to not feel jealousy or envy. You've put in so much time and effort, so why aren't things working out for you?!

Instead of giving in to those twinges of envy, however, I encourage you to acknowledge that particular person (or persons) as someone who has already achieved what you would like to achieve and begin to see them as a valuable resource or mentor that you can model in creating your success. If someone has already accomplished what you are setting out to

accomplished (whether it be weight loss, an ideal job, marriage, etc.), that means that you can do it, too! Rather than feeling uncomfortable that this person has achieved what you're still trying to achieve, use the other person as a resource to figure out how to replicate that success.

If the person has written a book, get a copy and read it. If the person lives in your area, ask to grab coffee with them and pick their brain about how they achieved their results. Don't worry, they will be extremely flattered if you tell them why you want to meet with them. If the person is a good friend of yours, then you have no excuses not to learn from them! Even just spending time with them and observing how they treat others or how they get things done on their daily to-do list can teach you a lot about success. If you have a friend who is great with relationships and you're only so-so, then observe her the next time you hang out with her and see if she treats her husband differently than the way you treat potential suitors.

The point is, it can be easy to get frustrated when you've hit a roadblock or two and you see others around you who seem to be sailing through their goals with flying colors. Rather than feeling despair, however, a more productive thing to do is figure out what makes the other person successful and implement those techniques in your own life. This keeps you in action (learning and implementing new strategies) rather than staying stuck and feeling sorry for yourself.

This is one reason why I love attending personal growth seminars put on by others who have already achieved what I'm trying to achieve. By observing how they carry themselves, how they interact with others, how they conduct their business, etc., I get a lot of great insight into how I can create similar results. Even if you can't attend a seminar, visit that person's website and sign up for their newsletter to see if you can get any insight into how they've created their results. You don't have to exactly duplicate what they do, but just open yourself up to some new possibilities out there that you may not have tried. After all, these people are successful for a reason!

I recently met someone who has achieved several of the goals that are on my vision board and I felt myself starting to get down on myself for not having already achieved the same results. Then I realized what an amazing resource this person could be for me in realizing my dreams, so I started asking her a ton of questions and arranging to be around her as much as I could. I encourage you to try the same technique in your own life and watch as your results start to soar overnight!

Develop a Support System

Just as important as learning from others along your path is having a support system in place to help you achieve your goals. You want to make sure that the people you surround yourself with on a consistent basis are positive, supportive, and truly believe that you can make your dreams come true. Sometimes the people we are surrounded by are not always as supportive as we would like (friends, colleagues, family members, etc.), so I suggest having an accountability partner and belonging to a mastermind group.

An accountability partner is someone you check in with regularly and give status updates to regarding how you are coming along your path to achieving your goals. You want to find someone who is supportive of everything you are trying to accomplish, but who is also going to hold you accountable for taking the actions you say you will take. They are intended to help you keep your momentum going towards achieving your goals, and should not side with you when things get tough and let you off the hook. When selecting an accountability partner, be sure to select someone you know will take the job seriously and keep you on track. You can check in with your partner in-person, over the phone, email, etc. The key is to touch base with them regularly so you continue moving forward and making progress on your goals.

Napoleon Hill popularized the term Mastermind Group in his book, *Think and Grow Rich*, and they have become increasingly popular today. A mastermind group is a group of like-minded individuals who are there to brainstorm new ideas with you, provide valuable feedback and support, and hold you accountable for achieving your goals. Often times mastermind groups are formed with individuals from similar fields, but you may also find it beneficial to include people in your group that come from different fields than you. Make sure that your mastermind group has a set agenda to follow and someone who keeps track of the time. I've discovered through personal experience that without these things in place some group members can tend to veer off-topic! Mastermind groups usually meet every week or every other week, either in-person or via the phone.

As I mentioned earlier, if you have to go on-line to find people to be in your support system, that's okay! Depending on where you live, it may or may not be easy to find people within your community who can support you in making your dreams come true. There are so many valuable social networking sites out there today that it won't take you long to find people who can support you in your journey.

Chapter Seven: Final Steps

Once you've decided what your ideal life looks like, have lined up your thoughts and emotions, implemented specific tools and techniques, and sent love to others along your journey, you're ready to welcome that thing you really want into your life. In fact, it's possible that the thing you wanted is *already* a part of your life!

Let's explore some final steps that will help you along your journey to creating your ideal life.

