

**WHAT'S**  
*cramping*  
**YOUR**  
**LIFESTYLE?**

FROM LIMITATIONS TO A LIFE OF UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES



**LEASE L. YOUMANS**

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**LIFE**STYLE?

FROM LIMITATIONS TO A LIFE OF UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

LEASE L. YOUMANS



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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to two of the greatest women that I have ever known, my grandmothers Katie M. Byrd & Mariah Youmans.

Even though you're no longer here your love still remains.

Forever & Always

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge and thank You, God, for allowing me to experience this moment in time where my dreams are being manifested and my steps are continuously being directed toward greater.

## | PREFACE

When someone states, “You’re cramping my style”, they mean that someone is preventing them from freely expressing themselves through their abilities, style, and unique individuality. In life, there are some people and things that can cramp your lifestyle, hindering you from moving forward and obtaining the things that you desire and envision for yourself. Some of these things can be mindset, yourself, others, lack of vision, fear, etc. and the list goes on and on. *What’s Cramping Your Lifestyle?* will assist you in navigating through those internal and external forces that hinder you from living a life filled with unlimited possibilities.

There was a period in my life when I was dealing with some things that were “cramping my lifestyle”. Over an 18-year period, I had lived in 15 different places to include homeless shelters. I had experienced multiple job losses, evictions, and repossession. Although, I wanted more for myself and my future it seemed failure was my only option.

Everything that could go wrong went wrong and stayed wrong for quite some time.

The outside picture appeared to be well put together; however, on the inside a different story was being told. I had absolutely no control of what was going on. I took a good look at my life and decided I was not going to continue along that path any longer. I decided things would get better for me. I decided I was going to get involved in the process of my life, stop allowing things to happen to and around me and begin to make the changes that needed to be made for me to be and do better. I decided I was going to take the necessary steps to live my best life and be committed to the process.

I decided that for me to truly live a life of success and meaning I had to begin walking in my God-given purpose and manifest His vision for my life. I did my research and equipped myself to step into greater. I have been on the roller coaster ride of disappointment and I know what it's like to see yourself as less than or not enough. I know what it's like to have a dream and yet not know how to reach it. I have

learned how to overcome failure and defeat. I made a conscious decision to get rid of those things that were “cramping my lifestyle” and moved forward. Weeping over damaged pieces of my life would not have done me any good, so I decided to pick up what was good and moved on. Now is the time for you to go from a life of limitations to a life full of unlimited possibilities.

PART

1

*Soul Prosperity*



***“We shall prosper in life and experience good health as our souls prosper.”***

# 1 | SHIFTING YOUR MINDSET

Your mindset can either make you or break you when it comes to living the lifestyle of your dreams. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, mindset is defined as “a mental attitude or inclination; a fixed state of mind.” You can envision, have dreams and desires for your life, however, if your mindset is not in alignment with what you envision you will never bring to fruition what you’re dreaming about.

Our mindsets about life and others began to develop at a time when we had no control over what was going on or even how to process what we were taking in. Our mindsets began to develop when we were born, and I would even venture to say while we were still in our mother’s womb.

In our childhood state, we are very impressionable. We take in and more often than not agree with what it is we are being told and by observing the actions of others. If a child is



told that they are stupid, not enough or that they will never amount to anything, then this is the mindset and self-image he or she is going to conduct themselves with in life. Yet, if a child is being told that they are great, the sky is the limit for them and that they can do and have whatever they wish for in life, this is the mindset they will conduct themselves with in life. So, one grows up and struggles or doesn't even try and lives a life of defeat while the other child grows up and achieves the best of everything that life has to offer.

There are two types of mindsets, the mindset of abundance-prosperity and the mindset of poverty-scarcity. Each person possesses one or the other. You either have an abundance-prosperity mindset, or you have a poverty-scarcity mindset. The abundance-prosperity mindset says there is more than enough resources, finances, and success to possess and share with others. The poverty-scarcity mindset says there is a lack of everything and that there is not enough to go around. This is not to say someone that possesses a poverty-scarcity mindset cannot transform it into an abundance prosperity-mindset. It is highly possible

and achievable; however, it does not come about without dedication, commitment, focus and hard work.

Let's deal with the poverty-scarcity mindset first. You can really tell who possesses which mindset by the words that they speak, the actions they take and by the lifestyles that they live. The poverty-scarcity mindset will make you feel and see yourself as inferior. That is inferior to others, finances, and even material things. When someone feels inferior in any area of their life they don't feel as though they deserve more. They don't feel worthy of anything better. Also, they live a life of not enough and in a state of constant struggle. Side note struggle is not a sign of humility it is outright IGNORANCE on the part of the person living this way because you can have billions in your bank account and still live a lifestyle of humility. It's all about the mindset.

Now, back to the poverty-scarcity mindset. Even though it's a negative mindset I will continue to use the words poverty-scarcity so you as the reader can read them because some people have been living this way for so long that they don't even recognize it as a problem. They are under the

notion that this is the way it has always been. Psst, can I let you in on a little something that just may be a secret only being kept from you? It doesn't have to continue to be the way that it has always been, you were created for greater by a God of abundance!

As I stated earlier the poverty-scarcity mindset will make you feel inferior, yes inferior to others and inferior to anything that denotes abundance. Follow, me and I will add this to your thought process. When you feel inferior to anyone or anything you are a person that has low self-esteem, poor self-image, feelings of unworthiness and that you are not valuable (not even to yourself). The inferior person is often the person that is being walked over and used by others, their posture is bowed not only physically but also spiritually, mentally and emotionally. They don't feel deserving of anything better. This person also walks around in fear and most of the time is being led by that fear. The poverty-scarcity mindset drives you to fear because it says that there is not enough to go around and there is a lack of everything. So, it's understandable one would fear when you

believe that you're living in drought and famine day in and day out.

Let's go back to the poverty-scarcity mindset causing you to feel inferior to others. Say you've been working on your job for 3 years now and what you are being paid is simply not enough for you to survive on anymore, and you desire a raise. Because, you see yourself as less than and beneath your supervisor you are fearful of asking for the raise you deserve. After all, you come to work on time every day and work really hard at getting your job done. Side note: Yes, even though a poverty-scarcity mindset may not feel good about themselves they will work hard to build someone else's vision because the weekly paycheck is guaranteed to continue to fund the lifestyle of struggle they are living.

So, you go in to speak with your supervisor, (this person that you have magnified in your mind to be greater than God himself) with your head bowed, very soft spoken and unsure of yourself not really expecting a great outcome. Now when you leave out and your request has been rejected your words to yourself may be, "I knew it was not going to happen

anyway.” So why did you make the attempt? And if you were told that the reason for you not getting the raise is that there is not enough money in the budget you are completely satisfied because remember the poverty-scarcity mindset says that there is a lack of everything and not enough to go around.

Not only does the poverty-scarcity mindset feel inferior to those in authority, they also feel inferior to anyone that appears to be doing better than them even if the appearance of prosperity is deceiving. They also feel inferior to those that are making attempts to become better and create a better life for themselves. This causes a lot of infighting and even jealousy. Have you ever seen someone that is constantly speaking negatively about others especially those that are doing better than them or those that have invested the time, finances, and work to live a certain lifestyle?

The poverty-scarcity mindset never puts in the work to do better because they don't believe that better is possible for them. I just hate it when people say, “Well everybody has it hard”. Clears throat, question please, “What about those

people that are making the Forbes 400 List, the CEO's of the Fortune 500 Companies, the person that just made their first million dollars or even their first \$100,000? Better yet what about the person that has a clear vision of where they desire to go in life? Even though they are far from it now physically, they are getting up every day and investing their time and resources into their future. Rather, than see it as a struggle they consider it a sacrifice because they know that if they sacrifice now, they will surely celebrate later.

The poverty-scarcity mindset goes all the way back to the womb, conceived in poverty, born into poverty, live a life of poverty and, then, you die in poverty. You can make the choice not to continue living in poverty.

Just, because you were born into something such as misfortune and poverty-scarcity, does not mean you must continue to stay there. Yes, during your years of childhood you did not have much of a choice. Now, that you're an adult of any age things have changed, and you have a choice to make. You can either stay the way that you've always been and live the life that you've always lived while desiring

something better. Or you can make the changes that you need to make to transform your mindset from poverty-scarcity to abundance-prosperity.

Before, we get to how to make the transformation from one mindset to another, let's talk about the abundance-prosperity mindset. Again, the mindset of abundance-prosperity says there's more than enough resources, finances, and success to possess and share with others. The abundance-prosperity mindset walks with and in a position of authority. This doesn't mean they hold an office or that they are ruling over others. It simply means they are sure they will achieve and have what they desire in life and whatever attempts to come against them on their way to their destination has already been overcome.

For some this started from the womb while for others they had to transform their mindset from one of poverty-scarcity to abundance-prosperity. I will also use the words abundance-prosperity the same way I used the former mindset so that you can constantly see and read them that they may awaken something within your mind bringing

about a shift. Notice that I stated the way I used the former mindset. This is because we are shifting into a new way of thinking as of right now.

## ***ABUNDANCE-PROSPERITY***

You are getting very sleepy.... just kidding. Did you know that when we smile or laugh the brain releases endorphins that makes it easier for us to learn and take in information? So, I hoped that little joke worked, if not just keep reading.

The abundance-prosperity mindset says that you can have and achieve whatever your heart desires. Now, think about that for a moment. Imagine how it would feel if you journeyed through life knowing that what you desired would show up at each destination you arrived at throughout each phase of your life.

### **ABUNDANCE-PROSPERITY MINDSET TRAITS:**

**THEY ARE LIFE-LONG LEARNERS** | Abundance-prosperity mindsets are always teachable so that they can continuously learn, grow and mature. It could be a new skill, or a new way

of doing something to make their life easier, more productive and forever impactful.

**THEY ARE ACTION TAKERS** | They take action and put in the work required to manifest what they desire to experience in their lives. They don't procrastinate or make excuses as to why they can't get something done. They take immediate action.

**THEY POSSESS A PEACEFUL STATE OF MIND** | They don't have peace of mind simply because they may be a multimillionaire, we all know that peace is not about what you have in your bank account. You could very well be a multimillionaire and on the brink of a nervous breakdown if every other area of your life is going downhill. They have a peaceful state of mind because there is no shortage in life concerning them and whatever they need, or desire is available to them.

**THEY ARE PROACTIVE** | They are not controlled by their emotions and react, accordingly. They take full responsibility for their lives and create the realities they desire to see and experience. They don't sit around and allow life to happen to them and just go with the flow, they happen to life.

**THEY ARE GENUINELY HAPPY FOR OTHERS** | They take great joy in the success of others and don't mind helping them achieve it. Even, if they do not have all the things, they desire they are still able to celebrate others in their achievements.

**THEY DON'T MIND HELPING OTHERS SUCCEED** | Because they believe that there is more than enough for everyone, they are not afraid of the success of others. They know that helping others reach and achieve their dreams do not take away from what they have or desire to accomplish.

**THEY ARE FINANCIAL GIVERS** | They don't hold onto what finances they do have because they know that there is more.

They can freely invest in the lives of others and different causes.

**THEY ARE MINDFUL OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS** | They connect with and spend time with others that are of the abundance-prosperity mindset. They connect with those that are moving forward in the right direction and not backward. They connect with those that are action takers and not excuse makers. They're in relationships with people that build them up and don't tear them down, they push them forward and don't hold them back.

**THEY SPEAK ABUNDANTLY** | When there is something that they need, and they don't have it in their hand they don't say things like "I can't, or I don't have." They confess "I have whatever it is that I need, to accomplish whatever I desire to accomplish." They know whenever you say "I can't" it cancels out the possibility of you ever being able to do a thing. You no longer consider doing something after you have made up your mind that you can't.

**THEY STAY FOCUSED** | They do not lose their focus on things that do not pertain to where they are aspiring to go in life. If it's not a part of their plan it's not worth their time, energy or financial investments.

For the abundance-prosperity mindset, the misfortunes and even the opportunities of today are just stepping-stones to the success that they will experience tomorrow. They don't allow unfavorable situations and circumstances to deter them from moving forward. If, they get a snag in their plan they will either sew it up if it's still of necessity or scrap it if it's not and do something different.

The reality of the present moment doesn't dictate the manifestation of their future desires. The abundance-prosperity mindset doesn't look at and cringe when the stock market crashes or when the economy takes a downturn. This is not to say they don't care or they're not paying attention; however, they become aware of what's going on and govern themselves accordingly, by creating ways to stay ahead of

the situation. They are not connected to their resources but to the “Source” of the resources.

The “Source of Abundance” for me is God and because God is my source, for me there will never be a shortage of what I desire or need. With that being said, we are still in the vein of the abundance-prosperity mindset. I would like for you to consider one of my favorite passages of scripture, *3 John 2 (KJV) “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”* Before I go any further just let me hang that verse right here a moment while I touch on something else.

Let’s talk about two words here cognitive and dissonance. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary cognitive is defined as: of, relating to, being, or involving conscious intellectual activity (such as thinking, reasoning, or remembering). Dissonance is defined as lack of agreement; the dissonance between the truth and what people want to believe; especially: inconsistency between the beliefs one holds or between one's actions and one's beliefs.

When we put these two words together you get Cognitive Dissonance which is defined as psychological conflict resulting from simultaneously held beliefs and attitudes that are not in harmony with one another. Taking in new information that goes against what you have held for a period, such as going from the former mindset to an abundance-prosperity mindset, may feel uncomfortable and this does not mean that there is anything wrong with you. Change no matter how great the outcome that you will experience in the end can be a very uncomfortable process. The key here is to push through the discomfort that you may be able to create the lifestyle you desire for yourself.

In the beginning of your mindset transformation, it will be like the sun rising and shining in your bedroom after a dark night. At first the light that enters in maybe dim but the brighter the sun shines the more the room becomes filled with light. You must put in the work to destroy the former mindset. Please note that this is a process, and it may not come with a lot of mental ease. Just know this, the length of

the process and the amount of ease that you experience depends solely upon the effort of the individual.

Now let's take our scripture off the hanger, shall we? 3 John 2 (KJV) *"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."* We shall prosper in life and experience good health as our souls prosper. Our souls are comprised of our mind, will, and emotions. Our mind, hence, our mindset. This also solidifies the fact that there is more to abundance and prosperity than the money factor. Thoughts form in your mind, and you will always go in the direction of your thoughts. No matter what you are speaking out of your mouth your actions will always follow and produce the seeds of your thoughts. This soul prosperity covers every aspect of our lives spiritually, psychologically, physically, socially, relationally, business or career and of course financially.

A few words that are wrapped up in the word prosper(ity) would be successful, strong, flourishing, thriving, vigorous, healthy and good fortune. The reality of these words will only be manifested in your life through the abundance-prosperity

mindset. To bring to fruition the prosperous LIFEstyle you dream of or that you see and hear of others experiencing you must allow your soul to prosper. It's amazing how this passage of scripture solidifies the abundance-prosperity mindset; however, our souls will not prosper on their own we must take action to experience soul prosperity.

