

CHAPTER 1

THE WALL

THE WALL

'Change is a door that can only be opened from the inside.'

He was the ruler of a huge empire and the time had come to seek an able and wise successor who would have all the skills and abilities to take over after he had retired. He assembled the best people he knew and asked qualified consultants to seek others in distant lands that might have what it takes.

On a particular day, all the possible successors were gathered together in a magnificent hall. The ruler addressed the gathering. 'I have a problem and I want to know who among you has the ability to solve it? What you see in the brick wall behind me is the biggest, mightiest, and heaviest door in the empire. Who among you, without help, has the power to open it?'

Some of the possible successors simply shook their heads and left almost immediately. It was just too big a problem. Others examined the door more closely, discussed different options while remembering theories of problem solving they had learned, thought about it some more before admitting defeat. It seemed an impossible task.

Have you ever felt that a task was too difficult to overcome? Have you ever felt like you've hit a brick wall, a roadblock or barrier? Or a problem was just too difficult to solve or that you're just going around in circles? Sometimes it's just a build up of a series of disappointments and setbacks that knock you off balance and it's easier to sit and wallow in the mire rather than try and stand!

Have you ever said to yourself, 'I wish I was in a relationship or in a better one,' 'I wish I knew what I wanted,' 'I wish the phone would ring,' 'I wish I had more money,' or 'if only I had a more understanding boss.' 'What should I do next?' or 'why is this happening to me?' Maybe you feel frustrated and can't figure out why. Or perhaps you want something to happen but you don't know what exactly. How can you make sure you feel happy and fulfilled? It's like being stuck in a traffic jam and you

don't know what's causing the jam! Or entering a maze and wondering in which direction to turn and if you'll ever find a way out!

Since we live in a world of infinite choices and infinite opportunities, the first step – and it's an important one – is to find out what we really do want instead. After all, what is the difference between people who are successful, feel happy and fulfilled and those that don't? What is it that they are doing and that you're not doing, yet? Are you curious to find out what's going on in their heads?

I'm curious to know what questions are going around in your head right now. And I'm curious because it's been said that we can never ask a question without knowing the answer to that question. It's our own beliefs and patterns in thinking and behaviour that often prove a block in finding a way through the brick wall to the answer. And we're going to break through that wall so YOU can find your way forward.

'How did things get this way?' you may be saying to yourself. Many of us get caught up in our routines: work routine, relationship rut, fitness habits and health regime or lack of! We get caught up in the way we always do things. In other words, we sit safely in our own comfort zone. Do you find that you do the same things on a regular basis, such as making a cup of coffee as soon as you wake up in the morning, reading the paper as soon as you get to the kitchen table in the morning, buying the same brand of toothpaste, or driving the same route to the office? And have you ever experienced your car taking the route to the office when it's the weekend and you were heading for the shopping mall? Do you habitually do the same things every weekend? Do you follow the same schedule week in and week out? Do you eat the same food? Do you have the same fitness routine and wonder why you're no longer toning up or losing weight? It's as if you're on auto-pilot! This is the comfort zone and, believe me, there are a lot of good reasons to stay in the comfort zone – the routines and habits you have and the things you do every day. After all, it's safe, simple, predictable, comfortable and routine. It's stress free and there's no thinking required. Furthermore, it feels good and there are no worries or surprises!

In Sri Lanka, you might be confused when you see huge elephants being held to a tree by a small piece of rope tied to their front leg. There are no chains or cages and it's obvious that the elephants could, at anytime, break away from their bonds but for some reason, they do not. So why is it that these huge, beautiful, magnificent creatures just stand by the tree and make no attempt to get away?

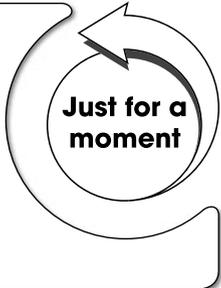
When the elephants are very young and much smaller, they use the same size rope to tie them to a tree and at that age, it's enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe they cannot break away. They believe the rope can still hold them so they never even try to break free. These animals could at any time break free from their bonds but they believe they cannot and remain stuck right where they are. How many of us go through life hanging on to a belief that we cannot do something, simply because we failed at it once before?