You Have Your Dreams Because You Are Meant to Manifest Them

Something I heard one time that I have never forgotten is that your dreams *want you*. They want you just as much as you want them! What this means is that you have your particular dreams because they are YOUR particular dreams, i.e. they are meant for you! In other words, you will not have a dream (no matter how far-fetched or out there it seems) without also being given the means to make that dream come true.

All of the books being published on the law of attraction these days say that anything is possible and that you can create whatever you want. At first glance, this may seem difficult to comprehend. How can there really be enough to go around for everyone so that *everyone* on the entire planet can achieve their dreams and create what they want?

This is possible is because not everyone wants to achieve the same things! Not everyone wants to become president of the United States, or become a millionaire, or have a super skinny body, or have five kids, or run a large company, etc. If you ask ten people at random what their dreams are, chances are that each person will have very different things they want to accomplish in their life. Sure, everyone would probably respond that they want more money, but for one person \$100,000 may seem like a lot of money, whereas for someone else financial success is represented by one billion dollars.

Everyone has different things that they want and are meant to achieve, and we are all given the means to fulfill any dream we have. If you have a dream and *really* want it to come true, then that means that it's in the realm of possibility for you to make it happen! It may take hard work and dedication, and the road to achieving your dream may not necessarily be easy. If you have a strong enough desire, though, that means it's in the realm of possibility for your life.

This is especially helpful to remember if you find yourself getting frustrated and wondering why things aren't happening for you. If you're feeling a burning desire inside to accomplish or have something, then that means that dream is meant for you. It is showing you a glimpse of what is possible in your life if you really step up to the plate and go for it. Instead of feeling upset or frustrated that you have this goal or dream and it seems so far away, take your intense desire as a positive sign that this dream is meant for you and begin

taking steps in that direction! The Universe wants to help you make all of your dreams come true, if you'll let it.

Make the Best of Situations

One of the things I've always thought I had a special knack for is making the best out of situations, or going with the flow. No matter how much we visualize, line up our thoughts, change our beliefs, consciously use the law of attraction, etc. there will always be times when things don't entirely go your way and you'll encounter what I like to call "opportunities for growth." This is called LIFE! Unfortunately, no matter how many self help techniques we employ, sometimes things just don't go our way.

The way you handle the "bumps" along the road is one of the greatest factors in determining your success. Life really is all about the way you respond to the bumps in the road rather than eternally searching for a road that is bump-free. Are you able to smoothly navigate them and use them to your advantage, or do you let them get you down and derail you completely?

One example from my life that comes to mind happened not too long ago. I was working in a job that I had been at for about three years, and was laid off rather suddenly. Layoffs were rampant at the time, especially in the field I was working in, so it wasn't completely unexpected but layoffs are never fun. What was surprising to me, though, was that I seemed to handle my situation better than the people around me!

Don't get me wrong, it definitely shocked me when it happened. Behind the scenes, though, I had actually been planning to quit this job soon anyway. I had been dreaming of starting my www.selfhelpgoddess.com website for several months, and had even started going to personal growth conferences to really get myself headed in that direction. In fact, the very same day that I was laid off I had actually written a Pray Rain Journal entry about not working and being able to run my website full-time!

Instead of letting the shock of being laid off and fear about what I would do next overwhelm me, I chose to see the situation as something that was working in my favor rather than something that was taking me off course. I used the immediate downtime to begin creating my website, and eventually was led to a new job that turned out to be the right fit for me. Sure, it was all a bit unsettling at first. We can always choose to see situations as working for or against us, though, and in this occasion I chose the former.

Along the same lines, you can always choose to take a challenge and turn it into an opportunity for growth and success. Rather than letting it defeat you, use it make you stronger!

Did you know that Michael Jordan didn't initially make his high school varsity basketball team? Instead of letting that get to him, however, he trained even harder and the next season he made the varsity team. As we all know, he then went on to become the greatest basketball player ever.

You can always use setbacks to propel you forward to creating more success. Rather than giving into the setback and feeling defeated, use the setback to increase your motivation for success even more and find a way to make it happen.

Here are some examples:

- If you lose your job, resolve to find another one that pays you 20% more;
- If a relationship ends, resolve to find someone who is even better suited for you;
- If your business doesn't pan out as planned, resolve to open another and make this one a long-lasting success.