Going through your transformation process may be like taking a journey into the unknown. Traveling to a place that you've only heard about and seen the results of in the lives of others. It may feel like coming out of the darkness into the light. Indeed, this will be a great way of looking at it. The former mindset was, in fact, one of darkness and it held you captive while keeping you from seeing who you could truly become and all the great things that you could experience in life. When a person has been locked in a dark place for too long, they must adjust their eyesight when they meet the light.

There are some things that you will need to adjust before you are walking fully in the light of the abundance-prosperity mindset. There is a light at the end of the tunnel;

however, you may need to clear your path so that you may be able to see it even before you reach it.

Some adjustments you will need to make could be the people that you associate yourself with. If someone is not willing to take this journey with you then you may have to leave them behind. You may not be able to hold conversations with them as much, as one of the traits of an abundance-prosperity mindset is they were mindful of their relationships. They spend time with those that are heading in the same direction as themselves.

Why would you keep going back to an individual that refuses to leave where you no longer desire to dwell? In a place of gossiping, slander, speaking negatively about everything and everyone, deceiving, manipulating, filled with excuses and just not desiring better for themselves. You will only lose ground and in turn become doubleminded (undecided and unstable) trying to please someone that refuses to share your journey.

Another adjustment or change you will have to make is what you are allowing to enter your mind through your eye-

gate and your ear-gate which are basically passageways to your mind. What we view and hear form thoughts in our minds that will either build and strengthen or weaken and tear down the abundance-prosperity mindset that we're in the process of creating.

In the world of reality television, we not only view but also hear a lot of different characters. Their bank accounts may have lots of money; however, when we look at the way they conduct themselves their lifestyles don't add up to the abundance-prosperity mindset we are in pursuit of. For some of them, not all, their relationships are dysfunctional, and they are not sure of themselves as individuals. Their social lives are all about bickering, fighting, and tearing each other down and the list just goes on and on. For some nothing in their lives are solid and they are attempting to live an abundance-prosperity lifestyle while holding onto the former mindset.

It is highly possible to have millions in your bank account and still be driven by the former mindset. I once read an article about a lottery winner who had won millions playing

the lottery. Now, because the person was still operating in the former mindset within less than a year that person was back to riding the bus and working as a cashier. The former mindset says spend it all up while the abundance-prosperity mindset leads you to save and make wise investments that will generate more.

Also, in the process of your transformation, you may have to be quiet concerning certain situations and circumstances you encounter. Let's just say when you operated in the former mindset and an unfavorable event occurred, you allowed the words you spoke to give life to the negative and to what you did not truly want. Because life and death are in the power of the tongue you may have made matters worse. Now on your journey to the abundance-prosperity mindset when something happens that goes against what you are believing for just keep quiet and don't open your mouth to speak until you can speak life and prosperity into your outcome.

Along with the transformation you are embarking on, you will be able to create new habits that will better serve you in

life. Habits are formed by consistently doing something repeatedly. With the former mindset, you may have formed some bad habits, however, as you consistently put in the work to create the abundance-prosperity mindset those old habits will change as you begin to think differently about yourself and the actions you are taking. Remember earlier I stated we will always go in the direction of our thoughts no matter what we are speaking with our mouths. As your thoughts change so will your actions. I would like to offer you some steps that you can take to create the abundance-prosperity mindset:

**SHIFT YOUR FOCUS** | Focus on the abundance and not the lack. Don't miss out on all the good you have because your attention is only directed to the lack you see in your life. Shift your focus to what you have and how you can grow those things into something greater. When you consider the lack ask yourself, "How can I..." or "What can I do to cause this thing to prosper?"

**CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE** | Change the way you consider a situation or circumstance, a person and/or relationship and you will begin to view things differently. To change your perspective, you must look at a thing from a different point of view, a different angle. For example, you're sitting down in a room at a certain angle. You can only see what's immediately in front of you and what your peripheral vision will allow you to see; however, that's not all to the room you are sitting in.

If you turn in the total opposite direction you will see that there is more to the room than meets the eye. You will be able to see that you limited yourself until you changed your perspective. The same thing can be done when we encounter different situations instead of only viewing it one way. Take a moment to view your situation from a different angle and watch the possibilities unfold.

**BECOME MINDFUL OF YOUR THOUGHTS** | Think about what you are thinking about so that you may be aware of the thoughts forming in your mind daily. When you become

aware of a negative thought forming within your mind interrupt that thought with a positive one. If you are facing a task that in the past was a challenge for you and you find yourself thinking “I can’t do this,” immediately change your thought process to “How can I get this accomplished?”, “Who is it that can assist me in overcoming this?”, or “I will not allow this challenge to defeat me as I did in the past”. Being mindful of your thoughts means you must stay alert and push through the negativity even when it may seem easier just to let the thoughts continue to form unchecked.

**BE GRATEFUL** | Practice gratitude and be grateful for all you have right now even though it may not be all you desire to have in life. Gratitude goes a long way and you can’t expect more blessings to come if you are not appreciative of the blessings you have right now.

Begin to see what you have, small or great and be thankful for all of it. Gratitude also plays a big part in shifting your focus and changing your perspective because you will

begin to focus on the good in your life and see things in a new light, the abundance-prosperity mindset that is.

**SPEAK LIFE** | I stated earlier that life and death are in the power of the tongue, that's actually from a passage of scripture which in its entirety reads *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."* Proverbs 18:21 (KJV). You must begin to speak life into the life of abundance-prosperity you desire to create and experience. When you speak you hear your words which in turn form thoughts in your mind, so practice speaking abundance and prosperity at all times.

Again, if you encounter an unfavorable situation and you are tempted to speak negatively about it, practice being quiet until you can speak about it positively. Sometimes you may have to speak beyond the situation and by this, I mean, begin speaking the vision of the outcome you desire to manifest and experience. I often say speak life because you never know how close to death someone really is. The same way you should speak positive, uplifting, encouraging and life

changing words into the lives of others, especially those that are going through a rough time, you should be able to speak life changing as well as life giving words into any situation that you may face.

Possessing the proper mindset is the first step of laying the foundation for what is to come in the remainder of this book. Now, can your mind be totally transformed with just the reading of Chapter 1? No, it cannot this is just the beginning.

As you continue to take in the information written throughout this book and completing the exercises within the companion workbook you will get closer to getting rid of those things that are “Cramping Your LIFeStyle” and go from limitations to a life of unlimited possibilities. It all begins with your mindset. One last reminder before we move on, don’t get discouraged with your transformation journey to the abundance-prosperity mindset. It did not take you 10-15 minutes for the former mindset to be created, and it will not take you 10-15 minutes to destroy it.

The purpose of this chapter was to shift you away from the darkness of the former mindset and awaken you to the more glorious abundance-prosperity mindset. If you need to read this chapter again do so and make your foundation sure. At the ending of each chapter I've placed a reminder for you to complete the chapter exercises of the workbook. To receive the maximum benefit of the information presented in this book you must take the time to reflect upon and implement the lessons, knowledge, and strategies that you've gained.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 1 of the Companion Workbook.***

## 2 | EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Now let's continue to strengthen our foundation, previously we discussed we shall prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers. Let's look at the latter of that scripture even as your soul prospers. Our soul is comprised of our mind, will, and emotions, so in this chapter, we will be discussing the emotions. Emotion is defined as "a conscious mental reaction (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as a strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Your emotions are either going to be based on faith or fear. When we speak of faith-based emotions we are speaking of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, happiness, etc. The fear-based emotions include anger, unforgiveness,

rejection, hatred, bitterness, anxiousness, etc. Back to our mindsets, the abundance-prosperity mindset is rooted and thrives in faith while the former mindset is rooted and thrives in fear. As you increase faith, fear will begin to decrease and vice versa.

Now, what do faith and fear mean? Let's look at fear first. Fear is defined as "an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger; an instance of this emotion; a state marked by this emotion" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Notice in the definition it states by the anticipation or awareness of danger. Here's the thing in some cases the danger is real and in others, it is imagined. The imagination is a powerful thing. There are times when a person is not met with any real danger or of anything going wrong it's simply what they have imagined. When you sit and think of all that could go wrong it will cause you to act in fear.

Most people do not get started with the process of manifesting their dreams because they imagine themselves out of it. They think of all the negative what-ifs, "What if no one likes me?", "What if no one shows up?", "What if it

doesn't work out?", "What if it does not go as planned?" The fear increases, faith takes a back seat no faith gets out of the vehicle altogether, and you allow fear to drive you away from your dreams and back into the former mindset.

Faith and fear cannot co-exist or work together. You are either walking and operating in one or the other. It's like light and darkness they cannot share the same space. Once light shows up or a light is turned on in a dark room it dispels the darkness. Darkness has no choice but to leave when light appears it happens automatically. For instance, walk into a dark room, turn on the light and the darkness will go away. Again, say you are in bed for the night with the light out causing the room to be filled with darkness. Now once the sun rises and begins to shine through the window, darkness is no more.

It does not matter how dim the light is that is turned on, it dispels the darkness. The brighter the light the clearer you are able to see what's in front of you or what's surrounding you. I like to use darkness and light to symbolize the abundance-prosperity mindset as being the light and the

former mindset as being the darkness. Once you make the shift to the abundance-prosperity mindset light shows up to dispel the darkness of the former mindset.

That light will shine brighter, and things will be made clearer to you, as you continue to do the work of transforming your mind. Then, you will be better able to see and recognize those things that will allow you to manifest what you desire in life.

Fear leads to indecisiveness which leads to stagnation, which can cause you to miss opportunities that could move you forward in life. The imagination is a powerful thing and it can be used negatively when it comes to walking in fear and positively when it comes to walking in faith. Faith is defined as a firm belief in something for which there is no proof; complete trust (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Let's also take a note from scripture, "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" Hebrews 11:1 (KJV). Faith, believing that you already have in your possession or are experiencing something that you can't see or touch physically in the present moment.

When you walk in the faith-based emotion it becomes easier for you to operate in the abundance-prosperity mindset. You must walk in faith to be able to operate in the abundance-prosperity mindset. While you are walking in faith you have no doubt that your dreams will come to fruition and that what you envision for your life will manifest. It is just as easy to walk in faith as it is to walk in fear the only difference is, faith gets you the positive results that you desire rather than the negative ones that you fear.

As you begin living a life operating by faith the negative what if's will turn into "What if I succeed?", "What if it works out for me?", "What if they do show up?" Better yet "What will happen when I succeed?", "What will happen once it works out for me?", "How will I impact and change their lives once they show up?"

Once you begin operating in faith it does not mean that fear will not present itself to you, however, it's up to you not to allow it to dim your light. Fear may attempt to come by way of the negative talk and doubt from others, it could be a memory that pops up from when you tried something

previously, and it did not work out or you may find yourself in a state of overwhelm that could lead you to doubt yourself and your abilities. Because no one person knows everything or has all the answers you can't allow what you don't know or what you don't know how to do to take you back to a place of operating in fear.

Faith does not need a majority or a large following for it to work, no it begins with the little and makes it great. Let's be clear when it comes to faith it is possible for you to have faith and not get what you are desiring in life. Let's take another note from scripture, *"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."* James 2:17 (KJV).

Faith without works is dead. You can imagine, visualize and believe but if you don't get up and do the necessary work required you will not experience the manifestation of the thing(s) that you are believing for. Success doesn't happen because you desire and believe that it is possible for you, no success happens when you desire, believe and WORK for it. You have to get up every day and go after what you want. Action is not an option it's a necessity.

Notice how I've been stating "operating in faith", to operate means to perform a function. So, when you are operating in faith you are taking the actions that are required of you. Faith is of no value to you if you have it and don't activate it with works or should it be said that you do faith a disservice when you don't attach works to it.

Now you can see why when you operate in faith the emotions that manifest is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, happiness, etc. When you operate in fear the emotions that manifest is anger, unforgiveness, rejection, hatred, bitterness, anxiousness, etc. Also, take note as to how your mindset and your emotions must be in alignment with one another. You cannot possess an abundance-prosperity mindset and operate in the fear-based emotions in the same way you cannot continue to possess the former mindset and operate in the faith-based emotions. It will be like oil and water, they don't mix.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 2 of the Companion Workbook.***

## 3 | A MATTER OF WILL

In this chapter, we will cover the third part of the soul, our will. Will is the power of control over one's own thoughts, actions, and emotions. We all have the ability to choose, think, and act freely, we all have a free will.

Are you willing to do what it takes? Sometimes it's not a matter of being able to do a thing, it's a matter of being willing to do a thing. Your will plays a big part in determining where you end up in life. No one can make you live a better life or change for the better. The information can be presented to you; however, you have a choice whether you will use that information to your advantage or not.

The saying is true you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. The horse will either die of thirst or be replenished by drinking the water. Imagine

seeing several horses laying by a river dead, and when you ask their owners what happened to them, they tell you that the horses all died of thirst. They died of thirst not because the river had dried up, in fact, you can see that the river has more than enough water, it's almost overflowing. They died because they did not have a will to survive.

You will die of thirst when you have the means before you for survival if you choose not to drink it. People are dying of the thirst for life every day while they long for something more, something greater, to be better, to be successful. The knowledge was before them of how to acquire wealth, build healthy relationships, become successful, be free of their past, overcome failure, become a better parent, build successful businesses, etc. and they did not drink. Imagine the hundreds of thousands of people that are merely existing in life when a river of freedom, prosperity, abundance, dreams turned reality, purposes fulfilled, visions manifested, great relationships, success, advancements,

opportunities and unlimited possibilities are before them. They were unwilling to drink, learn, act, implement, push past hard times, overcome challenges, forgive, move forward and pursue. They were unwilling to drink and thrive, so they are merely existing in life. You must have a will to not only survive in life but also to thrive in life.

Where there's a will, there's a way. You may not know the way or how you should go about getting something done, however, if you are willing to do a thing the way to do it will show up eventually. It's your will, you have the power over your thoughts, actions, and emotions. Your will can override your feelings, you may not feel like doing something but if you will to do it, you will get it done regardless of your feelings.

Either you will, or you will not. Do you have the will to thrive in life? Do you have the will to go after what you desire to accomplish? Do you have the will to make your dreams reality?

Some people don't give up during a fight because they are tired, no some give up because they don't have the will to continue fighting. We see boxers in a ring fighting each other, they've been engaged in a battle for many rounds now, they are both tired and can barely stand up. Who WILL win? The one with the most skills, perhaps. In life, some of the most skillful, most educated, most talented people give up and lose the fight for their lives. Is it the one with the most wins? In life, you could be a high achiever and have experienced things that would have taken everyone else out, then, that one fight will leave you wondering what hit you. I've seen someone with let's say an 11-0 record get beat by some unknown, no name fighter. In the end, aside from the level of skills, the number of previous wins we should also consider the matter of the fighter's WILL. Do you have the WILL to win in life?