I remember auditioning for the school choir! I loved singing and could often be found in front of a mirror with a hairbrush acting as a microphone. I practiced for hours for the audition and any nerves were wiped away by my excitement and the prospect of singing and creating harmony with the rest of the choir. What if I was picked out as a soloist? What if this led to my true calling to be the 'next big thing' in the music industry? Those questions were answered very quickly when I was rejected without reason. I'd sung barely a few lines when I was stopped and dismissed. To this day, I shy away from karaoke night due to a belief that my singing could clear the bar very rapidly!

How many of us go through life staying close to what is safe and familiar? Like the baby elephants, we too get used to staying close to what is safe and familiar. We get stuck in the shallow end of the pool and never swim further to explore the wonders of a coral reef. Just for a moment, stop and think about what's bad about those things that you do every single day? That's right! It becomes boring, monotonous and tedious. You become complacent with the way things are, losing your edge and becoming lazy.

Many people prefer to stay in the safety and predictability of the comfort zone. Their life is not brilliant, but it's not bad! If I were to ask you, right now, 'How are things going in your life?' how would you respond? And how are things going in your relationships and what about business?' What would you say? When I ask these questions in our seminars, people usually say 'OK, fine, it could be better', 'I mustn't complain' or 'fair to middling' whatever that means! Could it be better? Could YOU be better? Of course it could, and of course you could. So what's stopping you? You can dream about having more money, being in a better relationship, changing careers, buying a new car, but just thinking and dreaming about it doesn't get it, does it?!

Just for a moment, imagine a big TV screen or a small portable TV screen? Which grabs your attention the most? That's right! The big one!



Just for a moment

Most people only do something when they hit a brick wall, when they hit rock bottom, and when the problems and challenges seem to be projected onto the BIG screen. This often results in a massive wake up call and most people's goal setting or New Year resolutions are around getting away from feeling bad and stuck in their rut. They start off well. They're motivated to get away from the bad feelings so they take massive action and before too long they start to see some changes. As the situation improves, they gradually move back into their comfort zone. As if by magic, the motivation disappears, the action disappears to next to nothing and they return to the safety of the comfort zone. The majority of people live their entire lives in the comfort zone. Their life is not awful and it's not brilliant but it's not bad. That's a shame – what a waste!

If your life can be brilliant, why don't more people take action and do something about it? Every year thousands of people across the globe attend courses and buy books on goal setting, goal getting and personal development and achievement. Yet they never reach their true potential or put into practise the tools and techniques that they have learnt because they simply go back to the way they've always done things. They go back to the comfort zone and wonder why their life is not quite the way they imagined when they were younger. No doubt most of them will settle for second best and get caught in the comfort zone and in complacency.



Just for a moment fast forward your life in one year's time, five years' time, ten years' time, 20 or 30 years' time when it's not turned out quite the way you imagined. Will you be regretting the things you've done or regretting the things that you didn't do? Because if you keep doing what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got!

The human potential is to grow! Babies don't come with a manual. You only have to look at young children as they learn to walk, talk, read and write by watching others. And they ask a lot of questions! Questions to help them learn and grow, and take massive leaps forward!

As we get older, we are still learning and growing but we tend to get stuck in our habits and patterns of behaviour which can make it harder to step out of the comfort zone. ...unless we really have to!

What about buying a new mobile phone? How many of you stick with the same brand so you can skip reading the instruction manual and save the embarrassment of cutting off important calls just because you can't figure out how your new phone works? Do any of you remember sitting behind a computer screen for the first time? While I was an excellent touch typist I only learnt to use a computer because I had to. Before

that, I just used to ask my friend to open up a blank page for me, then I'd type in everything I'd need to and he would have to save and close the document for me! It was only when he left that I succumbed to pressure to learn desktop publishing...and it was easier than I thought!

