



Clarify, Simplify & Execute



LIBBY GILL



Mastering the new  
rules of risk-taking  
in work and life

# You Unstuck

"A great combination of common sense coaching and scientific research. I highly recommend it."

-Susan Jeffers, Ph.D., author of *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway*® and *Embracing Uncertainty*

You Unstuck



# The Work Book



# ABOUT LIBBY GILL

**Brand strategist, business coach and bestselling author,** Libby Gill has guided executives, entrepreneurs and organizations to define and articulate their unique value to successfully position themselves in a competitive marketplace. Her clients have included Nike, Disney, Oracle, Microsoft, Kellogg's, Comcast, PayPal, Safeway, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, Avery Dennison and many more.

A former Hollywood studio executive, Libby spent fifteen years heading public relations and corporate communications at entertainment giants Sony, Universal and Turner Broadcasting. She was also the PR/branding brain behind the launch of the Dr. Phil Show.

An internationally renowned speaker and author, Libby has shared her success strategies on the Today Show, CNN, NPR, Oprah & Friends, Fox News, the CBS Early Show, and in Time Magazine, Business Week, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, O Magazine, Good Housekeeping, Self and many other media outlets.

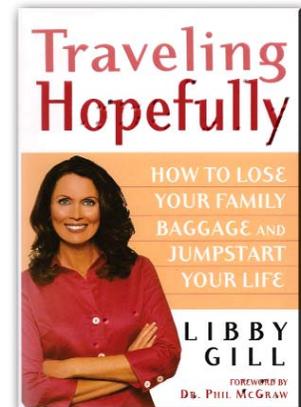
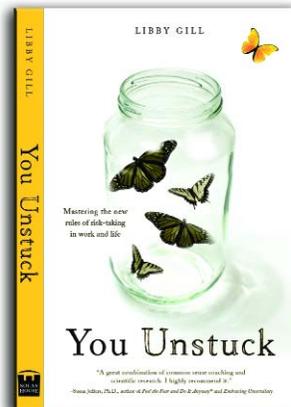
Libby's book, *YOU UNSTUCK: Mastering the New Rules of Risk-taking in Work and Life*, which is the basis for this workbook, won an Independent Publishers Award. *You Unstuck* has been acclaimed by business luminaries including Zappos.com CEO Tony Hsieh and Dr. Ken Blanchard. States Blanchard, "In *YOU UNSTUCK*, Libby Gill will help you understand the way you look at risk-taking so you can start moving past your fears and excuses toward success. This book is a powerful tool if you know you need to change but don't know how. Read *YOU UNSTUCK* and get your life on track."

The proud mother of two fabulous sons, Libby lives in Los Angeles, California. A member of the Author's Guild, she is an avid reader, hiker and gardener.

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# WELCOME TO THE JOURNEY OF CHANGE...

**Everyone gets stuck. It's part of being human. Maybe you're stuck in your career, finances, health or relationships. Or maybe life dealt you a bad blow like a layoff or divorce.**

**The real question is this: *What are you going to do about it?***

In the following pages, I want to share some tools that I've developed over the past decade to help you create change in your life. Although you can use this workbook by itself, to get the best results, I recommend that you use it in conjunction with my book *You Unstuck*. You'll find even more exercises, quizzes and scientific research there to guide you on your journey. But if the *You Unstuck Workbook* is your starting point, that's okay too. Putting pen to paper and actually taking the time to think deeply about where you are right now is the beginning of meaningful change. So what are you waiting for?

## **FIRST, LET'S SEE IF ANY OF THESE DESCRIBE YOU:**

- ✦ You know what changes you need to make but you're not making them.
- ✦ You know what you want but you have no idea how to get there.
- ✦ When you think about change, you feel totally overwhelmed.
- ✦ Your life is basically good, but there's one area that you keep avoiding.
- ✦ You are living other people's ideas about who you are and ignoring your own.
- ✦ You are being held back by the same thing that held you back last year, five years ago, maybe your entire life.
- ✦ You've lost a job, a loved one or a nest egg and it's got you totally shut down.
- ✦ You're willing to change everything about your life except the one thing you know will make the real difference.
- ✦ You're embarrassed to tell one more person what you want to do with your life.
- ✦ No one wants to listen to you talk about what you want because they don't believe you'll ever change.
- ✦ You feel like you're missing out on something and if you don't go after it now, you may regret it forever.
- ✦ You're scared to go after the one thing you really want, because if you don't get it what does that say about you?
- ✦ You're afraid that if you fail, it means that you are a failure.
- ✦ You're afraid if you succeed, no one will love you anymore.

You may already have an idea of some of the things in your life that need to change in order for you to become unstuck. Maybe you want a new job. Maybe you want to increase your sales or take on more responsibilities. Or maybe you're tired of feeling like your finances are out of control. Whatever you need to change, identifying exactly what is contributing to your "stuck state" is a great first step. I encourage you to take the time and energy to reflect on the following exercises.