What keeps a person fighting, especially after they have experienced multiple setbacks and losses after they've hit rock bottom over and over and over again?

What makes a person refuse to lay down and surrender when life is kicking them every time they try to stand up? Even though they're being kicked they still manage to make movement. They may be holding their side, have their head hanging down, they may not be able to leave the fight walking because they can't stand up, so they leave crawling. It's a matter of their will that keeps them going no matter what.

Abraham Lincoln had what some would consider an endless list of failures, losses, and defeats. He lost his job in 1832 and he was defeated for the Legislature. He experienced a business failure in 1833. He was then elected to the legislature in 1834 and in 1835 the love of his life, Ann Rutledge died. He suffered a nervous breakdown in 1836, in 1838 he was defeated for Speaker and then in 1843 he was defeated for nomination for Congress. He was elected to Congress in 1846 and lost reelection in 1848. In 1849 he was rejected for Land Officer and was defeated for Senate in 1854. He was defeated for the nomination of Vice President in 1856.

He was again defeated for Senate in 1858 and was elected President of the United States in 1860. He endured, did not quit and was finally elected President after 28 years of mostly, defeats and setbacks. What kept him in the fight? It was his will.

What kept me, Lease L. Youmans fighting? After having experienced homelessness, after having lived in 15 different places in an 18-year time frame and no I was not a world traveler. After having the feelings and thoughts that I should just give up and not try at all. After not being able to see pass my own misfortune while knowing there was more because I could see and hear of others succeeding. After having felt like a complete failure because I had tried and failed so many times. Side note: I failed so many times because I tried so many times, I could have failed once and called it quits. It was my will. I had control of my thoughts, actions, and emotions I just had to put myself in a position of control. I refused to die at the “river of life” no matter how many times I had to bend down and take a drink.

When a man asks a woman to marry him, his words are “Will you marry me?” and if she is willing she says, “Yes or yes I will”. He doesn’t have to put a gun to her head and threaten or coerce her in any way to get her to say yes. She must make a choice at that moment on the answer that she will give. She has control over her thoughts, emotions, and actions. Will you say “Yes I will” to your desires, dreams, and the possibility of success, to the prosperity and abundance that’s available to you, to better relationships, to living the lifestyle that you truly desire? If so, you must go after those things and pursue no matter what.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 3 of the Companion Workbook.***

PART

2

*Self-awareness*



***“When you are not aware of who you are it is impossible for you to have a healthy relationship with others.”***

## 4 | SELF-IMAGE

Do you have a “grasshopper complex” seeing yourself as less than or a “giant killer complex” seeing yourself as more than a conqueror? How do you view yourself as you journey through life? Do you see yourself as small or great? Do you feel inferior or superior to the challenges that you are facing?

There is a story that’s told of 12 men that went out to evaluate a country they were to inherit. Ten of the 12 came back with a report that they could not gain ownership of the land. When they saw those who already possessed the land, they viewed themselves as grasshoppers in their sight. This is called the grasshopper complex. In turn, they saw those already living in the land as giants. Those 10 men never got to step foot in that country again because of their perception of themselves. (See Numbers 13).

There is another story of a shepherd boy whose brothers thought he was only useful for taking care of their father's sheep. One day he stood in the face of adversity while an army of thousands ran away from it, including his own brothers. He defeated and killed a giant. His name was David and he later became King. The giant's name was Goliath and he quickly became defeated (See 1 Samuel 17).

How do you see yourself? It's easy to look in the mirror and be pleased with the outer appearance especially when you're all dressed up in your suit and tie, with a fresh haircut or in your little black dress and your makeup is just right. Have you ever taken a moment or two just to pause and take a deeper look past the outer appearance and take notice of the real you? How do you really see yourself?

What is the mental image that you hold in your mind of yourself when you're not in front of a mirror? You could be a grasshopper, small in your eyes and even think of yourself as small in the sight of everyone else. When I

went through the years of failure that I experienced I viewed myself as such and because that was the image that I held of myself, I was convinced that others saw me that way, also. You may be the giant, walking in confidence and don't give a second thought to what others think of you, never backing down from a challenge. You could very well be somewhere in between.

How is one's self-image developed? At what point after you're born do you start forming an image in which you view yourself? I believe that early on in our childhood we begin to form a mental picture of ourselves. Perhaps, as soon as we can understand the compliments or criticisms of others. You know those words like you're so pretty, you look cute, you're beautiful, you have a pretty smile or you're ugly, I don't like this or that about you, your chubby or fat, you're too dark or not light enough, you're so smart, you're wonderful or you're dumb or stupid. It's safe to say that we took on an image of ourselves by the words, the compliments, or criticisms of

others at a point in our lives when we didn't have a clue of what was going on. Some of those words not only formed the foundation for our self-image but also our self-esteem, how we feel about ourselves. For some, it was a foundation of a positive self-image while for others a negative one. Your self-image can place limits on or take the limits off of what it is that you are pursuing in life.

You may have heard someone say, "I just can't see myself doing anything great or big, or living a grand life." On the other hand, someone may say that they see themselves having the best of everything that life has to offer. Grasshoppers don't believe that they should have more, giants believe that they can conquer the world.

Your self-image will also dictate how you handle problems and face challenges. Do you see yourself defeated like the 10 of the 12 spies I discussed earlier without even engaging in the battle? They had everything laid out before them that would have allowed them to live and enjoy a good life. If you go back

and read the story of these men in its entirety you will find that they were able to see the abundance that was before them. When it came to those that already occupied the land some of which were giants, these 10 men forfeited the opportunity to live abundantly. They lost a battle that they could have won with no attempt to fight because of the way they viewed themselves. They even spoke of themselves in this manner “*we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight*” Numbers 13:33 (KJV).

Meanwhile, David saw himself victorious, as a giant, he spoke like a giant, his actions proved how he viewed himself. Physically he was a fraction of the size of the giant Goliath, but he did not allow that to stop him. Here’s a little secret David also had the ultimate backup, God, and a relationship with Him. The thing about that is some people today have God as their ultimate backup and still harbor the grasshopper complex, I’m just saying. Anyway, David’s image of himself played a big part in him defeating Goliath the physical giant.

Your self-image will either allow or stop you from advancing in life. Other than being developed as a child, your self-image is based on the former mindset or the abundance-prosperity mindset. Just as you can shift and transform your mindset you can also shift and transform your self-image. It is possible to be transformed from a grasshopper to a giant. No, you don't have to go into a phone booth like Clark Kent and come out as Superman, you must, however, shift your mindset.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 4 of the Companion Workbook.***

# 5 | ATTITUDE

The saying is true your attitude determines your altitude. There is a story of a man that was instructed to lead a group of people into a prosperous land. He was one of the 12 men that went out to evaluate the land in which 10 of them suffered from the grasshopper complex. However, when it was time for him to lead the people into the land inherited, he had to and was instructed to be of good courage. He had to take on a positive and fearless attitude about what he was facing ahead. He became courageous in his pursuit to conquer the land as instructed. (See Joshua 1)

Your attitude is your mental position about something, a feeling, emotion, or disposition toward something or someone (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). There are three factors that make up your attitude.

1. Your emotions, how a person, thing or issue, situation, etc. makes you feel. 2. Cognitive, what you think and believe about a thing and 3. Behavioral, how your attitude influences your behavior.

As with your self-image, your attitude is one of the determining factors in how far you will go in life, what you will achieve and how you will handle different situations and circumstance that you encounter in life. Your attitude can be good or bad, positive or negative. It is possible to have a good attitude about one thing and a bad attitude when it comes to something else. It is also possible to have an overall positive attitude in general even if you're not in favor of something or someone.

I read an article once about a young woman who was a waitress, some men came into the restaurant where she worked, and she had to serve them. She did not agree with their viewpoint but decided that she would not treat them differently and gave them the best service she could. She smiled and treated them well and showed them respect despite their differences. When it was time

for them to leave and pay their bill, she received a tip of a few hundred dollars.

She could have served them with a negative and bitter attitude because she did not care for what they stood for. The men were also aware of their differences but kept a positive attitude toward this young lady, they also could have disrespected her, treated her unkindly and not leave a tip at all. Because of their overall positive attitudes, they changed the outcome of an, otherwise, unfavorable situation.

What is your attitude toward those that do not have the same point of view as you? What is your attitude when you are placed in an uncomfortable situation? What is your attitude when trouble arises or when things don't go your way?

Ever heard of making an attitude adjustment? I was once placed in a position that I did not necessarily agree with and my attitude was jacked up (negative). As I was thinking and moving forward in the situation, I realized that if I did not adjust my attitude, I was going to make

my situation worse. Though I did not agree I had to focus on the positives of my situation and me being placed in that situation has turned out to be one of the best things that have ever happened in my life.

Sometimes, the only thing negative in a situation is your attitude. Yes, you may encounter unfavorable situations as you make your journey through life, but your attitude can really make the difference in how long you stay in a situation. The more negative you are about it, the more negative the situation will become because not only is your point of view about it is negative but also the way you feel about it is negative.

Make the attitude adjustment. My situation was a positive situation, but I was viewing it negatively and took on a negative attitude about it. My situation did not change and was not going to change I had to make the change in my attitude. You can lose the battle because of your attitude concerning the battle. You will miss out on the great things life has for you because of your attitude concerning a few bad or unfavorable in your sight

situations that occur. Make the adjustment, so you can soar in life and not be weighed down with a bad attitude.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 5 of the Companion Workbook.***

# 6 | SELF AWARENESS & RELATIONSHIPS

A relationship is a way in which two or more people regard and behave toward each other or the way in which two or more people are connected. I believe that the foundation of your relationships with others is your relationship and connection with God and awareness of self. I believe that our connection to God plays an important part in how we view and treat ourselves as well as others. God is Creator and who better to be informed by, concerning who you are, and your reason for being here than the One who created you.

The saying is true, you train others on how to treat you. How you allow others to treat you stems from how you treat and view yourself. You must be or become aware of who you are as a person. Know your likes and dislikes,

what you will tolerate or walk away from. Do you love yourself? Do you respect yourself? How do you view yourself? What do you think of yourself? How do you speak to and of yourself? How do you show or give and receive love? Are you committed and loyal to yourself? Do you honor yourself? Are you always putting the needs of others before your own leaving you no time to care for yourself? When you are not aware of who you are it is impossible for you to have a healthy relationship with others.

When there is no self-love, self-worth, self-respect, self-value, when you don't honor yourself often others that enter your life will follow suit. It's evident to others how you feel about yourself through your actions, your speech, and the way you carry yourself.

Relationships can make or break you. The wrong ones will destroy you, and the right ones will cause you to soar and thrive in life. There are different types and levels of relationships. We experience relationships with our families; husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, children,

sisters, brothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Throughout our lives we develop friendships and even romantic relationships, some people have business relationships and work relationships. Some of these relationships may be close-knit for some and broken for others. We love based on the different levels in which we are connected to other people, so everyone doesn't experience the same treatment. For some people, their love for their mother may be greater than their love for their best friend and then for some their love for their best friend could very well be greater than their love for their mother. Some will say that's sad but it's so very true at the same time.

It is also possible that some people have allowed their relationship with one person to be the basis for how they manage all their other relationships. You see this often with someone that has been broken by a relationship on any level, family, friends, romantic connection, etc. If that person doesn't allow themselves to heal, they move forward with other relationships guarded, not trusting

others, not giving of themselves completely and even fearful. They're not able to enjoy other people because of their issues with a past or current relationship.

When we are in the process of going after those things that we desire in life it is important that we not only check our relationships with others but also check our awareness of self. Are you in relationships with others that are loving, fun, peaceful, respectful and support what it is that you are doing? Here's the thing, everyone is not going to be in your corner or agree with your every move no matter what it is that you are doing. It's your responsibility to become aware of this fact and do some things in life without that person or those people. You can't make others get on board of your success ship or go along for the ride of your life's journey, so stop trying. Just because their family doesn't mean that they will support you, in fact, some of them will try to destroy you, do yourself a favor and move on.

Are your relationships causing you to grow and thrive or to wither away? Don't allow others that you are

connected to, to drain and suck the life out of your purpose, vision, or dreams. Let me share with you a dream I had some years ago that's really had an impact on me and my interaction with others. In this dream, there were two other people besides me. One of the people in my dream was at a place in life where there was a lot of struggle and suffering some perhaps caused by others, and some caused by themselves. The second person was someone that passed away a few years before I even had this dream. I can remember that we were all in an open, deserted field away from everything and everyone else. The person that was struggling and suffering in life was in dire need of help, in fact to the point of death. I was desperately trying to get to this person and provide some assistance. I wanted to give them life and death was present.

In my dream, it seemed almost impossible for me to get to this person as there was a fence that was separating us and stopping me from getting close. I could see through the fence, but it seemed as though no matter

the distance that I ran to get to the entrance I could never locate it. This person, in need of help, was lying on the ground lifeless. As I was running, I could see the other person that had passed away go over, kneel down and proceeded to perform CPR on the now lifeless body. Two forces were present life and death. I remember waking up and thinking why would the person that had passed away be performing CPR on anyone.

What this dream spoke to me was that a dying or dead man or woman cannot breathe life into you. It's a matter of life and death. If you want to live and thrive in life you must connect with those who are living and thriving. You must disconnect yourself from dead people even though they may not be dead physically. There are those you may be connected to that are merely existing and not living. They neither think nor speak life, everything for them is negative and more often than not they refuse to see the positive.

Behind their smiles are words laced with negativity. They will bless you with their words while cursing you in

their hearts. They are a distraction to those who really have your best interest at heart. While they appear to others to be helping you they are really hindering you. Remember this, wolves put on sheep's clothing every day, do good deeds while speaking pleasant words; however, when it comes down to the matters of the heart, they are imposters. These are the people that stifle your dreams and try to keep you from moving forward. They rob you of your strength and, instead, of breathing life into you they suck it out of you. These are the complainers, the ones who have a victim's mentality; they have no vision and refuse to seek out their purpose. You must recognize the difference between life and death. Death does not breathe life it only takes it away. It will take away the breath of your purpose, the breath of your vision and the breath of your dreams and goals. Be sure that the person that is seemingly breathing life into you is not in actuality taking your breath away.

Let go of those relationships that are draining you and frustrating your purpose. There was a time when I

had to discontinue a relationship that was causing me to lose ground. I had to finally tell this person that I had somewhere to be in life and if they wanted to be a part of my journey, they would need to move forward with me. I was not going to continue to keep turning around to go back and get them from a place they refused to leave. It's not always easy to let go and walk away from others; however, in some cases it's necessary. You may have to walk away even when you're not ready and if you feel that you don't have the strength to walk away, then, crawl. I've come to realize that letting go of some things and people didn't make me weak. It simply meant that I was wise enough to use my strength to build what really matters in my life.