Ultimately, we will never be truly happy unless we are growing. Growth equals life. Look around you: on this planet, everything that is alive is either growing or dying. The growth zone is where we can go to learn, innovate, experiment and try unfamiliar things and the farther we venture into the growth zone, the greater the potential and possibilities there are for learning.

So what's it like when you first move into the growth zone?

I've lived in the Middle East for over sixteen years now and yet I still vividly remember my first day in Dubai. It was the middle of July and the first thing that hit me as I stepped off the plane and onto the sizzling tarmac was the incredible heat and humidity. Before then, I thought 'hot' was the Spanish Costa Brava in July! I was excited to be in a completely different part of the world with different sights, sounds and smells, yet anxious and curious at the same time. I also remember being surprised to find the sea temperature akin to a warm bath – really! I knew no one, and was about to start a completely new role and a new life in Sharjah. In fact, I had never even heard of Sharjah before being offered the position of Entertainment Manager at a resort hotel. Would I make new friends? Would I be homesick? Would I be able to handle my new role and responsibilities? Would I be able to settle in to a new environment? Would other people like me? And would I be able to get a decent cup of tea?!

Do you recall when you were first learning to write? It was difficult to hold a pencil let alone draw a straight line on a piece of paper. Over time, and with practice, that experience became a habit and now you can write easily and effortlessly without thinking!

If you want to get back in touch with this experience again, if you're right handed, just try writing your name with your left hand. And if you're left handed, try writing with your right hand! It will probably look like a strange alien scrawl and it will feel very strange!



**Give
this a go!**

Do you remember your first driving lesson? I'd just turned seventeen, the legal age for driving in the UK, and even though my instructor was nicknamed 'Miserable Mitchell,' nothing could dampen my spirits. I was so excited that I could hardly wait to get into the car. There I was, safety belt buckled and in the driver's seat. First, the instructor told me to put both hands on the steering wheel. Next he told me to look down so I could see three foot pedals on the car floor under the steering wheel. 'Hmmm,' I thought, 'three pedals and I only have 2 feet,' and then he proceeded to show me the hand brake, the indicator, the gear stick, the wing mirror and side mirrors, the brake, and turn the key in the ignition... 'And don't forget to ease your foot off the brake and press gently on the accelerator,' he growled as I crunched the gears – the first of many times! Suddenly, I was into information overload...and waaay out of my comfort zone. There were times I thought I would never learn to drive a car. I was confused with all this new information. The famous hypnotherapist, Milton Erickson, once said that confusion always precedes enlightenment. And think about it, whenever you have experienced a major breakthrough in your life, did you experience confusion beforehand? Everyone has. So confusion's a good thing because it means that you are learning and changing. With time, practice...and patience, I went on to pass my driving test first time around!

In order to grow, we need to spend time beyond the borders of our comfort zone. It can feel uneasy, risky, sometimes scary, exciting and different. We have to get used to the sense of newness, the feeling of adventurousness and the initial discomfort. That's because there's not

much growth in the comfort zone and not much comfort in the growth zone!

It's all about choice!

Tunnelling & Digging Deeper

Wendy was very happy, and very good in her area training role with a well-known international hotel group. She was very much in her comfort zone! She knew all the staff by name, had organised her office just the way she liked it and was used to the hustle and bustle of working within a hotel. Wendy spoke to me and said, 'To be honest, I also like the security of a regular job, monthly salary (although not good), my apartment, the travelling and the people.' We had invited her to a brainstorming brunch to discuss joining our team. It had been talked about for a long time, but she was always too busy at the hotel with new projects and new initiatives. The questions going around her head were 'Should I leave a safe job?' 'What do I really want to do next?'

She continued, 'When my new boss called me in for a chat I had no idea that he was about to rock my world and tip it over! He told me there and then that my Area role no longer existed. My jaw dropped and for a rare moment, I couldn't think of a thing to say. I had hit a brick wall and felt numb and shocked that he wanted me to take a lesser position and become merely the Hotel Training Manager. How could this be happening to me?'

'I was upset. Angry. Hurt. Tearful. Disappointed. Horrified and stunned!'