***Answer as honestly and thoroughly as you can.  
After all, it's your future at stake!***

**Success  
consists of  
going from  
failure to failure  
without loss  
of enthusiasm.**

**—Winston Churchill**

# SUCCESS & SATISFACTION SELF-ASSESSMENT

**Awareness is usually the first step** in making any kind of significant personal or professional change. Use this tool to assess the satisfaction you're currently feeling in ten key life areas, so you'll know where to focus your life change efforts.

Think about each section and as objectively and honestly as you can, rate your satisfaction level in each area on a scale of 1-10, 1 being least satisfied and 10 being most satisfied. If a category isn't especially meaningful to you, factor that into your score. For example if you're single and happy about it, there's no need to give yourself a low rating on Significant Other. You're not scoring yourself on whether or not you have a significant other, just if you're satisfied with what you have.

*As you tackle the test, don't be surprised if some of your ratings are pretty low (*that's the stuck part*), though most people find they have a mix of both high and low scores.*

*You might even be pleasantly surprised to realize that you've got a lot more going for you than you thought.*

<b>CAREER</b>	<b>FINANCES</b>	<b>HEALTH &amp; SELF-CARE</b>	<b>RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY</b>	<b>RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS</b>
<b>SIGNIFICANT OTHER</b>	<b>SPIRITUALITY</b>	<b>PERSONAL GROWTH</b>	<b>FUN &amp; RECREATION</b>	<b>YOUR SPACE HOME/OFFICE</b>

Notes \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

# WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

After you've completed the ratings, enter the corresponding score and ranking from lowest to highest number below. Assigning self-determined ratings can be very eye-opening because after you've given yourself a 2 out of a possible 10 on Health it's pretty hard to pretend that everything is OK with your self-care. Conversely, even though you may grouse about your over-involved parents and sibling, when you give Family a 9, it's obvious that this part of your life is very satisfying for you.

Now, think of one action for each area that you can take within the next 24 hours that would take that score up a level. Write the action down next to the category.

Career		Immediate Action
Finances		Immediate Action
Heath & Self-Care		Immediate Action
Purpose/Spirituality		Immediate Action
Personal Growth		Immediate Action
Fun & Recreation		Immediate Action
Relationship with Significant Other		Immediate Action
Relationships with Family		Immediate Action
Relationships with Friends		Immediate Action
Living/Office Space		Immediate Action

Finally, pick the lowest number (or the area you want to focus on first) and complete that action step you indicated within one day. Forward momentum needs to take place immediately. This is important because if you don't take that step now, the odds increase that you'll continue to put it off indefinitely.

After taking that first step, look at the other scores you gave. Take one action every day until you've brought each score up a level. Soon you will realize that you are increasing your life satisfaction--**and you are doing it by just taking one step at a time.**

**There is no higher god than truth.**

—Mahatma Gandhi

# CREATING YOUR CLARIFY, SIMPLIFY & EXECUTE MODEL

You may already know what needs to change in your life and what steps you need to take to help you reach your goals. More often than not it's your belief system that is holding you back from change. So it only makes sense that to get closer to your goals, you need to change the belief that is holding your back. The best way to do that is to define your goals, figure out the best way to get there and then take action.

Think that's easier said than done? Not if you follow my Clarify, Simplify & Execute Model. It's a method of taking a goal and turning it into an actionable item.

**Get comfortable, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and let go of stress.** Continue deep breathing until you feel relaxed and ready to begin.

✦ Create a mental image of the life you want to live. Make sure you consider both the professional and personal aspects, including your work, home, family, relationships, spiritual life, and so on. Meditate on your vision until it takes shape and comes into focus in your mind's eye. If negative thoughts arise (*"Who do you think you are?" "What makes you think you can have all that?"*) acknowledge and release them without giving them too much energy.

✦ Imagine all the "pathways" to reaching your goal. If it helps, see the pathways literally, as a road, train track or street map connecting you to your vision. Consider specific actions you can take, feelings you want to hold foremost in your mind and ways that other people can support your journey.

✦ Next focus on how you'll maintain the mental energy and motivation to keep you moving toward your goal. Reflect on what's worked to keep you motivated toward past successes, including keeping a journal, joining a "mastermind team," or working with a coach.

**After you've done the exercise above a couple of times, write down your initial CSE plan by filling in the following:**

**CLARIFY THE VISION** ~ *My vision for my best possible personal and professional life includes:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SIMPLIFY THE MISSION** ~ *The most direct route to realizing my vision is:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**EXECUTE YOUR PLAN** ~ *I will execute my plan by doing the following:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Practice the visioning exercise for a few minutes every day, when you wake up in the morning and as you drift off to sleep. *Allow your vision to become increasingly focused and clear.*

# CHALLENGING THE IMMEDIATE NEGATIVE RESPONSE

**Determine some risks** you'll try in order to challenge any INR tendencies you may have.

Consider some of the following:

✦ Think of some positive risks that sound appealing or enriching. Include different types of risks representing physical, social, and intellectual events or activities. For example, physical risks might be rock-climbing, surfing or skydiving. Social risks include taking a dance class, throwing a party, or attending a singles event. Intellectual risk-taking might entail enrolling in a foreign language or academic class, joining Toastmasters, or submitting an article to your local paper or alumni newsletter.