Everyone that crosses your path is not meant to share your journey. All too often we clutter the pathway to our destination with those that are not a part of our journey. When you are aware of who you are and your reason for being you will not be so willing to allow others to come along for the ride. Though, someone may start out with

you or connect with you on your journey, this doesn't mean that they will step into your destination with you. Some relationships that you experience are temporary while others are permanent. It's been said that people enter our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. The sooner we understand this the better off we will be.

**A REASON |** A relationship can form due to the reason of a need in your life being fulfilled. You may need guidance or to be assisted through a tough time. You may need to be uplifted spiritually, mentally or emotionally, or supported financially. Maybe, the two of you are going through the same situation and may become each other's support system for that time.

**A SEASON |** During a seasonal relationship, you may be in a place of growth or learning and need to be taught something or vice versa. You may have started out on a new venture and that person is there to guide you and give you direction.

**A LIFETIME** | Within a lifetime relationship, there are lessons to be given and received over a lifetime. Over the course of time, individuals will grow through the ins and outs of life with each other.

Know that you can't take a reason and a season and attempt to make it a lifetime. When you attempt to do so you can take what was intended to be beautiful and turn it into a nightmare. Know what the purpose of a relationship is in your life and let go when it's time to let go. When we allow relationships to go past their expiration date they spoil, and we can even make enemies out of what used to be friends. When it's time to let go and you continue to hold on frustration sets in and you grow tired of the other person, you may even begin to fight against each other. Know the purpose of the relationships in your life and the roles and positions of the people that you are connected to. Don't force what should not be.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 6 of the Companion Workbook.***

## 7 | NOTHING COMPARES TO YOU

When you compare yourself to others you devalue who you are. Sometimes, you can get so caught up in comparing yourself to others that you neglect yourself. You neglect those things that were placed within you for you to be able to fulfill your purpose and to manifest your life's vision. When you compare yourself to others you examine yourself to see what similarities or differences you and someone else has. The negative side of comparing yourself to others is that most times it comes down to what's different. "What are they doing better than me?" You may ask what it is that another person is doing that you're not doing because you feel that they are further along in their journey than you are. Comparing yourself to others can make you view yourself in an unfavorable way.

Comparison destroys your dreams and your aspirations. Comparison stunts your growth and even causes you to tell yourself that you are not good enough. Remember, we are all each individually created in our own unique way. Yes, some individuals may share the same similarities but who we are at our core, the thing that makes us authentic, the thing that we are identified by or known for, those things are different. Be careful not to compare yourself to others and not to compare what it is you are doing or how you should be doing it to that of others. Two people could be doing the exact same thing but go about doing it differently. The reason you may go about doing it differently is that you are a different type of individual.

When I think about our individual uniqueness, I think about the fingerprint. There are three things that stand out to me concerning the fingerprint as it relates to us as individuals.

**INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTIC** | Having its own unique patterns a fingerprint is an individual characteristic. No two are the same and because of the fingerprint's individuality, not even identical twins share the same fingerprints. No matter how much identical twins have in common they still each have their own unique individual characteristics. The uniqueness that was placed on the inside of you is different from that of any other individual. It doesn't matter how much you may look alike, think alike, you may have the same gifts and talents, your purposes could be aligned, or you may have the same dreams. There is a uniqueness concerning what it is that you were created to do and how you are to go about doing it. When you look at the fingerprint and how yours is different from everyone else's, you shouldn't neglect how it is that you should show up in the world by comparing yourself to others.

**NEVER CHANGING** | Throughout our lifetime the fingerprint, the patterns, and ridges remain the same.

They will get bigger in size as you grow physically but the patterns remain the same. Because of this, the fingerprint is useful when identifying an individual. Throughout life you grow, mature, and you make progress but your uniqueness, your authenticity, that which identifies you remain unchanged. You continuously grow into the individual that you were created to be.

**PATTERNS ARE UNIQUE** | Fingerprints have an intricate general ridge pattern of whorls and lines. Just like the fingerprint you have your own uniqueness that was placed on the inside of you to accomplish what you were called to do in this life. No matter how you try to do life in the same way as someone else, you are still the unique being that you were created to be.

Comparing yourself to others and wanting to be like them doesn't change your reason and purpose for being created. Get busy working on being who you were

created to be, become aware of who you are as a unique individual. Embrace your uniqueness and the fact that nothing compares to you and that no one is exactly like you, you are truly one of a kind.

The way that you do something may not be the same way that someone else does it. Everyone may not get your uniqueness and that's okay. Once you embrace your uniqueness and once you embrace your differences, you will then, be able to walk whole-heartedly as the individual God created you to be. People compare themselves to others for various reasons, some are low self-esteem, a poor self-image, lack of confidence in themselves or their abilities and even fear. When you know who you are and where you are going in life there is no room for comparing yourself to others.

People also compare their progress in life to that of others. Someone may be where it is that you desire to be in life or doing what you desire to do. You don't know the details of their journey, what phase or season that they may be in right now. You don't know what they sacrificed

and invested to be at the location of their life you see them in. Maybe they are more disciplined than you, maybe their level of commitment is greater than yours or they could be more consistent than you. You can't compare yourself or your life to that of anyone else's.

Just because your destination is the same as that of another person, doesn't mean that you will take the same route or operate in the same way to get there. You may not use the same skills and talents to get there or the same knowledge and education. You may not even connect with the same people along the way.

When you compare yourself to others it takes away from your awareness of self. When you compare yourself to others and you know that there are things on the inside of you to elevate you in life it distracts you from your awareness of those things. We were all created equal in the image and likeness of God. Stop comparing the way that you look, your financial status, relationships, where you are in your career or your business to other people and live in your unique

individuality. Comparing yourself to others will leave you with your dreams never becoming your reality, your vision not being manifested, your purpose unfilled and your destiny never reached.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 7 of the Companion Workbook.***

**PART**

**3**

*Purposely Manifesting Vision*



***“To fulfill your purpose and manifest your vision you need to be clear on how you should move forward.”***

## 8 | LIVING ON PURPOSE

Imagine living your life only to get to the end and find out that you did it all wrong. You were a successful singer, your voice and the words that you sang touched millions. You stood on world stages and people even told you that you helped them through their difficult situations. Through your voice, you made millions of dollars. You get to the end of your journey pleased with the fact that you were a successful singer only to find out that your life purpose and success was in being a public-school teacher.

Purpose. Why am I here? Purpose. What is it that I am to do in life? Purpose. Whose life am I supposed to impact? Purpose. I know that there is a reason for my life I just don't know what it is. Purpose? Purpose? Purpose?

Purpose is the reason for something existing or is done, made or used. It's the original intent of a thing, well, in this case, a person. Everyone that was ever birthed into the earth did not do so without a purpose for them being here.

Purpose is like a national treasure. In it lies your vision, your dreams, your desires, your aspirations. I believe that some of our creative thoughts and ideas spring forth from our purpose. I believe that our vision, dreams, desires, aspirations, those creative thoughts, and ideas are directly connected to and conceived within our purpose and it is up to us to birth them into being.

C. S. Lewis stated that *"If you don't know where you're going any road will take you there."* I say if you don't know your purpose, your reason for being, any old life will do. Actually, any old life should not do. Some people discover their purpose early on in life while others don't discover it until later. Your purpose can still be realized at any age in life, you are never too old to begin to walk in it. As we grow and mature, we evolve and our

purpose becomes clearer and manifests as we go through the various phases and stages of life.

Let's talk about the importance of knowing your purpose. When you don't know what it is that you were created to do, you will find yourself aimlessly wandering through life. You will find yourself getting distracted and getting sidetracked. For instance, if you went to a new job and you were hired for a certain position. When you got to that new job and no one told you or gave you a job description of what your position was all about, you would not have a clue as to what it was that you should be doing. So, you would find yourself sitting idle, you may even begin to distract those around you.

In life when someone fails to realize that they were created by God with a specific intent in mind, they sit idly by while life and others continuously pass them by. You must know your why, your reason for being. Why are you here? In what capacity are you created to serve? When you don't know your why it is easy for others to come along and tell you what they want and desire for you to

do. When your purpose is unknown you can easily become frustrated with life, yourself and others.

What does having a purpose do for your life? Purpose gives meaning to your life. It will help you to identify and establish goals. Purpose keeps your priorities in order, calls you to action and establishes your future.

When considering your purpose, you must realize everything that you need to fulfill your purpose is on the inside of you. Sometimes we can look on the outside and at other people. Let's say you purchase an item that you need to assemble when, you get the box you are assured that the manufacturer has placed everything you need to put the item together inside the box. Everything needed to produce or manifest the vision/picture of the finished product that you see on the outside of the box is on the inside. You should know that you were created by the manufacturer which is God with everything that you need on the inside of you. Some of those things may have to be discovered, some of those things may have to be enhanced or sharpened. You have within you the gifts

and talents that you need to fulfill your purpose and as you grow and mature, they also grow, develop and mature.

Your purpose will fulfill you as you begin to fulfill your purpose. Just the thought of knowing that you are not here by happenstance but with intention and on purpose should give you a new outlook on life. Purpose says I belong here even if I'm standing in a crowd of a billion people, I too have a place in this world. Purpose gives you a sense of belonging while giving you permission not to try to fit in.

Purpose is undeniable even if someone never walks in their purpose, it doesn't take away their original intent for being born. Some people don't walk in their purpose because they may have never taken the time to discover it. Some people may not have any idea on how to fulfill their purpose and others may have found themselves in a place where they feel for whatever reason they can't go on. In any case, their why, their reason for being here, their original intent for being created remains the same.

It is important to know your purpose that you may be able to find that place of fulfillment and belonging. It is also important to know your purpose, so you don't find yourself sitting idle, watching life and others continuously pass you by. Your life is wasted when you don't know your purpose.

It is possible that one of the reasons that so many people try so desperately to fit in and even compare themselves to others is because they don't know their purpose. To not end up being one of the lost ones here are a few questions that you can ask yourself to discover, identify and get clear about your purpose.

First, let's look at it from a manufacturer's point of view. When an idea is conceived in his or her mind of creating a new product they may ask themselves "Who will this product serve or help or what problem will this product solve?" Notice how the intent of their product serves others and solves problems. With life, I believe that at the core of our purpose we are created to serve others on some level and to solve at least one problem.

The how and who we serve and the problem that we solve can be answered in another series of questions such as:

1. What am I passionate about? It has been said that purpose lies within your passion. Where does your passion lead you? Passion is a strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement for something or about doing something (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)  
What are you excited about doing?
2. What is it that you are always thinking about doing? What is it that's consuming your thoughts? You fall asleep with it on your mind and it's what you think about when you wake up in the morning.
3. Who inspires you, who do you feel a connection to? Sometimes we find ourselves following certain people, they become our teachers even though we have never met them. What they are teaching and

sharing seem to be aligned with what we are seeking and desiring to do.

4. What would you do even if you did not get paid to do it? You will do your purpose for free. Now some people's purpose will lead them to generate millions and others will not. What is that one thing that you will do no matter what?
  
5. Who or what captivates your heart? Complete this sentence "When I see or become aware of \_\_\_\_\_ it makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_ and I want to \_\_\_\_\_." Your sentence could go like this "When I see or become aware of someone being homeless it makes me feel like protecting them and I want to give them shelter".

Filling in the blanks of life can help you get one step closer to discovering your purpose. Now you may be asking what do I do next? How do I move forward after the questions are answered and I am clear about my

purpose? What direction should I take? I always take some time to pray to God before stepping out and doing anything. Also, you may want to connect with a mentor for guidance in what you have been purposed to do. You may need to allow yourself to be led by the desires that consume your heart. Remember, everything you need to fulfill your purpose is already on the inside of you. Your gifts, talents, and abilities; write them down so that you will know what you're working with. Find out the why and the how will appear.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 8 of the Companion Workbook.***

## 9 | WITHOUT A VISION

*“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”* -Helen Keller- Your vision is what your purpose looks like. When you consider your vision, you should get a good picture of what the result of you fulfilling your purpose will be like. When I completed my very first vision board I had a feeling that something was missing. Then, I held it up against my purpose and realized that there was a disconnect between my purpose and my vision. I realized that I had to consider my purpose concerning what I was putting before me. There may be some things that don't directly connect to your purpose when a vision board is created. The core of your vision board, however, should be directly connected to your life's purpose.

Sight sees things as they are while vision sees things the way they could be. Think about an empty lot, that's been sitting for years with no upkeep or maintenance. Every day people pass by this vacant run-down lot thinking what an eyesore. One day someone has a thought about building a huge building that would serve and solve a problem for others. When that certain someone passes the vacant lot, they see a building 50+ stories high, equipped with apartments, business offices, shops, and cafes. The grounds are well manicured, people are going in and out of the entryways, others are sitting outside of the cafes enjoying lunch with friends or co-workers, while others are passing by to get to their destination.

There were many times in my life that if I had focused on what I saw physically I would have given up. It was the vision that I had for my life that kept me going. Vision allowed me to see the end result. Vision allowed me to see that things would not always remain the same. Once you begin to see your vision, write it down, this will

become your vision statement. Just like a blueprint is drawn for a home or office building, your vision statement is like writing the blueprint for your life. Let's get into the fundamentals and procedures of your vision.

### **FUNDAMENTALS OF VISION:**

**DOCUMENTATION** | This is simply writing down your vision. When you document, write down your vision, you can view in writing what you have seen with your imagination. As you move forward your vision statement will be a point of reference for you. Documenting your vision also gives you an advantage when it comes to the process of planning and setting goals to manifest your vision.

**SIMPLIFY** | Make it as clear and understandable as possible. Make sure that it's worded in such a way that not only do you understand it but also that you may be able to share it with others.

**SHARE |** When sharing your vision with others only do so with those that you know are going to support you in what you are setting out to accomplish. Visions are given to us as individuals, everyone is not obligated to agree with what you see for your life and your future. It's okay to share your vision; however, guard it against those that are not going to support or encourage you. You must share your vision with others because there are people that will be willing to invest in you and your future; be it with their time, finances, resources, knowledge, or skills. You can't keep it to yourself for fear that others will tear it down and run the risk of missing out on opportunities that will get you one step closer to your vision being manifested. Remember before you begin to share your vision be sure that you have clarity and can articulate your vision to others in complete confidence.

**PARTICIPATION |** Become active with your vision. Take action and begin to live out your vision. You must get up

every day and take the necessary steps to manifest your vision. In sharing your vision there will be others that will participate in your vision, also. Don't try to fulfill your vision alone do what you can and allow others to assist you. If others are willing to invest their resources allow them to (this is also one of the reasons why you should be able to share it so that others will help you to fulfill it). This doesn't take anything away from you; it is still your vision.

**TIMING** | Timing is very important when it comes to your vision and it may be more important to some aspects of your vision than others. Some things that you may try to do and accomplish you may find that at the particular time that you have set for it to be completed just doesn't work. This does not mean that you take it out of your vision statement, just move on to something else for the moment and revisit that part of your vision at a later date and time. It could also mean that you may have to take

some time and reevaluate what you're trying to do and if where you're at in life is the best timing for you to do it.