'Everything I knew, respected and loved about working for the organization had suddenly changed overnight! I talked to a few key people and shared my disappointment and anger. Did he not realise what a key role mine was? Had he not thought this through properly? Who will communicate with the area and the other general managers? Who will develop new training managers and attend the regional

meetings? How could I not be needed? All these questions were going around in my head, but as the shock wore off, I realised that I really was about to lose my job. My role within the group was now redundant and I would have to move on and out of my comfort zone. Let them miss me, I thought indignantly!

'I resisted the change at first. The way I did this was to agree to stay for a couple of months to finish projects I had started and prepare handovers of my champion roles. I tried to keep some order and routine, but each day it got harder to go to work until the point where I didn't want to be there anymore! I was ready to leave my comfort zone. It was a relief to leave!'

It's natural for people to resist change. The main reason we resist change is because all change involves something coming to an end. And with all endings we experience some sort of loss. Even baby eagles have to be pushed out of the nest in order to experience the joy of soaring to even greater heights!

Wendy continued, 'There were still so many questions to be answered. I had got so used to my current lifestyle and routine. Would I be able to earn enough? And where would I live? What did I really want to do? I started digging deeper into what was really important to me in my work and career.'

'As more and more people began to hear about my situation, the more supported I felt. It was as if the universe opened up to answer all my questions and guide me towards opportunities that had been there all the time. So I stopped going to the hotel. I even enjoyed not going to work. I liked working within a different environment. Sure, I missed some of the people, but not the work, not the job and not those long, boring meetings and company politics. I was ready for something new!'

'It's been six months now and I've earned more money in that time than I would in a year at the hotel. It's not just about the money though. I look back and laugh as I now realise that what seemed like a barrier was actually an opportunity which has led me to be much happier and a lot more 'me' than I have ever been!'

Breaking Through

For Justine, the comfort zone was what she called her charmed life: married with three beautiful children, a successful, well paid job, flashy sports car, designer clothes, unlimited expenses, a gardener and housemaid, as well as exotic holidays! 'But beneath it all I was miserable and had been for several years. I was doing my best to stay in denial. Jumping ship after 25 years of married life and at this stage in my life was not a pleasant prospect. I tried everything I could to fix my misery – more clothes, expensive therapies, and another holiday - but nothing seemed to work. Something kept nagging at me that there was more to life than a cold, indifferent marriage and material trappings. What had I done in this life of which I could be proud? Where was the love in my life? What did I really want? I could think of nothing to satisfy the critic within. If I died tomorrow I would be missed by no one and forgotten by all. I felt like crying a river of tears. It wasn't fame and fortune I wanted. No! It was something less tangible but I knew I wasn't happy at all.'

'My journey to self-healing began around seven years ago, triggered by panic attacks, inertia when not working and a general malaise that affected my mood and will to live. Mid-life crisis hit me with full force and I could no longer ignore the signals from my body. I felt fat, silted up, physically and energetically, and totally depressed emotionally. I could no longer hold together the false impression of a healthy, successful and vivacious human being.'

'In my quest to improve my deteriorating physical, mental and emotional state I decided to do a complete detox from the inside out. After a brief stay in a health farm, I put myself on a strict vegetarian diet and cut out all liquids except water. The weight began to drop off at a steady 1 kilo a week. Within 9 months I had lost about 28 kilos. I remember saying to myself at the time 'This is Justine's diet for life!' My friends and family could not believe how different I looked and I was secretly delighted with my new body. However, I knew that it was not just about my body image. I wanted to remove all the stress in my life as well and I knew that included my high powered and well paid job. To the shock and dismay

of my employers, I resigned. I had been plotting it for some time, but it was a huge leap of faith for me. First of all I would no longer have an independent income. Something I had always prided myself on. I had always valued my independence and hated asking anyone for money. I also liked the freedom of buying whatever I needed and looking good, which all costs money. Secondly, I would lose my status symbol and the one thing in my life that gave me respect. Last of all, I would have no excuse for spending time away from my family and would have to face my demons. My job was, after all, a huge diversion. A brick wall to the real issues I was avoiding in my life. That was the scariest thing of all – facing my demons.'