✦ If fear is holding you back-and isn't that what always holds us back?-ask yourself these challenge questions: What's the worst that could happen? How likely is that worst-case scenario? How well could you handle it? If you're afraid someone will laugh at you on the dance floor, it may be somewhat likely, but will it really matter? Probably not. Say you're considering skydiving, but you're scared. Death is definitely a fate worse than someone laughing at your foxtrot, but it's not very likely. The odds that you'll die while skydiving are actually pretty slim-27 people die each year out of 3.2 million dives. Can you handle that?

Finally, add some accountability factors. When, where, and with whom will you commit to taking this risk? Put it on your calendar!

When you stop and analyze them, you quickly discover that fears are often irrational, yet we often let them create an Immediate Negative Response. Challenge INR tendencies and start saying "yes" to adventure-even if your first inclination is to say "no." Soon you'll discover that you won't have to challenge that INR habit because it's no longer there.

**Each of us has our own perspective on risk. While some of us cringe at the thought of stepping out of our comfort zone, others relish the exhilaration and possibility that comes with trying something new.**

**But all of us, risk-averse or risk-takers, sometimes back away from taking the bold risks that can propel our lives forward. I call that gut-level reaction the Immediate Negative Response, or INR, - fear's first line of defense.**

**The INR is that knee-jerk resistance to change that most of us have experienced at one time or another, which causes us to freeze, retreat or somehow disengage from the impending risk, even if the results might be delightful or, at least, painless.**

**It's a habit that could be stopping you from enjoying life to the fullest. By giving into the INR you are robbing yourself of opportunities for growth, connection and a whole lot of fun. By looking for ways to counter the INR you can add new layers of richness to your life. It's time to start embracing the possibility.**

Notes

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# HOW DEEP IS YOUR RUT?

People get stuck in varying degrees. Likely, the rut you are stuck in is bigger or smaller than the rut your colleagues are stuck in. In fact, most people fall into one of three categories when it comes to being stuck: Short-Term Setback, Situational Stuckness, and Dangerously Deep Rut.

Yet despite the fact that everyone experiences being stuck differently, most of us feel similar emotions toward being in that state. When you are stuck, emotions can range from discomfort to hopelessness. When was the last time you gave any thought to how you experience your stuck state? Do your feelings about being stuck spill over to other areas of your life?

In order to climb out of your rut you need to know how deep it is. Perhaps you lost a client or didn't quite hit the mark on that last presentation you made. The way you feel afterward could simply be signs of a short-term setback and will likely pass if you recognize it. Maybe you're experiencing a situational setback because of cutbacks or layoffs and you've had to take on the work of a position that was eliminated. Or, maybe you are in such a deep rut that you can't even put your finger on what you are feeling. The following exercise will help you identify what you are feeling about your stuck state.

## DETERMINE THE DEPTH OF YOUR RUT

To get a sense of how you experience your stuck state, take a look at the following statements. Rate each one on a 1-10 scale, 1 meaning you strongly disagree with the statement, all the way up to 10 meaning you strongly agree with that statement. Pay attention to your emotions while answering the questions. Allow any feelings of awkwardness, shame, or resistance to surface.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I feel hopeless about being able to change my situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Every time I come up with what seems like a great idea to change my life, my next thought is "That won't work," or "Why bother?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ I find myself unable to think clearly or problem solve.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My confidence seems to be continually eroding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rather than feel optimistic about life I often have a sinking feeling.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like I'm all alone in dealing with my stuck state.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm ashamed of myself for not having "my act together."
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have increasing difficulty in dealing with people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It seems like nothing in my life has turned out the "right" way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I feel physically weak and sometimes sense that my energy is draining away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My work has become more boring or frustrating to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I feel desperate, as if something terrible might happen if I don't change things soon.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm scared to tell anyone what I'm experiencing for fear they won't understand or they'll think less of me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I feel envious of other people's success or happiness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm afraid to take action because I might do the wrong thing.

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

Now add up your scores and see where you fall on the continuum of short-term setback to hopelessly stuck in a deep rut. If you're surprised or disheartened at your score, remember that awareness is the first step toward positive change.

**Nothing in life  
is to be feared.  
It is only to be  
understood.**

—Marie Curie

# THE PROSPECT OF RISK ISN'T ALWAYS BAD

15 - 49

## SHORT-TERM SETBACK

Although you may feel frustrated, stressed or anxious about your current situation, what you're experiencing is probably a normal and temporary lull. Check in with friends or colleagues in ANALOGOUS situations and see if they're experiencing similar feelings. Consider (but don't assume) that your circumstance could be brought on by external factors. Practice the risk-taking skills in You Unstuck and start taking action before your short-term setback becomes a long-term pattern.