**PATIENCE** | Patience is a virtue and you can position yourself by being patient to allow things to happen and happen in such a way that you find yourself closer to the manifestation of your vision. Remember Rome was not built in a day. There may be some aspects of your vision that may require you to gain knowledge or to learn a new skill. You must exercise your patience in that and not move forward full speed ahead, causing unnecessary setbacks, and even destruction to yourself and others. Patience and timing go hand in hand and if it's not time for you to move forward you must be able to exercise patience and wait. And waiting doesn't necessarily mean sitting down and folding your hands doing nothing. While you are patiently waiting to move forward, use that time to gain knowledge, learn a new skill or sharpen the ones that you have, so you will be equipped and effective in moving forward in that certain area.

**FAITH** | To manifest your vision, you must have and exercise faith. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)*. Faith is seeing the future in the present and believing you have what you're believing for even though it's not yet manifested. Faith requires work, effort, and action. Faith without works is dead, it doesn't benefit you or your vision if no action is taken on what you see or say you believe is possible for you. With every step that you take toward the manifestation of your vision make sure that it is a step of faith.

**SERVICE** | Your vision should not be self-serving, it will always lead you to reach out to serve and help others while improving and impacting humanity, society, your family, and your community.

## **PROCEDURES OF VISION:**

**GENERATES A PLAN** | Once you have documented your vision you, then, have to take the time to map out a plan as to how you will manifest your vision.

**REQUIRES REVISION** | As you continue to grow and mature you may realize aspects of your vision that you did not realize initially. You can add to your vision or elaborate on specific points within your vision. And as you begin to experience the manifestation of your vision you can go back and revise it. Remember to always stay open especially in times of prayer and meditation concerning your vision.

**BRINGS ABOUT CHANGE** | Once you have written and gotten clear concerning your vision it will require you to change in order for it to be manifested in your life. Change does not always feel good or come easy; however, it is necessary for you to get to where your desire to go. Remember when it comes to your vision, making certain changes are always good. You may have to change the way that you do things, how you spend

your time, how you handle your money, change the way you think about and see things and even change some of the people that you are connected to.

**DIFFERENT PHASES** | Different aspects of your vision will happen at different phases in your life. Remember when dealing with the different phases of manifesting your vision again Rome was not built in a day and patience is required. You may find yourself at different phases or seasons in your life in different areas of your life all at the same time.

**REQUIRES DISCIPLINE** | Your vision will require that you become disciplined in manifesting it. A lack of discipline will always leave you at square one.

**REQUIRES CONSISTENCY** | The reason most people don't accomplish what they set out to do is that they are not consistent when it comes to the process or the plan. Even, when it does not appear that anything is happening

for you remain consistent. Continue to take action no matter how things look or what is going on around you.

**DESTINY FOCUSED** | Your vision does not look back to your past and it extends beyond your present. Your vision will always keep you focused on what is ahead of you, what is possible for your life and on the impact of the lives that you will be able to touch through your vision.

When writing your vision statement here are some areas to consider:

Spiritual

Soul

Health

Family

Relationships

Business / Career

Finances

Personal / Leisure

## **WHEN WRITING YOUR VISION STATEMENT:**

1. Think about your life 5, 10, even 20 years or more from now. What do you see yourself doing?
2. Ask yourself:
  - What do I desire to do with my life?
  - What am I inspired to do?
  - What would I want to do even if I did not get paid to do it?
  - When my life is ending what will I regret not experiencing, seeing, achieving or doing?
  - What impact and change do I want to make in the world?
  - What thoughts and or ideas never leave me?
3. Don't put limitations on yourself.
4. Don't put limitations on your time or finances when writing your vision.
5. Don't be concerned about the opinions of others.

Make sure as much as possible that everything ties into your purpose. Somethings may not be related to your purpose per se, maybe you see yourself traveling the world, and your purpose doesn't necessarily require you to travel the world. If traveling the world is something that you personally desire to do and it's not going to interfere with you pursuing your purpose, then go for it, place it in the area of personal and leisure. Also, there is nothing wrong with stating the kind of car you desire to drive, the type of home you would like to live in, or the type of neighborhood you want to reside in.

**POINTS TO REMEMBER:**

**DON'T PLACE LIMITATIONS ON YOURSELF** | You may see yourself doing some great things that you may not have imagined for yourself previously, write it down. Don't allow your now to overshadow your future. You may not have the skills now that you will need to achieve certain things that you see your future self doing; however, as you get into the planning phase of manifesting your

vision you will have to plan to acquire the skills that you need.

**DON'T PLACE LIMITATIONS ON YOUR TIME OR FINANCIAL ACCESS** | When you see the whole picture in your mind you may not be able to fund or find it hard to find the time right now to pursue certain things. Remember that you will acquire what you need as you begin to move forward. Once you begin to set goals and map out a plan you will be better able to prioritize your to-do list.

**YOUR VISION STATEMENT MAY REQUIRE SOME REVISIONS AS TIME GOES BY** | As you continue to grow and mature you may realize aspects of your purpose and vision that you did not realize initially, and you will need to add it to your vision. As you begin to walk in the manifestation of your vision you can go back and revise it.

**DON'T BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE OPINIONS OF OTHERS** | Other people will always have an opinion good or bad concerning what it is that you have been purposed to do. Don't allow those opinions to sway you and get you off course.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 9 of the Companion Workbook.***

# 10 | CLEARED FOR GREATNESS

To fulfill your purpose and manifest your vision you need to be clear on how you should move forward. Clarity is a 2-part process. First, you must get clear about where you are right now, your current location. Ask yourself where am I spiritually, mentally and emotionally? Where am I financially? Where am I in my relationships? Where am I in my business or career? Be honest and open with yourself.

While getting clear about where you are in life presently you may discover that you're in a place that you don't necessarily desire to be. You may not be experiencing the most joyful or most pleasant situation. You may be broken, miserable or unhappy but you must be honest with yourself concerning the state of your life right now. This does not mean that you are accepting

your current situation as your destination, you are simply acknowledging that this is your present reality.

Life is about making progress so if you are not in the most pleasant of places right now at least be honest with yourself, that this is where I'm at. It's okay if you find yourself saying "Maybe I am broke, maybe I'm not doing what I desire to be doing right now, maybe there are some people in my life that I need to let go." Be honest about where it is that you are located right now. Again, it's not that you are accepting your present as your destination, it's just temporary, it's just your right now.

Once you sit down to become clear this means that you are serious and you're going to change some things in your life. You may not be the person that you desire to be, you may not even like yourself right now. It's okay because you are on the path from limitations to a life of unlimited possibilities and you must be clear to realize the limitations and move past them.

Being honest with yourself is essential because you may need assistance getting to your desired location in

life. You want to ensure that you receive the proper guidance and direction as well as what steps you need to take to move forward. Let's say you are trying to get to a friend's house, and you call that friend up for directions, the first question your friend is going to ask you is "Where are you located?" This is to ensure that you are given proper directions and the easiest and fastest way to get to your destination. When you know where you're located you must be willing to share where you're located especially when you're trying to receive assistance from someone. They can help you avoid some roadblocks and detours as you take the journey to reach your destination.

Second, you must get clear on where you desire to go in life. It's not enough to say that you want to be and do better you have to know what better looks like for you. Some people are stuck in life because they don't know what they want. If you don't know what you want, you cannot move forward because you are not going to know what it is that you should be doing.

What do you want your life to look like in the next 5 years or in the next 5 days? What do you want your life to look like at the end of the day? You must be clear about where it is that you desire to go. When the question is asked, “What it is that you want out of life?” or “Where do you desire to go in life?” The response is often “I want to be successful.”, “I want to be rich.” or “I want to be happy.”

You must be clear about what those things look like to you, what does being happy and successful look like to you? The way you may view these things and the way someone else may view them could be totally different. There was a time in my life when I knew I had to make a change and I just wanted to be better and to do better. I could not really define what that looked like at that moment but at some point, I had to sit down and really think about what better looked like to me.

Some people are trying to get to places and are not clear about what those places look like or the experience that they will have once they reach them. So, if or when

they encounter them they don't recognize them. Don't be one of those people who because they are not clear about where they desire to go they are all over the place, wandering around in life. When they get to a certain point they're wondering "How did I end up here or what am I doing here?" Once you become clear about where it is that you desire to be in life you can then begin taking the necessary steps to get you there in every area of your life.

I once saw a movie in which this young girl was kidnapped and taken to this underground hideaway. In her desperation to become free when her abductor was not paying attention, she attempted to make an escape and in doing so she made her situation worse. She had no idea of where she was located or what her surroundings were. Also, she did not know where the exit was, so she ran frantically around from one area of the hideaway to the next with no real chance of breaking free.

In life when there is no clarity it can seem as though you are in an underground hideaway and just want to

break free. In your desperation, you don't take the time to get clear about your surroundings or location and you don't take the time to define what freedom looks like to you. You frantically go from here to there in life not getting the result that you desire, true freedom.

People that are not clear about where they desire to go are not focused, they're in a rat race, going nowhere fast. Again, when you know where you are going you will be able to set goals and map out a plan on how to get to your destination. So, take some time to sit down without interruption and get clear about where you are and where you desire to go.

I would like to leave you with one last thought concerning clarity. Clarity breeds focus. When you're clear about where you are headed in life you become focused. When you're clear about who you desire to be in life there are just some people and things you are not going to allow on your journey. Distractions may present themselves, but they cannot overwhelm and defeat you.

When you gain clarity concerning where you are and where you desire to go in life, there are a few things that you will need to do that will assist you in getting to your desired location. Set goals, create a plan of action, get rid of all excuses and stay consistent.

**GOAL SETTING** | Take a look at where you desire to go and what you want out of life and begin to set goals that will move you forward in reaching your destination. You may have heard of setting S.M.A.R.T Goals. Smart is the acronym for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Specific. Your goals should be Specific: Consider who, what, when, where, why & how. Your goals should be Measurable: Ask yourself how will you know when you're done? Your goals should be Attainable: Ask yourself is this realistic? Don't overextend yourself. Your goals should be Relevant: How does this fit in your life right now better yet how does this goal fit into your purpose and vision? Your goals should be Time-Specific: When will you achieve your goals? You should have a start date and fulfillment date for your goals.

When you set your goals state the outcome that you desire to achieve in the present tense. For example, if you want to weigh a certain amount by a certain date, you will state the goal as I weigh X number of pounds on October 15, 20XX.

**CREATE A PLAN OF ACTION** | Once you have set your goals, you then need to move forward to the planning stage, create a plan of action. Something that I always tell myself is this “There is no time like the present to plan your future.” Every achievement that you desire to make requires a plan of action. Action is not an option it’s a necessity. Back to our example goal, I weigh X number of pounds on October 15, 20XX. When creating a plan of action, you may use:

**Action Step #1:** I take 30-minute walks daily.

**Action Step #2:** I eat 3 healthy well-balanced meals daily.

**Action Step #3:** I eliminate all soft drinks from my diet.

Each day wake up knowing what you are going to do within that 24-hour timeframe, getting you one step closer to what you want. A plan will keep you on track and help you to stay focused. A plan will also help you to maximize your time. The words of Benjamin Franklin remain true *“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”* You don't want to just set a goal and say that it will happen one way or the other on any given day; you must have a plan of action. Sometimes it is possible that you may find that you need to go back and revise your plan, so stay open to change as you move forward. Remember timing is important and if what you planned is not doable for where you are in life at a specific time don't hesitate to revise it.

**GET RID OF ALL EXCUSES** | I once heard someone say, *“Excuses are reasons filled with lies.”* Stop making why you can't do something to fulfill your dreams valid. When you continue to make excuses as to why you can't do something to change your life or your situation you are  
96 | Cleared For Greatness really giving up control over your

life and what is going on around you. Take some time to write down every excuse that you have given yourself as to why you can't do something. Once the excuse is written down cross it out and replace it with a commitment to yourself accomplishing your goal. Every time the excuse comes to mind, speak the commitment. Doing this you will also train your mind to think differently about certain things.

**STAY CONSISTENT** | Even when it doesn't appear as though anything is happening for you, keep going and keep doing. When you become consistent at doing something you begin to make it a habit. Your habits will then form the actions you take every day, and your actions will lead you to the success that you desire. You must stay consistent even when things don't appear to be working in your favor. Sometimes, you may have to make some adjustments along the way but don't quit on your dreams. More often than not you are closer to your dreams being manifested than you realize.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 10 of the Companion Workbook.***

PART

4

*Focus Forward*



***“There is nothing more frustrating than seeing where  
you desire to be in life while  
choosing to remain stuck where you are at.”***

# 11 | THE DANGER OF LOOKING BACK

You can't move forward as long as you continue to look back. When we look back at what used to be or what once was in our lives, good or bad, we cause ourselves to lose ground. Also, we cause a delay in reaching and experiencing what is ahead of us.

There is a story of a woman known as Lot's wife (See Genesis 19:24-26). Lot and his wife found themselves in a very bad predicament; however, they were given a chance to break free of their unfortunate situation. When it came time for them along with their two daughters, to escape to a better life they were given clear instructions not to look back at the life they were being set free from. As, they were on their way to better Lot's wife turned and looked back and she became a pillar of

salt, frozen in time between her past and her destiny. Becoming a pillar of salt was not her destiny she chose to make it her destination because of her choice to turn and look back on what was behind her. She looked back at what she should have considered her past.

Her husband Lot along with their two daughters continued to move forward and reached their destination. I'm quite sure that when they got to their destination and she was not there they did not have to question what happened to her. They may have asked themselves "Why did she look back?" They knew her absence meant that she had, in fact, looked back. If only she had been able to leave it all behind – her past.

The difference between Lot's wife and those that look back today is that she physically turned her head to look back. Worse than physically looking back, people today look back in their minds, their thoughts, they hold on to the memories or maybe it's the memories that has a hold on them. Nonetheless, they look back and looking back

keeps you from moving forward in life. You can't pursue your dreams, desires, vision, etc. while your thoughts are turned in the opposite direction and focused on what's behind you.

Imagine running in pursuit of something and all the while your head is physically turned and focused on what's behind you. How far will you be able to go? How long will you be able to stay on course? How close will you be able to get to those things that you are pursuing? How will you know when to shift or what turns to make? How will you be able to see the obstacles or challenges that are in front of you?

Why did Lot's wife look back? Maybe, she enjoyed her old life so much that she couldn't part with it. Perhaps, she was thinking about her friends that she was leaving behind. She could have been thinking about the fact that what she was leaving behind was all she knew. She could have thought "After all it wasn't so bad, yes there were some issues, yes some of the people I really could have done without, but I had become accustomed

to it". Someone could be looking back and holding onto the past because that's all that they've known up until this point. She couldn't let go of a place which was so bad that God felt a need to destroy it.