'I had no intention of returning to work, so the huge amount of free time I now had allowed me to indulge myself. I wanted to get in touch with myself and my emotions. I learned meditation and alternative therapies. I read copiously about self improvement and the mind-body-soul connection. I started a journal and wrote poetry. I was on a journey of self-realisation. I took myself out into the wilderness for about five years and re-discovered parts of me I always knew existed but had deliberately submerged. This was often painful and scary, but also liberating. During this period I became more of a recluse and I came to the conclusion that my marriage was doomed. I realised that to stay in the relationship was a sentence of death. We were both on a different journey and I needed to get started with mine.'

'I agonised over my decision to leave, worrying about the effect it would have on my children, the anger it might incur in my husband and the alienation of my friends. Last but not least, I worried about my ability to look after myself. I was never a greedy person, but I liked a respectable lifestyle and wasn't sure if I had the ability or the energy at the age of 47 to make a decent life for myself on my own.'

'After a few false starts – I tried to leave and then changed my mind, rushing back to what was safe and familiar, back to my comfort zone - I finally reached a level of despair that was far deeper than the fear of losing my children or material comforts. I woke up one morning and cried

an ocean. I cried for what I had become, I cried for what I had denied myself, I cried for my family and I knew that even if I lost everything, I had to leave. Once I had made the decision, once I had surrendered to my truth, once I had decided what was really important to me, once I had faced my fear, my life opened up around me. I am not saying it was easy, but the huge pressure of living a lie, being someone I could no longer be, was lifted. It was a breakthrough and I was truly on my way to self realisation.'

Climbing Over

In Sarah's case, life was one big party and she loved it that way. 'My life was great... and then suddenly it wasn't. After a routine check-up at the doctors, I found myself in agony. Despite painkillers and rest, the pain in my back got progressively worse. I couldn't work, so I kept going back to the doctor who kept increasing the painkillers and exploring what it wasn't. I struggled to walk. Making a cup of tea was a real effort. Feeding myself reduced me to tears and shopping wasn't possible as I couldn't carry anything.'

'I lost my job, and had to move back to Cornwall to be looked after by my grandmother. I kept going to the doctor but all they could do was to eliminate what wasn't wrong with me. Appointments became the highlight of my week. A laparoscopy told me that my reproductive system was fine. A specialist told me that I didn't have IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) and a physiotherapist kept trying different treatments. I cried a lot. The pain was unbelievable and I went from hurting to agony and back again and I remember looking at all the boxes of painkillers and thinking that if I took them all then I wouldn't have to face another day of agony. Being assessed to qualify for incapacity benefit was humiliating, particularly since I had never experienced being unemployed, and to add further distress, I lost my apartment and was left with a huge debt of negative equity. The future did not look bright and I was firmly stuck behind a wall.'

'I didn't give up, kept looking at other options and eventually a light at the end of the tunnel appeared seven months later in the form of a chiropractor recommended by a friend of a friend. It's sometimes strange how the right people appear in your life at the right time. Looking at my x-rays, he could clearly see damage to my lower spine, while I cried with relief as he prescribed a series of treatments. I had intensive adjustments, wore a support belt, couldn't sit down for months, did gentle exercises and still took painkillers when I really had to. The summer was spent lying on the beach not being allowed to swim but watching others enjoying themselves. I decided to speed the recovery process along by focusing on what I could do and consequently spent 2 months making sugar flowers for a wedding cake whilst lying on the floor. I finished a patchwork quilt I had started as a child and I also learned to type. I attended a counselling course (and realised that we all have our issues!) along with an NVQ course on IT and twice a week I drove to St Austell to develop my NVQ Assessor qualification in catering. I couldn't cook anymore, but I could teach.'

'Two years later I qualified as an NVQ Assessor and began looking for work and was offered a job in London, training hotel receptionists on Front Desk Systems. I took it, learned it, excelled in it and was subsequently offered a posting overseas. I grabbed the opportunity and have never regretted it. In fact, if I hadn't spent two years of my life horizontal, I wouldn't be where I am and who I am today. Things happen for a reason and although it took years for me to discover what the reason was, I am glad it happened.'