No matter how much you work on yourself and clear your blocks, there will always be new challenges to overcome and things you weren't expecting along the way. You always have a choice, though. Instead of getting overwhelmed, you can always choose to create something positive out of a situation that at first appears negative. We can always choose to see a situation as working for us rather than against us.

Sometimes Things Appear to Get Worse Before They Get Better

Along the same lines, sometimes in life things will appear to get worse before they get better. No need to panic, though! It's often just the Universe's way of letting you know that the timing is not quite right yet, and you still need to get rid of a few old things to make room for new circumstances in your life.

Not long ago I wanted to start creating more money in my life, and I began listening to an audio program that was supposed to raise my vibration around money. I listened to the audio every day to get into the feeling place of being a millionaire and having an endless supply of money at my fingertips. Not long after I started following this program, though, I was let go from my job in the story I described above! Wait, wasn't I working on attracting *more* money into my life rather than less? What was going on here?

Be on the lookout for similar circumstances in your life. It doesn't always happen like this, but sometimes in order to make room for something new you have to get rid of something old that is no longer serving you. This could look like losing a job, breaking up with someone or getting a divorce, getting evicted from your apartment, getting passed over for a promotion at work that you were sure was yours. At first, these sorts of things can be jarring and you will wonder what's going on. It may seem like you are completely going off course from what you are trying to create. Don't despair! When these things happen it is actually just the Universe's way of clearing space for the thing you have asked for.

When I lost my job, I was losing my income in the short-term. In the long-run, however, I was increasing my chances of becoming financially free because I started my website. In time, this venture will give me much more freedom and income than my 9-5 job ever would have.

This seems to happen a lot in relationships, too. One person in the relationship may be looking for a more serious commitment, but the relationship seems to unravel rather than get more serious. Again, this is just the Universe's way of creating space for the committed relationship you've said that you want. The serious, committed relationship may not be with the person you are currently with, but it is on its way to you.

Oprah's life coach, Martha Beck, has an exercise whereby she has her clients write a list of all of the worst things that have happened to them in their lives. Once they've done that, she instructs them to list all the good things that come from those events. Sure enough, good things always come out of the bad circumstances, and oftentimes the new circumstances far outweigh the bad circumstances that were left behind!

Give Away What You Are Trying to Get

One secret I've learned over the years, which is not immediately obvious, is to give away that which you want more of. At first glance this seems counter-intuitive or just plain backwards! Why would I give away something I'm trying to get more of? Won't I just end up with less?

What you put out into the Universe always comes back to you *at least* tenfold, often more. By giving things away, you are signaling to the Universe that you are confident that new things will soon show up to fill in that space. Nature abhors a vacuum and will rush in to fill any voids you've created in your life.

Do you feel like you're lacking love in your life? Give away love! Do you wish you had more financial abundance? Start giving away money! Several of the most popular prosperity books out there recommend tithing 10% of your income every month as a regular practice in order to increase your wealth.

Don't get me wrong, giving away money doesn't require giving away A LOT of money. Sometimes I just throw in a penny in those "give a penny, take a penny" cups, or give a homeless person a dollar. These things don't have to be huge demonstrations. To give away love, you can smile at others while walking down the street or send an email or a note to someone letting them know how much you appreciate their presence in your life. Again, these don't have to be enormous demonstrations. You are just trying to reinforce the feeling within yourself that you have good things coming your way. By giving away things now, you are creating space in your life to attract new things.

If you just want to clear the way for new things and new energy to enter your life in general, start getting rid of clutter or things you don't use in your life anymore. Do you have clothes you haven't worn in years? Sell them on eBay or donate them to a charity that needs old clothes. Do you have books that you will never read again? Sell them to a used bookstore or donate them to a library. I did this not too long ago and I felt so much better afterwards. Not only did I feel much lighter and less cramped in my living space, but I created room for new books to come into my life!

Planning for Your Success

Another effective tool I've used over the years involves taking action to signal to the Universe that you are in fact ready for what you are asking for and that you believe it's on its way. Once the Universe picks up on your positive vibe that this thing is yours, it has no choice but to send it to you!

By preparing yourself in advance for what you want to happen, this actually paves the way for good things to happen and increases their likelihood of showing up. Rather than just going through life haphazardly and hoping you achieve what you want, you can actually plan for your success and increase the odds of it happening. Sometimes just taking little steps in advance opens the door for bigger things to come your way.