50 - 100

## SITUATIONALLY STUCK

Whether your situation is self-imposed or was dumped on you by the outside world, you've got to take steps now to break the cycle. You may have already tried taking a risk or two, but if your circumstances haven't changed, then it's time for more aggressive action. If you don't push past fear and resistance, you run the risk of allowing what was once situation-specific to sabotage other areas of your life.

101 - 150

## DANGEROUSLY DEEP RUT

You've been stuck in a deep rut for so long that you've probably lost faith in your own ability to climb out, yet you're too ashamed of being perceived as a failure to confide in those closest to you. It's critical that you go back to the 3-step Clarify, Simplify & Execute process so that you clarify your vision, simplify your mission and execute your plan for getting unstuck. As you focus on having the life you want rather than the hard work ahead, you'll shift perspective and regain confidence. Suspend all destructive self-talk and keep reading with an open mind and willing spirit, doing the exercises as you go.

## DO YOU RUN FROM OR TOWARD A RISK?

The prospect of risk isn't always bad. With risk comes potential failure, that's true, but it also has just as much potential for success. The opportunity that risk presents is something not everyone sees. Lots of people just focus on the potential for failure that risk carries and they don't realize that they have an equal opportunity to succeed. That's because success or failure are outcomes that depend on what you do after you accept the risk.

Whether someone eyes risk in that perspective depends a lot on his or her tendency toward risk-avoidance or risk-advancement behaviors. Someone who has a tendency toward risk-avoidance will obviously try to get out of taking that risk while someone who exhibits risk-advancement behaviors embraces that risk fueled by the desire to move forward.

# ASSESSING YOUR RISK-AVOIDANCE OR RISK-ADVANCEMENT BEHAVIORS

Now let's look at your **Advance & Avoid behaviors** to get an indication of where your default switch is set on the continuum. **Take the following quiz to find out.**

- 1.** **You are asked to serve as head of a project team at work. Although you're familiar with the subject area, this is a more visible leadership role than you've had in the past. You:**
  - a. Beg off, citing your busy work schedule.
  - b. Panic and quickly find a behind-the-scenes mentor to coach you.
  - c. Step into the role with pride, confident you'll find any help you need along the way.
- 2.** **You're attracted to someone you see at your local coffee shop. You:**
  - a. Start a conversation, hoping it will lead somewhere.
  - b. Ask the person to join you over coffee.
  - c. Hope the person will approach you.
- 3.** **You're twenty pounds overweight and fear that you might be turning into a couch/computer potato. You're finally ready to start that fitness plan you've been thinking about for ages. You:**
  - a. Go take a nap and hope the urge passes.
  - b. Take a brisk walk around the block to get your body moving.
  - c. Enlist your family in a fitness and nutrition program.
- 4.** **Your finances are a mess. Even though you're making decent money, you're late paying your bills, you haven't bothered looking into retirement funds and your credit rating is not what it should be. You:**
  - a. Ask your CPA uncle for some basic financial advice.
  - b. Hire a financial planner or business manager to help you clean up your financial act.
  - c. Decide to look into it after the next tax season.
- 5.** **After twenty years of doing the same kind of work at three different companies, you're longing for a new career. You:**
  - a. Start thinking about going back to school
  - b. Tell your boss you'd like to take on some new challenges
  - c. Make a mental list of all the great things about your job
- 6.** **Even though you love your spouse, you have to admit that your sex life has gotten pretty dull. You know you need to shake things up, but you don't know how your partner will perceive your newfound friskiness. You:**
  - a. Purchase some lingerie (for yourself or your spouse-or hey, shake it up and buy lingerie for both of you!) and spring the surprise one night
  - b. Know your spouse will freak, so you keep your thoughts to yourself
  - c. Tell your spouse you've had it with your lousy sex life and he/she better figure out how to jazz it up

**Become a  
possibilitarian.**

—Norman  
Vincent Peale

# ASSESSING YOUR RISK-AVOIDANCE OR RISK-ADVANCEMENT BEHAVIORS - CONT.

**7.** You've had a serious argument with a family member that you fear could become a life time rift. You and everyone you've obsessively told the story to over the past year agree that it's the other person's fault. You:

- a. Decide you'll break the silence when hell freezes over
- b. Ask a sibling to broker a family meeting
- c. Swallow your pride and make a conciliatory phone call

**8.** You've just gotten your youngest daughter off to college and are beginning to enjoy your empty nest when your 28-year-old son returns home after losing his job. From the looks of his luggage (and dirty laundry) it appears that he may be planning to stay for a long time. You:

- a. Lay down the house rules, including how long the welcome mat will be out
- b. Let your spouse deal with it
- c. Welcome him with open arms, after all, he is your son

**9.** Since childhood you've harbored a dream about your adventure of a lifetime - making a movie, writing a book, moving to a foreign country, or sailing around the world. Even though you know it sounds crazy to most people, to you it sounds like heaven. You:

- a. Confide in the one person who's sure to bring you back to your senses
- b. Jump in and give it a shot
- c. Talk to anyone you can find who's had a similar adventure

**10.** You've wanted to have Lasik surgery to improve your vision for years, but ever since your general practitioner said he wouldn't give it to his cat, you've been scared off. Finally you decide to:

- a. Do some serious medical research and come to your own conclusion
- b. Make peace with wearing glasses and contact lenses
- c. Quit listening to other people's opinions and schedule the surgery

**11.** You've been with your significant other for more than two years. You're ready to discuss marriage, but afraid if you bring it up, you might jeopardize the relationship. So you:

- a. Complain to everyone who will listen about your non-committal partner.
- b. Break off the relationship because it's not going anywhere.
- c. Summon up the courage for a frank conversation.

**12.** You're an engineer and eager to attend a conference for restaurateurs, your dream career. You're nervous about being a "fish out of water," as possibly the only person at the conference not a chef or restaurant owner. You:

- a. Pass on the conference, you're just going to feel like an idiot if you go.
- b. Go for it, deciding to make the experience a bold adventure.
- c. Determine that you'll go to the conference but not speak to anyone if you don't have to.

**Sometimes I wish I had a terrible childhood, so that at least I'd have an excuse.**

—Jimmy Fallon

# ASSESSING YOUR RISK-AVOIDANCE OR RISK-ADVANCEMENT BEHAVIORS - CONT.

**Here's how you score your Avoid & Advance Assessment.**

Add up the scores for your responses as indicated below and see where you fit in the following categories.

1.	A is 2 points;	B is 6 points;	C is 10 points	_____
2.	A is 6 points;	B is 10 points;	C is 2 points	_____
3.	A is 2 points;	B is 6 points;	C is 10 points	_____
4.	A is 6 points;	B is 10 points;	C is 2 points	_____
5.	A is 6 points;	B is 10 points;	C is 2 points	_____
6.	A is 10 points;	B is 6 points;	C is 2 points	_____
7.	A is 2 points;	B is 6 points;	C is 10 points	_____
8.	A is 10 points;	B is 6 points;	C is 2 points	_____
9.	A is 2 points;	B is 10 points;	C is 6 points	_____
10.	A is 10 points;	B is 2 points;	C is 6 points	_____
11.	A is 6 points;	B is 2 points;	C is 10 points	_____
12.	A is 2 points;	B is 10 points;	C is 6 points	_____

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## 24-58

### RISKOPHOBE

If you fall into this category, you are a die-hard Riskophobe and you're going to need some soul-searching and an action plan to get you past your sticking points.

You're prone to take the easy way out, backing off when things start getting tough. But if you ever want to move toward a bigger vision of what is possible, you've got to break your risk-avoidance pattern before it becomes your lifelong modus operandi.

## 59-86

### CAUTIOUSLY COURAGEOUS

While you may not always feel confident, you usually don't let it stop you. Risk-averse by nature, you're well aware that if you want to accomplish big dreams you've got to take bold action. More like the steady tortoise than the sprinting hare, you will get exactly where you want to go, albeit more slowly than some, if you continue to stay the course.

## 87-120

### ADVENTUROUS ADVANCER

Just like everyone else, you experience fear and doubt, but you barely give it a passing glance as you zoom around life's game board toward Go. You know the risks and you understand the potential pitfalls of acting on a bold vision, but you've made the conscious decision to create a rich and purposeful life. Bravo! Now go share your zest for adventure with others-the world is waiting for more people like you.

### Risk-Taker's Tip

Within reason, fear is a good thing. It alerts us to danger and helps us respond appropriately. But when our fears and anxieties stop us from taking life-enhancing risks, it's time to identify and manage those fears.

## At some point in our lives

we've all experienced that moment of being so totally engrossed in an activity that time seems to stand still, we lose any sense of self-consciousness, we gain a sense of potential control and the experience becomes self-rewarding. It's called the "flow theory" and it's a powerful experience if you can find your flow.

For instance, the last time you wrote that spot-on mid-year report for your department and it felt like the report wrote itself - that was being in the flow. Delivering a flawless speech to your organization and not having nerves or self-doubt and realizing that not only are you enjoying yourself but your audience is listening intently and laughing at all your jokes - that's being in the flow.

We've all been there at some point - probably without even trying. So the key is to learn out how to find your flow. This exercise will show you how.