“If your fascination with what you already have precludes you from creating what you don't have, you're likely to end up as an accident on the highway to the future. So strike a balance between continuity and innovation. You can't have one without the other; both are essential.”

Ken Blanchard, *Mission Possible*

I'm often asked what brought me to live in the Middle East. Well, I decided to step out of my comfort zone, take massive action and change everything about my life!

I was 19 and he was seven years older than me, and extremely good looking! He came from a completely different background and when he told me he lived in a mobile home, I had a vision of a caravan in the middle of a field! At that time I lived in a huge house with my parents and I remember he later told me it was a daunting prospect walking up the long and impressive driveway to pick me up on our first date! We clubbed, partied, went off to Dorset on the weekends and since I had had few boyfriends before that time, I had no reference points of what to expect. In fact, looking back, I probably didn't appreciate all the little things he did do to make me feel special. It didn't matter because by then, I was totally in love with him. I adored him and set him up high on a pedestal. About a year into the relationship, he told me he was taking a year off work and travelling around Europe with a friend. My initial disappointment turned to delight when his friend dropped out and he asked me to go with him instead and what an amazing adventure it turned out to be! After six months of planning, we left Dover on May 15th 1980 and set sail for Jersey, to begin a two-year adventure around Europe with only £600 each in our pockets, a small Fiat 127 packed to the brim, and a tent. My mother was horrified at the prospect and thought me ill-equipped for life in a tent. Secretly she predicted I would be back within two weeks! Instead, I loved it! I loved the freedom to go where we wanted, whenever we wanted and I loved him. We were best friends and passionate lovers! This was probably one of the most incredible times of my life. New places to see, people to meet and all with the person you want to be with! In the UK, jealousy had often got the better of me and to the detriment of our relationship, but there was no need for me to be jealous now as we were together 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I was in heaven!

Two years later, with a huge box of photos and a ton of memories that are with me to this day as souvenirs from this road trip, we finally returned to England. We each found suitable employment and a place to rent

together. Another year passed and we bought a small house and that's when complacency set in! One night he came back late and admitted that he'd slept with someone else. I was devastated and asked him to leave immediately. In my model of the world, what he had done was unacceptable behaviour. In hindsight, I should have taken some responsibility for the situation and used it as an opportunity to talk and reconnect. I regretted this decision many times, as we continued to see each other for quite a number of years after but he would never move back in. It was always a volatile, rollercoaster-of-a-ride relationship and it's only on looking back I can appreciate the closeness and passion we shared and that I spent many subsequent years seeking in others. It was just after Christmas 1988, I was 28 years old having grown up through my 20's within this relationship, and again, my intuition instinctively knew he was seeing someone else. Although we had broken up before, something inside me also told me that it was different this time. That this was it. It's hard to put into words how devastatedhow broken.....how my world just disintegrated and fell apart....totally....and completely. Physically and emotionally I felt that my heart had been beaten, bruised and ripped apart. I cried. And cried. And cried. And cried even more. Months later things were pretty much the same and I was still crying. I kept going. Going to work. Going to dance classes. Going through the motions. It was as if I was on autopilot. But at home.....I just cried! The wall was around me and it was a very dark place indeed! Every day, it just got darker and the wall got higher. It felt like I'd been to the top of the mountain and been given a glimpse of paradise and then had it snatched away. And then I was forever trying to get back to the top again.

There comes a time when you have to make a decision. A decision is an opportunity to exercise your options and choices. And you have to make a choice: to stay within the confines of the wall; find a way through or climb over and move on! I decided to climb over and move on.

I started meditation with a group called the Brahma Kumaris. I would get up at 5.30am (friends will be shocked as I'm not known as a morning person!) and drive 45 minutes come rain, frost or shine to meditate with them in the morning. Then I would drive back home before the morning

traffic to feed my cats, get ready and go to work. These were some of the kindest, purist people I have ever met. They never tried to pry or question my motives for attending their group. They just allowed me to be part of their community. It was like a safe haven for a time and it gave me a glimpse of light through the wall and that was when the wall started to crack!