I've read in several books on relationships that if you're single and want to attract a new relationship, you should clean out your closet and empty drawers in order to make space for a partner in your home. If this is you, take a look around your home. Is it overflowing with clutter and junk, or is there room for another person to move in? Oftentimes we wonder where our life partner is, but we haven't really created space for them in our crowded lives. If he/she showed up tomorrow, would you feel comfortable inviting them over to your home? Would they feel comfortable there?

Feng Shui experts tell you to make sure you have a night stand on both sides of your bed, not just your side of the bed. This may seem strange if you don't currently have a significant other, but by taking these actions you are increasing the chances that a partner will soon show up. This is because you are taking concrete action to express your commitment to having a new relationship in your life.

If you're hoping to attract a new job, do you have a suit all ready to wear when you land an interview for your dream job? Is it dry-cleaned and at the front of your closet, so you can easily access it when the time comes for your interview?

I remember a few years back I was in a job that I didn't particularly care for. I knew that eventually I wanted to start looking for a new job, but I wasn't quite ready to start sending out my resume. One day, however, I was shopping for clothes and came across a really nice suit that was perfect for interviews. I knew I didn't plan to go on interviews for a few months and I already had a suit at home I could wear, but I decided to go ahead and purchase the suit in order to let the Universe know I was ready to start getting interviews. Not long after, I quit my job that I didn't like and started applying for new jobs. Right away I was called for two interviews, and of course I wore my new suit. I received offers for both positions, and the job I ended up taking was actually offered to me on the spot! The funny thing is, we had to wear suits every day at that job so my interview suit came in quite handy.

The key is to prepare for your success now as if it is already a given, rather than waiting to see if your success arrives and dealing with it then. Not only do you increase your chances

of success by preparing for it beforehand, but you insure that you'll be equipped to handle it if and when it does arrive.

Take a look at your list of goals and see if there are concrete ways you can prepare for your success now. If you're hoping to attract more money, do you have bank accounts and financial advisors in place to help you deal with your money? If you're hoping to lose a significant amount of weight, do you have a few clothing items you will be able to wear when you drop the weight without having to go shopping? By taking steps and putting these things into place now, you are sending a strong signal to both yourself and the world around you that you are indeed ready for success. Act as if your success is a given.

Practice Gratitude Daily

Practicing gratitude on a daily basis can radically change your life for the better, even if you ignore all the other steps listed in this ebook. I had heard about keeping a gratitude journal for years, but it wasn't until I started keeping one myself that I understood its powerful effects. Oprah Winfrey has also said that keeping a gratitude journal completely changed her life.

You can practice gratitude in two ways:

- Being thankful for what you already have;
- Being thankful for things that have yet to arrive in your life, but that you are in the process of creating.

Practicing gratitude on a regular basis for things you already have in your life is important because it shows you just how much you already have in your life. I don't know about you, but it's not uncommon for me to spend a lot of my time focused on all the things I don't have in my life or all the dreams that haven't manifested yet. I was surprised when I started doing my gratitude journal, though, to discover how many great things I really do have in my life! From smaller things to large things, I have a ton in my life to be grateful for on a daily basis and I'm sure you do, too.

For example, if you're reading this ebook it means you have a computer and that is something to be grateful for. Also, if you're reading this it means you still have your eyesight, and that is something to be extremely grateful for! Think of all the things you can be thankful for that are already in your life now, like the meal you ate for breakfast or the smile you received from a stranger. Not only will you start to feel better about your life, but being in a constant state of gratitude and appreciation will lead to more things to be grateful for because what you focus on expands!

I highly recommend keeping a gratitude journal. Ideally you should write in your journal daily (best is right before bedtime), and list 5-10 things you are grateful for. Again, these can be big or small things. It can be something that happened that day, something

happening in your life overall, material items, qualities you love about yourself, family members you appreciate, etc.

It is also a powerful practice to list things for which you are grateful that you are intending to create in your life. By being thankful for these things in advance, even before they have made an appearance in your life, you are actually telling the Universe that you are confident that the object of your gratitude is on its way and it's just a matter of time before it arrives.

Think of using gratitude in this way as a means of receiving things into your life. Meister Eckhart once said, "If the only prayer you ever said in your whole life was thank you, that would suffice." Instead of praying to God or Source to make things happen in your life, simply say a prayer of gratitude that the thing you are wanting is on its way to you. Pretty soon, it will be!