## FINDING YOUR FLOW

**Read the following exercise all the way through or have someone read it as you close your eyes and follow the meditation.**

Find a comfortable spot where you won't be disturbed for ten or fifteen minutes. Either lying down or sitting with your feet flat on the floor, close your eyes and begin to focus on your breathing. If your mind wanders, don't worry about it. Just continually return your focus to your breathing. When you begin to feel relaxed and centered, picture a time when you felt completely focused on a pleasurable task or event. (If you can't remember a moment like that, imagine one that appeals to you.)

You might be engaged in sports, hiking in the woods, playing a game with your children, or involved in an interesting work project. Whatever it is, let it begin to unfold.

As you let the scene play out, see yourself as if you were watching a movie screen in your mind's eye. Allow yourself to use all your senses. What do you see in your vision? What are you hearing around you? Are there any pleasant smells wafting from your dream kitchen or coming from your seashore stroll? Are your hands engaged in some activity? What are you touching, feeling, chopping, hauling or painting?

Give yourself plenty of time to recreate this image. Bring it to a natural conclusion and, when you're ready, open your eyes in real life and return to the present. Describe your vision and what it meant to you.

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How did it feel to be so fully engaged that time stood still?  
What was the project in which you were involved? Did you feel confident?  
Competent? Is it something you still do regularly? If not, why not?

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**It's stasis  
that kills you  
in the end,  
not ambition.**

—Bono

# IS YOUR STRESS KEEPING YOU STUCK?

**Whether you embrace risk** or cringe at the very thought of stepping out of your comfort zone, one simple fact holds true; we were designed with an innate way of dealing with it. We have a built in fight or flight system. However, that system triggers stress. It was meant to, because stress can be a good thing. It's a protective mechanism that prompts the proper reactive response in your body. So when you have that tight deadline lingering, stress gives you that extra kick of adrenaline to get the job done.

The problem is that stress in large and consistent doses can be bad for you. What's more is that the amount of stress in your life can elevate without you even realizing it. In our society where we live with our trusty smartphone at our side and a feeling of obligation to be accessible 24/7 it doesn't take long for stress to multiply in our lives. I call this stress creep and it's important to realize when the stress levels are increasing in your life before they become overwhelming.

Revisit this "in the flow" feeling often and find the time to regularly indulge in what I call uni-tasking, that is, that luxurious feeling of focusing on just one completely absorbing activity. You'll be amazed how good it feels to re-discover the nearly lost art of deep focus.

## TEST YOUR STRESS CREEP

Ask yourself the following questions to get a quick snapshot to see if your stress is under control. Answer the following questions with the scores: 4= always, 3= often, 2 = sometimes and 1 = never.

- ✦ Are you drowning in deadlines? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Has your stress increased over the past year? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Are you juggling multiple responsibilities? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Have you lost or gained more than 10 pounds in the past year? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Is achievement important to you? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Are you able to relax, nap, or enjoy down time? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Do you ever feel guilty that you prioritize work over family or friends? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Are you impatient or irritable? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Have you taken a vacation of more than two to three days in the past year? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Do your loved ones ever beg you to slow down? \_\_\_\_\_

Now, add your scores and see how your stress levels stack up.

Total \_\_\_\_\_

**The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes.**

—William James

# IS YOUR STRESS KEEPING YOU STUCK? - CONT.

10-20

## TOO LAID BACK

While it's good to be laid back in moderation, you've got so little stress in your life you're probably not achieving much. You may also lack excitement or stimulation. Could it be that you've traded stress for stuck?

21-30

## UNDER CONTROL

You've got a good handle on managing your stress, juggling your responsibilities and living a well-balanced life. Continue to keep your stress under control while you start getting more aggressive about getting unstuck. You can handle it!

31-40

## OVER THE TOP

You are waaay too stressed. Get it under control or you may be heading for some serious repercussions. Start some de-stressing tactics immediately and consider scheduling a full physical. How are you going to get unstuck when you're recovering from a stroke or heart attack?

### Risk-Taker's Tip

Although everyone experiences being stuck differently, most of us feel emotions ranging from discomfort to hopelessness. Learning to become comfortable with feeling uncomfortable is a critical part of the process.

### RISK, RELAX, REPEAT

As you begin climbing the risk-taking ladder, you may feel negative thoughts like fear or anxiety creeping up. It's normal, but when those thoughts come you've got to stop them in their tracks. Silently holler "STOP" in your head or use some other slogan to interrupt the negative thought pattern before it begins.

Another way of doing this is to combine relaxation with risk-taking. By practicing deep breathing techniques along with experimenting with different types of exercises you'll find what works for you in order to clear the mind of negative thoughts. One of the most effective of these is visualization. By visualizing your ideal outcome you are better able to control stress and the negative thoughts that come with it.

By turning these negatives into positives you will be on your way to getting unstuck. However these changes won't come immediately. Creating mental shifts will take time, but be persistent in not letting those negative thoughts take hold.