What are the thoughts of the past that you need to destroy? Don't look back your destination is not there that was just a part of your process good or bad and it's over now. Yes, the physical moment is over, however, it's taking the time to entertain the mental moments or memories that are dangerous to us.

Focus forward. I'm quite sure that her husband Lot and their two daughters may have had their mental moments also when thoughts of the past spoke to them beckoning them to look back. Lot's daughters left their husbands behind because they refused to leave their present situation. They did not allow the past to become a distraction to them and keep them from reaching their destination. They focused forward, they kept their sights, both mental and physical set on what was ahead of them.

The past is a distraction, those thoughts, and memories of the past are to distract you from reaching your destination. Some memories could be good memories and they could be memories from a time in life that you enjoyed and had lots of fun. Every enjoyable moment may not have been a moment that really benefited you. Thieves and liars laugh when they look back and see how they got over on others but that doesn't make their memories something that they should hold on to if they are trying to move ahead in life and be better people.

Most people will miss out in life because they have the past in their view. You can have a desire to move forward, however, if you allow your past to dominate you, you will only get so far. I once heard of a man that worked for a major corporation, he was a great worker and did very well in the position that he operated in. When it was time for him to move forward to a higher level, he was unable to because he could not stop looking back – mentally. Yes, he did well in his present position

but when it was time for him to go higher the weight of his past held him back from moving forward. He became a modern-day pillar of salt, unlike Lot's wife he was still able to breathe, to exercise all five of his senses, still able to speak and still able to walk and wander around, just not move forward.

The past will allow you to continue to walk, but it will not allow you to move forward. The past will have you wandering around in darkness while you're in a room full of light. You will only be able to go so far so DON'T LOOK BACK!

Did Lot's wife honestly think that she was just going to turn around for a moment, to catch a quick glimpse of her past? The thing about getting that quick glimpse is that it can captivate you for a lifetime. Don't allow a thought of yesteryear to sneak in and you find yourself still entertaining it a year or even years from now, it happens.

Don't be passive when it comes to those memories of the past that come to bring your life to a sudden halt.

You must be mindful of the thoughts that you entertain. I've had thoughts from the past that have come up and yes there were times when I would become captivated by them and began reliving the moments of the past. I had to become vigilant with my thoughts and when something comes up that's going to take me back to a place in time where I don't need to be, I quickly begin to think on something else.

Some people still carry the past from their childhood, this could be through the thoughts of abuse or mistreatment from their parents or others, neglect, abandonment, rejection, negative thoughts concerning themselves, etc. With these thoughts, certain emotions are triggered. When you think of having been done wrong in the past it can trigger the emotion of anger if you have not been healed of that situation. When you think of being betrayed you may still feel the hurt if you are not healed of that situation. You can still be connected to the past emotionally.

Did she hear a familiar voice or a familiar sound? Have you ever been listening to a song that you enjoyed way back when and it takes you back to what you were doing, who you were hanging out with, what was going on in your life at the time you first heard the song? Have you ever heard an old familiar voice of someone you used to date or of a friend that you were close to at some point? Once you hear the voice it again takes you back to the past primarily to the relationship that you had with that person good or bad. You can't allow the noise of your past to distract you and keep you from answering the call of your future. Some people can't answer the call of their future because they are too busy answering the call of their past.

She became a pillar of salt, when I first read this story years ago I was under the impression that Lot's wife became like a pile of grains of salt. Until it was brought to my attention that she turned into a statue. A pillar is a tall vertical structure made of wood, stone, or metal used as support for a building or it can be used as a monument.

Salt is used to season, to add flavor to or preserve food. Lot's wife was useless in seasoning, preserving or supporting anything or anyone because of the state that she was in. She had lost her flavor because of her decision to look back. She could no longer touch the lives of others. She could no longer bring comfort to her husband or give much needed wisdom and guidance to her daughters.

Let's look at the word remember in the sense of putting something back together again. When we take a trip down memory lane or look back at what once was, we are putting the pieces of our past back together again, re-member-ing our past. I am reminded of a passage of scripture that reads *Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it?* (Isaiah 43: 18-19a KJV). We can't receive newness of life if we continue to sift through the graves of our past, resurrecting the dead things. When we fill our minds with images and visuals of our past it becomes impossible for

us to visualize and embrace our future. Stop looking back and re-member-ing the past constantly putting it back together again. Focus and look forward to the future, the new thing. When Lot's wife re-member-ed what was and looked back it stopped her from receiving the new life which was before her.

Your salt or seasoning could be your wisdom, knowledge, advice, counsel, support etc. When you look back on and become stuck in your past you are no longer able to touch and impact the lives of others. Like the gentleman that I spoke of earlier that could not be elevated to a higher position on his job because he was stuck in the past, he could not impact lives at a greater level. Just think of how much more he could have touched and affected the lives of those he would have encountered had he let go of his past.

How many more lives will you be able to reach and impact if you would only stop looking back? How much more could you accomplish in life? Don't become a "pillar of salt in the community" be a pillar of the community,

someone that's providing support for a cause, movement, or others. Don't allow yourself to become frozen in time because you keep re-member-ing your past. Leave the past behind and move forward.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 11 of the Companion Workbook.***

# 12 | MOVING FORWARD

Now that we know the danger of looking back let's discuss moving forward. To move is to go in a specified direction or manner, to change position, also it's the change of place, position, or state (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Move is an action word, you can make a move both mentally and physically. To not act is to become stuck in the location or state that you are in. Forward is onward, as making progress, toward a successful conclusion (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Here's the thing some people are in a great location right now everything is going right, however, now is not your destination. Moving forward is not just about leaving a bad situation for something better, or about becoming unstuck and moving ahead. Moving forward is also about

not allowing yourself to become too comfortable in the good state you are in right now, so you can experience life at a greater level.

Not only can you get stuck in your past you can also get stuck in your present, your now. Just say that presently you are on a job that you've been working for 5 years now, you make 50k per year, you have experienced some advancement with this company, they treat you great, financially you are stable, this job allows you to enjoy some of the things that you desire in life. Overall, you have become comfortable. Outside of being comfortable and financially stable, you sense that there is more for you to gain if you made a career change or even started your own business. You feel the desire to move forward nudging you, but you stay put. Year number 7 comes around, you're still there, yes you have received a raise and it made you feel like you did the right thing by staying put. Guess what the nudge is still there, and fear has shown up at this intersection of your life and you settle deeper into your now comfort zone. Year

number 8 enters the picture of your life and it's filled with frustration and dissatisfaction. You dread getting up for work. Every day has become Monday for you with Friday nowhere in sight. Your coworkers have even changed, at least in your mind they have. The thoughts of what-ifs and uncertainty begin to fill your mind, "What if I had left 3 years ago?", "I could be doing...", "I should be...", "Is it too late?", "Have I missed out?"

How many people go through similar experiences time and time again with their careers, jobs, businesses, ministries, relationships, etc. It's like sitting in traffic at a red light, then suddenly, the light turns green signaling for you to go and move forward. You continue to sit there not because your car has stalled, run out of gas or shut down. The person behind you may for a second or two if they are considerate wait believing that you will proceed through the light and you don't. They then proceed to honk their horn impatiently because they have somewhere to go and you're holding them up. When you don't respond they stick their head out of their window

and begin to yell at you to move forward while at the same time still honking their horn.

You are stuck. You are at the very busy intersection of Comfort Zone Ave. and Pursuit of Purpose Blvd. You are not alone; this is one of the busiest intersections in life that you could ever reach. And guess what that person behind you honking their horn and yelling at you from their window, they are in the same predicament as you, stuck, indecisive, frustrated, unhappy and settled within their own comfort zone. They are only trying to get a glimpse of Pursuit of Purpose Blvd. because they have heard so much about it. You're blocking their view! Now look to your left that person sitting in the car next to you with the look of frustration, fear, and confusion on their face, they can easily move forward no one is ahead of them, their stuck too.

Many people traveling along Comfort Zone Ave. get to the crossroad that's going to free them and they don't make the turn. They sit there and watch the traffic of everyone else's life pass them by along Pursuit of

Purpose Blvd. Great Relationships pass them by, Successful Businesses pass them by, Happy Families pass them by, Millionaires, and even Billionaires heck even Thousandaires pass them by (Thousandaires do become Billionaires), World Travelers pass them by, Successful Ministries pass them by, Overcomers pass them by, Thought Leaders pass them by, Purposes Fulfilled, Visions Manifested and Dreams Realized pass them by. While, you are stuck, don't know what to do, don't know where to start, paralyzed by fear, settled within your comfort zone, smothered by your excuses, believing the lies of others that are themselves stuck, life is just passing you by.

The comfort zone is a contradiction. On one hand, it's the place where you feel secure and safe. Yet, on the other hand, it makes you feel insecure and fearful of stepping out of it. Inside the comfort zone, you may feel confident at the level you're at, even though you know that greater awaits you. In this place you have it all figured out, you know what steps to take, the right words

to say and how everything is going to turn out. You also know that there's more in life for you to achieve; however, you have become so comfortable at your present location in life that you are now afraid to make the turn. What does your comfort zone look like?

### **FACES OF THE COMFORT ZONE:**

**A JOB |** This job could be paying you well and allows you to enjoy life to some extent as we discussed earlier. It could also be a job where you're living from paycheck to paycheck and you hate going to everyday.

**BUSINESS SUCCESS |** You could have a business that is doing well. You've reached your goals and you're generating your desired income. You have achieved some great things but now it's time for you to take it up a notch.

**A RELATIONSHIP |** Relationships could be in the form of friendships, business partnerships, a romantic

connection or casual associations. The relationship may have become stagnant, these relationships could either be healthy or toxic relationships.

**PHYSICAL LOCATION** | The comfort zone could look like a location that you have lived in for the past 10 years and now it's time for you to relocate.

**YOURSELF** | You may have become comfortable with the person that you have grown to become in life and there is nothing wrong with that in and of itself. Yet there is always more for you to experience as a person and in turn become more aware of who you are.

People chose to stay within their comfort zones because again they feel safe and secure. Life on the outside may seem a little bit scary. It's the not knowing what's going to happen next or how something is going to work out that keeps them there. You can create a comfort zone at any level in your life. For instance, let's say that there are 10 levels of success in life. You have

passed levels 1 through 5 and now it's time for you to proceed to level 6. At level 5 your relationships are going well, your business is attracting customers and clients, you live in a great city, and you know the lay of the land.

To advance to level 6 you're going to need to relocate to another state, leave friends and family behind, the person you're in a romantic relationship with is all for the move but remember they are leaving some things and people behind as well. You will have to leave some or all your business connections behind, including employees. Just the thought of it makes you afraid, and you begin to take steps backward into your comfort zone while pulling the door closed on an opportunity of a lifetime.

What you're missing out on is that because of the business connections that you will make once you relocate you will have the opportunity to expand to multiple locations and reach the 7-figure earner mark financially. The general associations and connections that you will make will lead to great friendships with

people that you feel you have known all your life. You will be at peace and even your romantic relationship will grow and flourish as well.

The process of life is about progression, growth, maturity, learning, building one's self, reaching new heights and levels in life, experiencing new things and so much more. Because of this, you will become frustrated with life itself, yourself and those around you if you choose to remain the same. Our purpose for living, the life vision that we imagine, our desires, dreams, and goals will either push us to move forward or cause us great frustration.

On the one hand, you will become so passionate and motivated by that which you see possible for your life that you will move forward. Your now will no longer do, no matter how good it has become. In the face of every obstacle and challenge that you encounter you will move forward. In your pursuit of purpose, you will step out of and walk away from relationships or associations

personal or business that no longer benefit, serve or move you forward.

On the other hand, you will become frustrated. First, there is a nudge, a sensing that it's time for you to move forward, then there is FRUSTRATION. You become frustrated when you choose not to move forward because you see where your purpose, vision, desires, dreams, and goals will lead you and the lifestyle that you can experience. There is nothing more frustrating than seeing where you desire to be in life while choosing to remain stuck where you are at.

Then, there are others that don't see, they don't know the purpose for their lives, they don't have a vision for their future selves, they have no goals, dreams or even desire to move forward. It is possible that they too can move forward. As long as you are alive there is a possibility of change and moving forward. This group of people will just require more work that's all.

There are many reasons why some people choose not to move forward. People stop moving forward in life

because of unfavorable situations and circumstances, because of death, they have allowed fear to stop them, or a bad break up. They are unsure of what to do next, what direction to take, or because they just simply don't know how to move forward. However, these are the times when you must push yourself to continue to move forward.

Why is it so important to continuously move forward in life? We have all heard the statement "A body in motion stays in motion." And so, it is with life – a life in motion stays in motion, forward motion that is. With the body when you don't use certain muscles, they become weak and can't really perform at the levels that you need for them to when you have need of them. Certain limbs will begin to stiffen up on you. You must practice movement in the body, be it in the form of exercise or just simply getting up and walking from one place to another.

Life is about progression, movement, growing and maturing as a person. When you decide that you are not

going to stay in forward motion and go through the process of progressing in your life, you become stagnant, stiff and weak. The gifts, talents, and skills that you have on the inside lie dormant. They become dull because you are not doing anything to sharpen them. The spiritual, mental and emotional muscles that you need to get through the tough times are not being strengthened, and you become stiff and dull in certain areas of life.

Continual forward motion will promote continual forward thinking. You will always be thinking and meditating on what's ahead of you, what it is that you'll achieve next. You will broaden the horizon of your imagination because once you accomplish what you have imagined it allows you to imagine greater. Remember greater can only happen when you step outside of the confines of your comfort zone and begin moving forward.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 12 of the Companion Workbook.***

**PART**

**5**

*Get In The Game*



***“Stop sitting on the sidelines of everyone else’s life  
and become an active participant in your own life.”***

# 13 | OVERCOMING FAILURE

Have you ever felt like a complete failure, never able to accomplish anything that you set out or desired to do? Though I had big dreams for myself and my future, it seemed failure was my only option. Everything that would go wrong went wrong and stayed wrong for quite some time.

With this pattern of failure came a poor self-image of myself that I, in fact, was a failure. Though, I would get up and dust myself off after each fall the thoughts of failure were always in the back of my mind. Not only did I not look at myself in a positive light my thoughts caused me to believe that others did not see me in a positive light either.

We can allow failure to be our teacher and learn valuable lessons from it or we can allow it to become our

prison and hold us in a place where we never move forward. I allowed failure to become my teacher and chose to learn from it. Though, it was not easy I had to take an honest look at myself. I had to ask myself what was causing and what would end this destructive pattern that was taking place in my life. There was a lot of inconsistencies and procrastination in the way that I lived my life and that hindered the manifestation of my desired lifestyle.