If the idea of a journal doesn't appeal to you, take a gratitude walk and mentally list all the things for which you are grateful. You can thank a Higher Power (God, Universe, Source, etc.) or just list things to yourself. I used to do this every morning on my walk to work, and by the time I got there I always felt so confident and excited about the day ahead!

Just for practice, right now take a few minutes to list five things you are grateful for in this moment:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

OK, now stretch yourself and list five more!

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Did you actually do the exercise? If not, why not? Even if you do it in your head, come up with ten things you can be grateful for. Don't you feel better? Continue doing this on a daily basis and watch as your life improves all around you!

Be Happy Now

What I'm about to reveal here may possibly be the biggest secret to creating your ideal life EVER. Even if you skip over everything else, be sure to pay special attention to this section

because this could be the most important bit of information you read throughout this entire ebook!

So, what is this amazing secret that could change your life in an instant? Be happy now!

This may sound overly simplistic so I'll explain how this works. Once you really embrace this you will see amazing results.

Think about all the things you want in your life. Maybe it's more money, a great relationship, a successful career, a happy family, good health, a fit body, etc. When you think about those things, isn't the real reason you want them because ultimately you think they will make you happy?

Why do you want a million dollars? So you can quit your job and travel the world, and *be happier*. Why do you want a fulfilling relationship with your ideal partner? So you can be loved and accepted for who are, and *be happier*. Why do you want to open that art gallery you've been dreaming of for years? So you can express your natural talents and gifts, and *be happier*.

Let's face it, the reason most of us want anything in life is so that we can be happier or reach that state of eternal bliss and happiness we're all searching for. It doesn't really even matter what you want, because everyone has different wants and desires. Eventually, though, all anyone really wants is happiness, plain and simple. Happiness is the treasure at the end of the rainbow!

If that's true, then why not just be happy now? Bypass the requirement for achieving and acquiring all these things you think will finally make you happy, and just be happy now!

The problem is that most of us condition our happiness on something outside of us. We think we can't be happy until we get the fast red sports car, the prestigious job, the adorable children, the muscular toned body, perfect skin, or whatever. Society basically trains us from a very early age to believe that happiness is only accessible to us *after* we've attained something on the outside. The sad part is that many of us never get to that place of eternal bliss and happiness for because a) we never accomplish the goals we think will make us happy or b) even if we do achieve those goals we quickly come up with new ones and condition our happiness on achieving those goals. It's a never-ending battle, really.

Let's bypass all those goals and external things all together and allow ourselves to be happy now! I came to this conclusion recently in my own life and remember thinking how life-altering this was. I was mentally going through my daily list of things to be grateful for and was repeating the same things I have said to myself numerous times: "I'm grateful for the condo I live in. I'm grateful to have money in the bank and live in a great city. I'm grateful to have friends who enjoy doing the same activities as me, etc." All of a sudden, though, it occurred to me that even as I was grateful to have all these wonderful things in my life, I wasn't necessarily any *happier*, which is my ultimate goal (and I'm guessing it's yours, too).

So I decided to just be happy now! I decided to be happy to be alive, to be able to breathe the air that I breathe, to be able to drink a cup of coffee when I wake up in the morning, or to have clean clothes to put on every day. Don't get me wrong, it can take a little conscious effort to get to this place. Once you do, though, it is so rewarding! Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are about as happy as they make their minds up to be."

The funny thing is, not only will you already be happier but you will actually begin attracting those things you thought you needed to be happy in the first place. You will already be happy, and therefore your attitude towards those things will loosen up and relax. That makes it much easier for them to flow into your life! You won't need those things to be happy anymore, your need and desperation will be released, and the Universe will have a much easier time delivering those things to you. If we were really able to see the big picture, we would see that the Universe is practically "beating down our doors" trying to deliver our wants and needs to us at all times. Unfortunately, we are usually in such a state of need, fear, and anxiety, that we block those things from entering into our lives.

If you are trying to bring more happiness into your life today, just be happy now! Don't condition your happiness on anything outside of you; instead just decide right this minute to get yourself into a state of pure bliss and just be happy now for no reason whatsoever.

Conclusion

Thank you for reading *Secrets to Creating Your Ideal Life*!