### Risk Reinforcement

Go back through the notes you've made so far. If necessary, catch up on any exercises you've missed. Spend some time thinking and writing about the underlying fear that's got you stuck. Ask yourself the best way for you to begin to move past it and start getting unstuck. After you've spent some time consciously working on the problem, change your environment by going outside for a walk, turning on a CD or doing some meditation. Prepare your brain for a aha moment and let it happen!

# VISUALIZING YOUR IDEAL OUTCOME

**Even if you don't consider** yourself a particularly “visual” person, human beings have an amazing ability to think about a challenge, imagine an ideal resolution, and then manifest that outcome (or something close to it) in reality. If your cynic alarm is starting to sound, there's really nothing terribly mystical about this process. It's simply the idea that form follows thought. Obviously, the idea of the airplane existed before the Wright brothers actually built the first successful one. Edison imagined the light bulb and, after multiple failures, made it a reality.

It's no different for you. By harnessing the power of your imagination, you can “see” a positive outcome for events such as landing a new job or becoming physically fit before that outcome actually exists. By giving your brain a mental dress rehearsal, you not only release anxiety but also put yourself on the pathway to success. If you've experienced this phenomenon of “energy following idea,” you'll know what I'm talking about. If not, I want you to add this valuable skill to your risk repertoire. Here's a good way to get started.

- ✦ Get in a comfortable position sitting or lying on the floor (or even at your desk). Close your eyes and begin taking slow, deep breaths. Feel the air go all the way down to the abdomen so you're not taking shallow chest breaths. As you exhale, imagine yourself breathing out any negative feelings. Concentrate on a word like anger, fear or exhaustion that sums up how you're feeling. Now, consciously breathe that word out of your system with each exhalation. Continue this for 3-5 minutes, allowing tension to drain away into the floor as your thoughts begin to slow down.

- ✦ Now imagine a scene that you'll picture in your mind, as though watching a mental movie. It could be something that you'll actually be facing that day, such as asking the boss for a leadership role on a project or signing on a new client.

- ✦ Take yourself through the scene, letting it play out as positively as you can imagine. Maybe it's the ultra-confident you pitching a client or closing a deal. Let the conversation or scenario unfold. Now, put some obstacles in your place. Maybe the client throws you a curve ball or shuts you out and you risk losing the deal. Or your boss isn't committing to meeting with you.

- ✦ Continue to work through the scenario, giving yourself plenty of time to really feel what it's like to be supremely confident and in control that you breeze through the challenge barely batting an eye. See the final outcome of the situation, whether it's you confidently and strategically getting your boss's attention or masterfully bringing the client around, sealing the deal and becoming the office hero.

- ✦ Bring the scene to a natural conclusion and anchor it with a word or phrase that sums up your feeling and your mission for the day. It could be power, energy, win, passion, strength, confidence, joy or calm.

- ✦ Take several more deep breaths, focusing deeply on your word during the inhalation. Continue this for 3-5 minutes until you feel energized and ready to take on the day. Open your eyes with a stretch and a smile.

When the scenario you imagined or something similar actually takes place (you'll be amazed how often this happens), allow yourself to relax into your pre-programmed response. Let the sense of calm control, power, or command take over and steer you toward the outcome you visualized. Don't be frustrated if this doesn't happen the first time (or every time). Just relax and have faith that by “seeing” the outcome you want, you greatly increase your odds of making it happen.

**Tension is  
who you think  
you should be.  
Relaxation is  
who you are.**  
—Chinese Proverb



# CREATING YOUR ESCALATING RISK HIERARCHY

## CLARIFY YOUR VISION

Start by going back to your Clarify, Simplify & Execute model and looking at your vision. How has it changed? Has it become more real and attainable? Does it have more detail now, more meat on the bones? Take a few minutes to see that crystal clear vision, whether that's you healthy and trim, you loving your new job, or you in a terrific new relationship. Close your eyes for a moment, try some deep breathing and bring that vision to life in your mind's eye.

## Simplify Your Mission

Next, let's move on to simplifying the mission by defining some clear action steps that you can take. Determine every single activity you can think of relating to your end goal. Don't worry about how small each step is, just keep chunking it down.

## Execute Your Plan

Now it's time to get started. Determine when you'll begin executing your plan, what accountability factors (such as a coach, calendared reminders, accountability partner, etc.) will keep you on track. Finally, determine some relaxation practices you can add to your plan to keep you calm and motivated, especially when your will power or energy is flagging. Now go!

**Here is an example of a plan** we created for Shirley, whose story I outlined in *You Unstuck*. She was a Seattle-based technology lawyer who'd grown so weary of courtroom combat that she'd begun to consider career alternatives for her post-fifty life.

## Shirley's CSE Model

- ✦ Clarify your vision: Determine a new life purpose.
- ✦ Simplify your mission: Find a new career that uses my legal skills but allows me to serve the community.
- ✦ Execute your plan: Launch job exploration in nonprofit and government arenas, with Libby serving as my accountability coach.