In asking myself questions about the failure that I'd experienced, I found that I harbored a victim's mentality. A victim is one who is harmed by or made to suffer from an act, circumstance, agency, or condition (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). With this kind of mentality, I was certain not to succeed because I did not believe that I could fight myself out of what I was going through and win. When you are victimized in any way be it mentally, physically, emotionally, etc., you will either withdraw to protect yourself to prevent it from happening again or lash out to prevent it. I began to withdraw to protect

myself not necessarily from other people; I began to withdraw from life, from my dreams and from what was possible for my future. I began to withdraw from myself and my responsibility for my life by pointing the finger at others; it was always what others did to get me into this situation or did not do to help me out. I had to learn how to take full responsibility for my life if I wanted to experience change, regardless of who was or wasn't involved in the situation.

There came a time in my life that I made up my mind that my life had to change and that for the better. I had to be willing to take whatever steps that I needed to take to get to the place where I was experiencing the results that I desired for my life. I started pointing the figure at me and began to look inward at who I was and how I was going to break the cycle of failure in my life. I realize that each time a misfortunate situation presented itself whether it was in the form of a job loss, being without a place to stay or not being successful in accomplishing a goal, I did not thoroughly think the situation through.

I know that some things that happened to me were beyond my control but in those things happening I failed to take control of my thoughts and my actions. Even though we can't control how others treat us or respond to us; we can control our response. Even though we can't control every situation that happens to us in life; we can control our reaction to what is going on.

Because, I was operating out of the victim's mentality there were times that I did absolutely nothing and looked to others to rescue me. I simply did not think things through and use the knowledge and wisdom that I did have at that point to move me to the next phase of life. Though I may not have been able to change a situation completely I would have placed myself in a better position to overcome the situation more efficiently. Instead, I chose to dwell on the failure longer than I should have. I eventually got up and moved on, but I prolonged the process because of improper thinking.

To overcome failure there were some things that I had to do: 1. I had to accept my life as it was. 2. I had to

make a conscious decision to move forward. 3. I had to ask questions of myself. 4. I had to change my mindset, my way of thinking. 5. I had to take full responsibility for my life and my actions concerning my life. 6. Make the right connections 7. Become consistent in fulfilling my dreams.

## **STEP 1**

**ACCEPTING LIFE AS IT IS** | I had to accept my life as it was, my reality. This would become my turning point. I can remember walking around the bedroom that I was allowed to use in one of my family member's homes (this would be the 11th time I had to live with someone) and really began to see my life as it was. It was like I was walking around in a circle and all my failure and disappointments up to that point were swirling around me like a twister. It was not the prettiest sight to see but I had to accept it; I had to accept where I was, not in a sense of this was it for me, but I had to accept it as my reality at that point to move on. I had to become honest with myself, my life was a mess.

We know that when a twister has run its course it leaves your life in disarray with pieces of it all over the place. You must accept that this is your reality now; pick up those pieces that are still good, salvageable and can be restored and move on and begin to build a better life.

The one thing that I can say that was always good, was my ability to remain determined. I may have failed at a lot of things, but I never gave up and I was always determined not to quit even when I wanted to. I always believed that there was something greater than what I was going through at any given moment in my life. I had to accept my reality for what it was, the good, the bad and the ugly. You will never be able to overcome that which you are not willing to confront. I had to confront the failure and the results that it left in my life at that time. My dreams were still good along with my gifts and talents, my potential was good, and my abilities were still good. Even though I had suffered much I still had hope for my future and I still believed that success was possible, that was good.

## **STEP 2**

### **MAKE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO MOVE FORWARD | I**

had to decide to move forward and even though it was easier said than done I had to take action. You must make a decision to move forward because life is a process and through this process, you should always be progressing. We all progress at different levels and at different speeds but we have to keep moving. I could have stayed in that bedroom that day and dwelled on the twister effect that had taken place in my life, weeping over damaged pieces of my life but that would not have done me any good. Instead, I decided to pick up what was good and move on. Stop weeping over what was and be strengthened by what is possible. When you decide to move forward you decide to move past some things. You decide that certain people and thoughts can no longer be a part of your journey. You decide that your ability to succeed in life is far greater than any failure you've experienced in life.

### STEP 3

**ASK QUESTIONS OF YOURSELF** | I had to begin to ask myself some questions about my life and where I wanted to be and give myself honest answers. When you begin to ask yourself the right questions you begin to deal with your issues; you begin to look at yourself, instead, of others.

- First, I asked myself what was it that I really wanted in life? Where did I really want to be five or ten years from now? In answering these two questions I could not allow my answer to be what the image of someone else's life or success was at that time because I didn't want someone else's life. I wanted what was possible for my life. There is nothing wrong with looking at someone else as an example of success in any area, but you must live your own life. I did not allow myself to look outwardly but inwardly at what I desired because we all have the same potential within us to be great; we were

created that way. In asking myself where I wanted to be in the future I had to sit down and visualize it in my mind and write a clear vision for myself on paper so that I could put it before me to look at and meditate on, on a consistent basis.

- What did I possess inwardly that was going to get me to where I needed to be? What were my gifts, my talents, my strengths, what did I enjoy doing? What skills did I have that stood out among others, what was my passion in life?
  
- What was I willing to do to sharpen my gifts, talents, and abilities to allow them to position me to live my best life? Your gifts, talents, and abilities can place you before great men and women, but you must sharpen and polish them for others to take notice. For some this may mean going back to school or taking a training

course in what you are interested in. For others, this could mean spending more time developing that which you already possess within you.

- What was it that I needed to start or stop doing to move forward? You may have some habits that are holding you back. You may harbor thoughts that are hurting you rather than helping you. You may be using the same methods in life because they have become comfortable to you yet at the same time they're causing you to become stagnant and not advance.
- What was I willing to do? Was I willing to sacrifice to see my dreams and vision for my life fulfilled? Was I willing to be consistent and stop procrastinating? Was I willing to apply the

knowledge that I had obtained? Was I willing to remain focused to move forward?

#### **STEP 4**

**CHANGE YOUR MINDSET** | I had to change my mindset. I could no longer walk around with the victim's mentality. I realize that not everyone operates in the victim's mentality; however, there are other ways or thoughts that we think which hold us back such as one of self-pity, defeat, not being good enough, etc. I had to take the responsibility of what was happening in my life off others and place it on myself. Even though others were there to assist me the ultimate responsibility for my welfare, happiness, and success was mine and I chose to take it and fulfill my responsibility for my life.

When you think a certain way, you tend to gravitate to those that think the same way that you think which do you no good and, in most cases, will make you worse off. You must stop having conversations about what's going wrong in your life with certain people that are going to keep the fire burning in your bad situation, so to speak.

Walking away from certain relationships may be painful but it's necessary to your growth, and the fulfillment of the dreams that you have for yourself.

This is a sacrifice that must be made; however, it is up to you to decide what conversations need to be stopped and what relationships you need to step away from and give yourself space to grow or end altogether. When we let go of the negative we must replace it with a positive. Connect with people that are going where you are going or those that have achieved what you desire to accomplish. Every time a negative thought comes into your mind have a positive thought ready to overcome it. You may have to write some positive thoughts about yourself and about your life and begin speaking them out loud so that you will hear what you desire to think about. As we discussed in Chapter 1, it can take years to build a negative mindset so don't get frustrated that yours may not be torn down overnight but start somewhere, move forward.

## **STEP 5**

**TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR LIFE** | I had to take full responsibility for my life, no one else could live my life for me; therefore, it was not anyone else's responsibility to make sure that it was handled properly. I realized that people could only assist me with my setbacks according to their resources, ability, and capacity to help me. I realized that no one had to assist me at all but even in them assisting me if they chose, I had to take the greater responsibility for what was happening.

You are responsible for your welfare. You are responsible for your happiness, and you are responsible for your success. At some point, you must let go of all the excuses and get involved in the lifestyle that you desire to achieve. Stop trying to take the easy way out by handing the responsibility over to others. Others may have been involved in what led to your bad situation it is ultimately you that must pick up the pieces and move forward. I once heard someone say that she learned how

to participate in her own rescue, start participating in your own rescue.

## **STEP 6**

**MAKE THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS** | When I decided to do all the steps listed previously, I had to connect myself with the right people. I had to connect with positive people, people that were stable, people that were consistent, persistent and goal oriented. I had to connect myself with people that too had a desire to see failure overcome or that had already overcome failure in their own lives.

Some people I connected with through friendships or networking. Some people that I have connected to I have not met them personally, but I've connected through reading their books and stories of success. Some people I followed their websites and read their blogs. You must make the right connections. Ask yourself who is going in the direction that you are traveling or who has already arrived at the destination that you desire to reach and begin to go after them.

## **STEP 7**

**BE CONSISTENT** | In all that I have set out to do to reach the level of success that I desire in life, I have resolved to be consistent. No longer do I allow obstacles to hold me back or stop me from moving forward. My mind is made up that I will do something every day to get me closer to achieving my dreams. I realize that most times the same problems present themselves to us but under different circumstances. When unforeseen and unfavorable situations occur, I now gather my thoughts and look at my situation as a blessing and an opportunity rather than seeing it as an obstacle.

I am consistent with the new mindset that I have taken on. I am consistent in being responsible for my life. I am consistent in keeping negative people and things out while welcoming the positive. I am consistent in making the right connections in every way possible. I am consistently grateful for where I am and for recognizing and accepting my life for what it is. I am consistent in taking the necessary time to meditate on where I want it

to be. I am consistent in following the vision that I have set before me. I am consistent in the development of my gifts, talents, and abilities.

**LEARN FROM IT** | I've learned that everything I've lost in life was not a loss. Some things and people were not supposed to remain, they simply served their purpose and moved on. In fact, in order for me to receive what I desired, the room had to be made for it to enter my life. This also taught me the valuable lesson of not being attached to things and people.

I've learned that some things in life are worth the fight no matter how big the giants are that are standing between you and your dreams. Your dreams should always be so big that no matter what is standing between you and them you will always have a clear view of them. If you ever get to the place where you can't visualize your dreams because of an obstacle; then, either your dream is too small, or you have allowed yourself to lose focus.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 13 of the Companion Workbook.***

# 14 | PARTICIPATION IS REQUIRED

Stop sitting on the sidelines of everyone else's life and become an active participant in your own life. If you want to get to where you desire to be in life and achieve those things that you desire to achieve you must participate. In the "game of life," you hear all the plays that you should be making. You have gotten the strategies and how to carry them out, and you choose not to implement them and follow through. Everyone around you are making the plays and scoring the successes that you desire. No one even throws you the ball of opportunity anymore because they know that once it's in your hand it will go no further, and you refuse to pass it to someone else to allow them to succeed.

Participation is required for you to move forward. You must get involved in your life. Participation can be both physical as well as mental. There are those that have involved themselves in doing the work but need to

participate with a greater level of action, commitment, and dedication.

Sometimes, you can go through life as a mere spectator to what is going on around you. When you're not participating in life and sitting on the sidelines you become a spectator of everyone else's life, watching everyone else move forward, go after their dreams and get what they desire in life. If you're not careful you'll become content sitting on the sidelines, watching the lives of others and yours also completely pass you by. Don't become caught up in what is going on in the lives of others, simply put mind your business. We lose focus on what it is that we need to be doing to see results and success in our lives when we focus our attention on others.

When you don't participate in life you don't place yourself in a position of control over your life. You have no control over what's going on within you or around you and you have no control of the situations and circumstances that may come about. When you don't

have control over your life other people will then begin to control you. You will begin taking on their ideas and doing what they say for you to do.

To have control over your life, your actions, what it is that you desire to do, you must participate, and you must take full responsibility for your life and the things that are happening within your life. When you see someone, and they are not participating and out of control in life, to begin with, when misfortune happens to them it may just take them out altogether.

Now situations will arise that we don't see coming and they may catch us off guard; however, with someone that just isn't active in their life they will not be prepared to handle the misfortunate situations that do show up. When you are not participating in life not only do you not see those things coming, you're not prepared to handle those things.

Participation prepares you; it strengthens you; it builds you; it allows you to gain experience and staying power. For the person, that's not participating, and it

appears what they're going through is going to take them out is because they have not prepared themselves for the things that are coming in life. Even though you may not know what's up the road ahead, when you're participating and preparing yourself, taking the necessary steps to move forward, gaining knowledge and maturing, when certain things come your way you'll be able to handle a bad situation better. By you not participating you're not going to know what to do, which way to turn or who to turn to for assistance, guidance, or advice.

To achieve what you desire in life you must become an active participant. Most want to achieve their desires in life but are not willing to get up and do the work that's required of them. It's not enough to have a dream, it's not enough to see where you desire to go, it's not enough to know what to do, you must get up and get involved in the process. You start from where you are and build yourself up to where you need to be.

There are three things that could happen to you when you choose not to participate in life, you miss out on opportunities, you make no progress and you could become envious of others.

**MISSED OPPORTUNITIES** | When you are not participating in life you will miss out on opportunities because you're not prepared to take advantage of them or will not recognize them when they come your way. It's been said that opportunities don't go away other people take advantage of them. These could be opportunities of advancement, financial wealth, connecting with others to form great associations or relationships, a chance to change the lives of your family, a chance to impact and change the world around you.

You can have an idea of what it is that you want to do, and you never act upon it by taking the steps required to bring the idea to fruition. This idea could have made you millions, gotten you out of a bad situation and changed your life for the better. Sometime later you see someone else doing the same thing and now your

thought is, that's what I wanted to do but the reason the other person is doing it is that they chose to participate. God does not give us ideas for them to just fill our minds with thoughts. He gives them to us so that they will not only change and prosper our lives, but the lives of others as well. Are you sitting on a million-dollar idea?

Other people are taking advantage of the opportunities that pass you by because they are making the choice to participate in their lives and you're not. How many good opportunities have you missed that could have moved you to the next phase or level of your life because of nonparticipation? When you're not participating in life you're not prepared for the opportunities of life. You must be prepared for the opportunities that are coming your way. The only way to prepare yourself is to participate.

When you say that you want something, you must prepare yourself. You can't sit back and continue to miss out on opportunities. Some people will try to justify their missed opportunity by saying well it wasn't meant for me

or that wasn't the will of God for my life. Yes, it was meant for you, yes it was the will of God for your life, you just chose not to follow His will, or you were unwilling to participate. You were not prepared, and you could not receive or even recognize the opportunity that came your way. You stay in the same place, stuck in life and you become frustrated because you see where you desire to go, but you refuse to get up and participate or participate at a greater level.

**NO PROGRESSION** | When you don't participate in life you will make no progress. Waking up every day does not equate to making progress in life. Just because you woke up this morning doesn't mean that you're any step further than you were when you went to sleep last night. To be able to make progress you must participate.

It's like going to dinner and a feast is set before you, to be able to enjoy the feast and become full you must participate. You can't just sit at the table and not eat, you will leave hungry. How many people in life are starving because they choose not to participate and, indeed, it is

a choice? Don't starve at the table of life when it's offering you a feast, a feast of abundance and prosperity, success, great relationships, opportunities of advancement, joy, peace, and happiness, etc.