It is my sincerest hope that reading this ebook has not only given you suggestions, tools, and techniques regarding how to create your ideal life, but that it has also inspired you to make anything you desire in life come true. I'm absolutely convinced that with the right combination of following your intuition, perseverance, hard work, and trusting that things will happen at the right time, anyone can make all of their wildest dreams come true!

For additional self help resources and recommendations on creating your ideal life, visit my website at www.selfhelpgoddess.com and my blog at <http://blog.selfhelpgoddess.com>. You will find lots of information in both places that will help you achieve more success in all areas of your life.

I'd love to hear any comments or feedback you have about this book and/or my website. I can be reached via email at mary@selfhelpgoddess.com or maryknebel@yahoo.com. I'm also always looking for new self help books and resources, so feel free to email me any recommendations you have. I may even add them to my site!

Here's to creating a life that is full of love, abundance, success, and happiness! Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you on your journey.

Recommended Reading

(Alphabetized by author's last name under each category)

Abundance/Money:

I'm Rich Beyond My Wildest Dreams, "I am. I am. I am.": How to Get Everything You Want in Life, by Thomas L. Pauley and Penelope J. Pauley

Open Your Mind to Receive, by Catherine Ponder

The Abundance Book, by John Randolph Price

You Were Born Rich, by Bob Proctor

Creating Money: Attracting Abundance, by Sanaya Roman and Duane Packer

The Science of Getting Rich, by Wallace D. Wattles

Law of Attraction:

The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne

Feel It Real! A Guided Approach to Bringing the Law of Attraction into Your Life, by Denise Coates

Excuse Me, Your Life Is Waiting: The Astonishing Power of Feelings, by Lynn Grabhorn

Ask and It Is Given: Learning to Manifest Your Desires, by Esther and Jerry Hicks

Law of Attraction: The Science of Attracting More of What You Want and Less of What You Don't, by Michael J. Losier

Quantum Success: The Astounding Science of Wealth and Happiness, by Sandra Anne Taylor

Making Your Dreams Come True/General:

The Aladdin Factor, by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen

The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be, by Jack Canfield with Janet Switzer

The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success: A Practical Guide to the Fulfillment of Your Dreams, by Deepak Chopra

Your Heart's Desire: Instructions for Creating the Life You Really Want, by Sonia Choquette

Creative Visualization: Use the Power of Your Imagination to Create What You Want in Your Life, by Shakti Gawain

You Can Heal Your Life, by Louise L. Hay

Conscious Living: How to Create a Life of Your Own Design, by Gay Hendricks

Happy for No Reason: 7 Steps to Being Happy from the Inside Out, by Marci Shimoff with Carol Kline

Relationships:

Love Will Find You: 9 Magnets to Bring You and Your Soulmate Together, by Kathryn Alice

The Soulmate Secret: Manifest the Love of Your Life with the Law of Attraction, by Arielle Ford

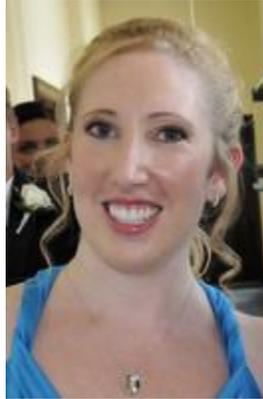
The Dark Side of the Light Chasers: Reclaiming Your Power, Creativity, Brilliance, and Dreams, by Debbie Ford

I Need Your Love - Is That True? How to Stop Seeking Love, Approval, and Appreciation and Start Finding Them Instead, by Byron Katie

Living in Love, by Alexandra Stoddard

A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of "A Course in Miracles", by Marianne Williamson

About the Self Help Goddess



My name is Mary Knebel and I'm known on-line as the Self Help Goddess, because I love finding, reading, and reviewing the best self help books and products out there to help others create their ideal lives.

After growing up in Indianapolis, Indiana, I attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, where I double-majored in Human & Organization Development and French. Following college, I embarked upon a life-long dream of mine to live and work in France, and moved to Paris. While there, I worked as a legal translator for a large international law firm for two years. Following my stint in the City of Lights, I returned to the United States and landed in Washington, DC, where I still live today. In Washington, I have worked in both non-profit and corporate organizations in the fields of Human Resources and Recruiting. Currently, I am fulfilling another life-long dream of mine to run a website dedicated to promoting the best self help resources I can find. It has been a passion of mine since I was a little girl to create my ideal life, and I hope to inspire others to do the same.