It was also at that time that I decided this was really an opportunity to reinvent myself. I was noticing certain patterns of behaviour (and my mother had often said I was too bossy.....I prefer to call it assertive!) that often led me into trouble and confrontation with others. I started to look for opportunities overseas. I contacted everyone I knew overseas. There were auditions and job applications abroad and I remember asking my mother what else I could do after I mailed off yet another application form. I was feeling frustrated. I'd made a decision and wanted something to happen. Right now! She wisely told me that if I was absolutely sure that I'd done everything I could, that if I had left no stone unturned and taken as much action as possible, then I just had to wait for the universe to respond. And it did! Two opportunities appeared at the same time - one was in the Canary Islands, and the other one in Sharjah. At the time, I'd never even heard of Sharjah, part of the United Arab Emirates. Looking it up on the map, I decided there and then that if I didn't like it, I could always return home. And so a new journey of learning and discovery began!



"Until one is committed there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back.....always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth - the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans; that the moment one commits oneself, providence moves too.

All sorts of things occur to help one that would otherwise never have occurred. A whole stream of events issued from the decision, raising in one's favour all manner of unforeseen

incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way.

Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now."

Goethe



Decision Time

What are the walls that you are facing? What are the barriers blocking your way forward right now? And more importantly, are you ready to go on a journey of learning and discovery?

It's in the moments of our decisions that our destiny is made!

Only one potential successor approached the door and gave it a thorough examination. She tapped it and noticed its width and depth, pushing here and prodding there. Finally, she made a decision. She took a deep breath in.....and out, centred herself and then pulled gently on the door. Lo and behold, it swung open easily and effortlessly.

The ruler addressed the group. 'Success in life depends on certain key things. First, rely on all of your senses to fully understand the reality of what is going on around you. Second, I caution you against false assumption about what is possible and what is not possible. Third, be willing to make bold decisions and fourth, have the courage to act with boldness, courage and conviction. And finally, put your powers into action!

Is that wall really an obstacle or is it really a chance for you to learn and grow and learn how to deal with life in a more effective way? Or is it a challenge that makes reaching the goal that much more valuable

– because you had to strive for it? Or is it a lesson? The choice is yours. You can take all the things that looked like obstacles and turn them into something useful and valuable to you.

Successful people make choices of how to approach the brick wall – tunnelling through, breaking through or climbing over – because they know that on the other side lies a garden of opportunity and the wall is an opportunity that helps you tap into your creativity and find new ways forward to get what you really want in life.

So what is the difference between successful people and unsuccessful people? *Successful people take action!*

Action causes a reaction but you've got to take action first! One of my friends is a fitness enthusiast. He subscribes to all the fitness magazines. In fact there is a pile of them stacked neatly in a corner of his lounge. He also has membership at an exclusive health club; however, the most exercise he gets is probably from lifting the health and fitness magazines from one corner of the lounge to the other. While he extols the virtues of a healthy lifestyle, talks about it, thinks about it and even reads about it, he does nothing! The first step is to make a decision and then back that decision up with massive action.

Just for a moment, close your eyes and imagine that you've completed the exercises in this book and have broken through your wall. How would you be feeling? What would you be seeing? How would you look? What opportunities would you have created for yourself and others? Would you be feeling happy, elated, excited or relieved? What sounds would you be hearing and what would other people be saying to you?



Just for a moment

The golden opportunity you are seeking is in yourself. It is not in your environment, it is not in luck or chance, or the help of others, it is in

yourself alone. To get what you want, you change who you are, and you change who you are by simply changing the way you think and act!

So imagine it's your birthday and you can wish for whatever you want. What do you wish for?

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'One ship sails east and another sails west
'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale
Which determines the way they go.
As the winds of the sea are the ways of fate,
As we voyage along through life,
'Tis the act of the soul that determines the goal,
And not the calm or the strife.'

Source unknown

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