Sometimes people will sit at the table of life and don't eat, don't participate, or get involved so they can't enjoy what is before them. Some are malnourished because they need to participate at a greater level. Not only do they not fully experience what life has to offer them but also, they can't fully experience and enjoy themselves. As you participate and make progress in life you become more aware of who you are as a person, you become more aware of your capabilities, you become more aware of your strengths, you become more aware of what you have to offer in life. You become more aware of how it is that you can make an impact in the world. Not only are you missing out on life as a whole, you're missing out on an opportunity to know yourself, to grow, mature and advance in life.

Without participation, there is no progression. Again, waking up every day does not mean that you've made any progress. A lot of people woke up today, also a lot of people are just sitting on the sidelines of life because of a lack of participation. They woke up to watch others succeed. They woke up to watch others advance. They woke up to watch others fulfill their dreams. They woke up to watch others fulfill their purpose.

**BECOME ENVIOUS** | Non-participation causes one to become envious of others, wanting what they have but not willing to do the work required to achieve it for yourself. You become angry and upset with others that have acquired wealth and abundance, but these are the ones that got up every day and went after what they desired to have in life. They put in the work required to achieve a certain lifestyle. They put in the work required to experience success in their relationships, within their homes, in their ministries, businesses and careers. They put in the work required to be the person that they are today. Everyone must put in the individual work required

to live the lifestyle that they desire to live and to become the person that they desire to become. Stop being angry at other people for where you are because you choose not to do what's necessary to get to where you desire to be in life.

You should not be the same person or at the same level in life that you were 5 years ago because life is about making progress. Through the process of life, as you participate, you grow and mature and become better at being who you were created to be. When you encounter that person or those people that are participating in life, you see people who are happy for others and their success. They celebrate others when they win or accomplish something.

They're able to do so because they are focused on working on themselves and the lifestyles they desire to achieve. They've decided that they are going to participate in life and not just watch it pass them by. When you become envious of others, you have no idea what a person went through to get to where they are

right now. You don't know what is required of someone to maintain the lifestyle that they are enjoying. You don't know the details of someone else's life when you're sitting on the sidelines as a spectator because you only have an outside view.

To achieve the life that you desire you must become an active participant. Sometimes, you could be participating, but life is requiring for you to do so at a greater level. What you are desiring may require greater effort and sacrifice on your part. Make a conscious decision that you're going to become an active participant in your life or to participate at a greater level. In life, if you are participating and you desire to move forward into something greater you already know that you must put in more work or effort, a greater level of commitment and dedication.

Imagine your life 10 years from now and you are still at the same place in life that you are right at this very moment, no advancement. Right now, could very well be a great place for you, it could be somewhere that you

absolutely hate or somewhere in between. Now is not your destination. Where in end up in the next 10 years will be determined by your level of participation in your life right now. Stop allowing life to happen to you and begin happening to life. Again, stop sitting on the sidelines of everyone else's life and become an active participant in your own life.

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 14 of the Companion Workbook.***

# 15 | MAKE THE CLIMB

Are you willing to make the climb? You can't just want to be successful; you must be willing and committed to doing what it takes for you to achieve the level of success that you desire. You will always be at the bottom of the ladder of success looking up if you are not willing to make the climb. Making the climb can take place in any and every area of your life. Are you willing to put in the work to see the results that you desire to achieve?

What is the climb? The climb is the action steps that you commit to taking every day that will get you one step closer to the manifestation of your desires being fulfilled. It's your sacrifice, staying up late and getting up early to put in the work that your purpose, vision, or dreams require of you. It's making investments in yourself and your future. The climb may require that you let go of the hands of some people and leave them behind for you to go higher and achieve greater in life.

Imagine standing at the foot of a ladder and looking up to the very top rung. Just because you desire to be at the top doesn't put you at the top. You will need to make use of your body and put in the effort to climb the ladder. You must be willing to make the climb and too many people are just desiring success but they're not willing to go after it. They're not willing to put in the effort, take the necessary steps or step out of their comfort zones. They're not willing to do something different, acquire the knowledge required, or sharpen their skills.

You can't always expect to take the easy way out or take shortcuts to acquire success. It's like trying to acquire wealth by taking the get rich quick route. Most times the finances gained do not last very long and you'll find yourself back at square one or even in a worse position. As you make the climb and as you go through the process the correct way, then, you will gain the wisdom that you need to maintain and grow what you acquire in life. Don't attach yourself to others that promise you a platform or an easy way to the top. Are you really prepared to be there? Are you

really prepared for the position or the platform that you will occupy? Don't cheat the system of your dreams by taking shortcuts because when you get to the place where you desire to be you want to have staying power. You don't want to have just 15 minutes of fame, here today and gone tomorrow.

Some people reach the top, but they don't have the staying power to keep them there. Everyone sees their character flaws or that they're not a person of integrity or of their word. As you make the climb and take the necessary steps required, there may be some things that need to be worked on. Maybe you need to learn how to deal with people, work on your integrity or sharpen your skills. It's best to work on these things while no one sees you or know your name because everyone will see what you're made of once you start making advancement toward the top of the ladder of success.

When you make up your mind that you're going to be committed to making the climb, there's a certain process that you will have to go through. A process of learning and

maturing, of how to deal with people, letting go of people and things that hold you back, how to conduct yourself in certain situations.

The climb may require that you let go of the hand of some of the people that you're holding onto. Sometimes you are on your way to your destination or the success that you desire, and you may still be holding on to certain people or things. Think about trying to climb up a ladder with a weight attached to you, it will be a very difficult task for you to complete. Some people and things at various points in your life become dead weight. This does not mean that they are necessarily bad people or things. Good can become dead weight when it's not supposed to be in your life at a certain season, phase or level of life. As you continue to go from one level in life to the next you must be aware of who and what you need to let go of.

Everyone will not reach the top with you; you may reach your destination and the people that you started out with may not be there. You may end up connected to a whole new group of people as you continue to climb. Everyone

that crosses your path is not meant to share your journey so stop trying to take everyone along with you. Some people may just want to ride your coat tail and they will weigh you down. They will not put in any work or effort in trying to advance themselves in life, to achieve what they're saying they desire in life, to manifesting their vision or making their dreams reality.

Then there are those things within you as an individual that as you move upward, you will need to let go of to keep moving forward. These things could be bad habits, procrastination, excuses, etc. Let go of the dead weight and use your strength for the climb, to overcome obstacles or to face and grow through challenges. Use your time and effort on those things that will produce in your life and not invest it in people and things that are no longer required to be in your life any longer.

I'm not saying that you will need to completely cut everyone off but there are some people that because of the path you're traveling on, they can't continue the journey with you. It doesn't mean that you become rude, mean or

nasty toward them. You no longer may be able to be involved with that person because making the climb is now something that you are focused on. Most times when your focus changes in life, your desire to be around certain people or do certain things will change, also.

Once you begin focusing on fulfilling your purpose, manifesting your vision, making your dreams reality or living your desired lifestyle you are less likely to pay attention to other things going on around you. It's like having tunnel vision and some people and things will become distractions to you even though you were once heavily involved with them.

Making the climb is not always easy; however, it's necessary when you desire to reach greater levels and higher heights in life. Again, think about climbing a physical ladder. You're using your strength, your arm and leg muscles to hold, pull and push yourself up, it could be very difficult, especially depending on how high the climb or the angle of the ladder. To get to where you desire to be there are some things that you will have to deal with, some

situations you will have to face, some challenges that you must overcome, and you will need your spiritual, mental and physical strength to do so.

Are you willing to make the climb? Don't be the person at the bottom of the ladder of success looking up at everyone else moving forward, experiencing, and enjoying the lifestyle that you desire. Don't be that person because you're not willing to make the climb.

Many people will start out with you, some will walk away, some will only make it halfway and some will complete the climb. There are those that you will pass on your way up because they may have stopped along the way. Some may have made it to a certain level, and it has now become their comfort zone. Move past them and proceed to the top.

To be able to complete the climb you must be "souled out" (mind, will, and emotions) and committed to yourself, your purpose and vision and what it is that you are pursuing. When you are "souled out" no matter what comes your way, you will not lose focus and turn around. Yes, you may

get tired, it may get hard, discouragement and fear may present themselves to you, but your commitment will not allow these things to stop you. They may slow you down, you may have some setbacks and detours along the way. You may have to stop and rest, you may need encouragement, you may need to sharpen your skills or gain more knowledge. You may even get to a point that you just don't know what to do, be so focused and committed that you don't quit.

Allow your passion to override how you feel when you don't want to take the necessary action required of you. Go after what you want as if you are going after your last breath and don't stop until you catch it. Be one of the persistent ones, the consistent ones, and the determined ones.

Don't back down from the obstacles and challenges that show up along the journey. Instead, allow your obstacles to turn you into an overcomer and your challenges to transform you into a champion. Face fear head on while moving forward in faith – faith that you already have what

it is that you are seeking. You must believe that giants do fall and push forward with ease until you reach the top.

To make the climb you must make a conscious decision that you are going to pursue your purpose, vision and dreams no matter what, you're going to go after it. Make a conscious decision that you're going to pursue with everything within you, that nothing or no one is going to stop you or get in your way. When your own negative self-talk or when someone else starts speaking negatively to you, or when you see people that have fallen out of the race and they throw in the towel your mind must be made up that no matter what you're going to experience your desires. You may not know how you are going to get there just yet, just make the decision that you are going to pursue.

Always, keep your why in front of you as you complete your climb. Always, know why you're fighting. Always, know why you're moving forward. Always, know why you should keep focused. If it's some people and things that you left, remember why you left those things and people so that you can continue to make the climb. You may get to a

point where you encounter new people along your journey, and it may seem like they don't understand you or you may feel as though you don't fit in with them. You may want to go back to the things and people you were once accustomed to, but you must have your why in front of you to continuously pull you upward.

Sit down and visualize what it will look like when you complete your climb and write it down on paper – this is your vision for that thing you made the decision to pursue. Visualize it, feel it, see yourself there even before you start. How will it be once you reach your destination? What will it feel like to experience a life of abundance? What will a successful relationship look like? How will you feel when you receive the promotion of your job? What will your business look like at its next level? Before you get to the experience, you must experience the experience, and you do that through visualizing and imagining your outcome. Then create a plan of action as to how you will get there. Your plan will keep you focused, and help you stay the

course. Your plan will place you among the certain few that reach the top.

You must be mindful that making the climb extends to all areas of your life. Don't just focus on the area of finances and wealth. Make the climb spiritually, mentally and emotionally (soul), body (health), relationships on any level, ministry, business or career, leisure and rest as well. You cannot live a full and complete life when you only focus on one area of your life. What good is having abundance of wealth or business success when your family is torn apart and near destruction. Make the climb in your relationships, so you will have those that will push you forward and even pull you upward when you are weak. These relationships will also surround you, so you will not fall. Are you willing to make the climb?

***Next Step: Complete Chapter 15 of the Companion Workbook.***

*Final Thought*



# FINAL THOUGHT |

## UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

I used to think of God opening doors in the sense that God will open one door for you at a time. Then in 2013, God gave me revelation on what open doors really meant. When God opens a door for you there are multiple doors behind the initial door that serves various purposes for you to walk through. What He showed me was just like you open the front door to enter your home, the front door is only the initial door. As you begin to move through your home you will see various other doors, such as doors to the bedroom(s), bathroom(s), you have closet door(s), even down to the doors on the kitchen cabinets.

Some doors may have to be opened by turning a doorknob, others you slide open, still others you push or pull open. No matter how large or how small the space is behind the door it serves a purpose. Many times, we miss

the totality of what God has provided for us because we stop at the initial door. We miss out on various opportunities, opportunities for advancement, to build great relationships, for financial breakthroughs, healing, to further our education, etc.

When God opens a door for you, seek out the other doors behind that initial door that contain the resources and provision that He has made available for you. He has everything behind that initial door within other compartments to fulfill our purpose and reach our destiny.

Also, with making connections imagine yourself standing in a line of 100 people or more and everyone is holding hands. We may think that we are connected only to the persons to the left and right of us that are holding our hands. We are also connected to the other people they are connected to, not necessarily a direct connection, but a connection, nonetheless. Some of these connections are Divine Connections. So, you can't place limitations on others because of your perception or sometimes limited view of them. By placing limits on others, you place limits

yourself. Exhaust all the possibilities and everything that God has made available to you through your Open Doors and Divine Connections.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR |

## LEASE L. YOUMANS

I am the Owner of Purpose + Prosperity, LLC. a life and business coaching boutique, where I work with individuals who are ready to level up in their life and business. I show you how to gain clarity, master your mindset, walk by faith and in confidence so that you can boldly live a life of purpose and prosperity. I also show you how to Package Your Purpose™ To Generate Profits, ultimately creating multiple streams of income.

“We are daily becoming who God created us to be so that we can fulfill the purpose that He created us to fulfill.”

-Lease L. Youmans –

To find out how I can support you in your journey please visit [www.leaseyoumans.com](http://www.leaseyoumans.com)

## | MY PRAYER FOR YOU

I pray that you will prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers. May you purpose daily to renew and expand your mind and be cautious of what you allow to attach itself to your mind through thoughts, words and actions. May your mind be filled with life changing, impactful, creative thoughts and ideas. May you conduct yourself in a positive manner in every situation and circumstance. May you be quick to hear and slow to speak. You will not be led by your emotions. You have a sound mind concerning all things. You are not a prisoner of your past and you look boldly with great expectation toward and walk into your future. I come against and sever every past hurt, disappointment, regret, and mistake from your life. May all things good and right enter your life now, in the name of Jesus. I pray upon you the wisdom of God and the spirit of boldness to release those things and people that are no longer a part of your journey. May the purpose and vision for your life be made

clear and plain. You walk in abundance and prosperity. May the best of God's blessings and favor be evident in and upon your life, relationships, business, career, and ministry. You walk by faith and not by sight. I pray that you will have the will and determination to carry out the plan of God for your life. May your purpose be fulfilled, your vision manifested, your dreams come to fruition, and your destiny reached. I speak life, peace, stability and harmony into every area of your life. I come against the plans of the enemy that would come against you. Though weapons may form against you they shall not prosper, and may all things work together for your good. I pray that you will recognize the greatness of God upon your life and continuously walk therein. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## | PRAYER OF SALVATION

Jesus, I thank You that you came that I may have life and that I may have it more abundantly. I ask you now to forgive me of all my sins. Your word says that *“If I confess with my mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in my heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, I shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9* Jesus I believe that You are the Son of God and I now confess You as my Savior and Lord. Work in my heart and help me to live a life that is pleasing to You, Lord Jesus. I thank You Father for a renewed life in You that begins right now. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

If you have prayed the Prayer of Salvation or if you are renewing your commitment to God please let us know by visiting [www.thelifestylemakeover.online](http://www.thelifestylemakeover.online)