## Shirley's Relaxation Routine

- I start the day with a prayer of gratitude.
- Next, I run for at least an hour, more on weekends or when I'm training.
- Once a week, I take a yoga class and attend church.

## Shirley's Action Steps (in random order)

Explore other law firm jobs  
Explore careers in nonprofit  
Start dating  
Make new friends

Book a vacation  
Internal work to unlock new passion  
Explore government service career  
Schedule time for fun

**Action is  
eloquence.**

—*William Shakespeare*

# CREATING YOUR ESCALATING RISK HIERARCHY

Now, see how Shirley reprioritized her risk-taking activities so she could start with those that were less daunting to her. By starting with the low-risk risks and working your way up to the tougher ones, you build confidence and competence. Plus, you get a sense of mastery and success as you begin knocking off the easier tasks. Win-win!

## Shirley's Escalating Risk Hierarchy

- ✦ Book a vacation
- ✦ Make new friends
- ✦ Schedule time for fun
- ✦ Explore careers in nonprofit
- ✦ Explore government service career
- ✦ Start dating
- ✦ Explore other law firm jobs
- ✦ Internal work to unlock new passion

Using this plan as an example, take some time and write down your own plan. Remember, if it isn't written down it isn't a plan.

### MY CSE MODEL

Clarify your vision: \_\_\_\_\_  
Simplify your mission: \_\_\_\_\_  
Execute your plan: \_\_\_\_\_  
My Relaxation routine \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### My Action Steps (in random order)

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### My Escalating Risk Hierarchy Action Steps (from least anxiety-provoking to most)

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# MANAGE YOUR MONEY BY MANAGING YOUR MINDSET

**It may seem ironic** that one of the very reasons you are pursuing success in your career can also be the reason you are being held back but it's true. If money worries monopolize your time you can't be your best. Likewise, if you are overly concerned with making money it can be to the detriment of relationships around you, which is also counterproductive.

Developing a money mindset doesn't simply mean making money nor does it mean shunning it in a search for more meaning in life. It means learning how your fears, hopes, and assumptions result in your pattern of behavior toward money.

You need to get unstuck with your money by challenging your limiting assumptions and breaking the patterns of past habits. Take this test to help you understand your mindset toward money.

## IDENTIFYING YOUR MONEY MINDSET

It's time to do some writing. If you become anxious or fearful - and you might-stop and do some deep breathing. You may even want to close your eyes and repeat a calming word or phrase like "Calm," or "I can handle this," or whatever gives you enough comfort to continue. My job is not to make you feel better, though eventually you will. My job is to wake you up and get you to challenge your beliefs and change your behaviors, starting with awareness. Because if you're stuck in a negative Money Mindset, better to get a wake-up call right now, rather than when the bank forecloses on your house or takes away your credit cards.

Go back to the Self-Assessment at the beginning of this workbook. What was your rating in Finances? Let's take that assessment a little deeper now. Rate yourself on a 1-5 scale (1 being don't agree, 5 being completely agree) about your satisfaction and comfort level in these aspects of Money Mindset:

I have access to information and help regarding finances: \_\_\_\_\_  
I feel good about what I earn: \_\_\_\_\_  
I am a good saver: \_\_\_\_\_  
I am where I should be with regard to my net worth: \_\_\_\_\_  
I am comfortable asking for what I think I'm worth at work: \_\_\_\_\_

Identify any negative limiting assumptions that may be driving your financial behavior today. This is crucial, so give yourself plenty of time to nail down a succinct statement that captures what is truly holding you back. It could be that you don't deserve anything nice; that you are resentful and angry with your partner; that you feel alone and unloved; or that you're convinced you have nothing of worth to offer the world.

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**Only those who  
will risk going too  
far can possibly  
find out how far  
one can go.**

—T.S. Eliot

# MANAGE YOUR MONEY BY MANAGING YOUR MINDSET - CONT.

**Describe three self-defeating actions** that are a direct result of your limiting assumption. For example, maybe you're furious with your husband for working all the time and ignoring you, so you get even by spending. Or maybe you have a limiting assumption that you don't deserve nice things, so you live off of ramen noodles when you could afford steak and good wine. Maybe you've been so obsessed with chasing the big dream, that you don't pay your bills on time or repay loans from friends and family. Think it through then write it down.

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Awareness is the first step to getting you unstuck, so no matter how painful or scary, make sure to do the above exercise. If need be, share your answers with someone close to you for additional perspective.

Once you identify your Money Mindset it's time to become a Money Manager by learning to manage money by changing your money habits. As you are forming a new vision for your financial future, make sure you continue to focus on the things that give you joy. Be modest in your expectations, at least initially, and be realistic about how your life may or may not change as you change your money behaviors. This will save you from the mistaken belief that getting your financial act together will result in the ultimate happiness.

## **BECOMING A MONEY MANAGER**

Even if money can't buy you happiness, getting your negative habits under control can go a long way in reducing stress and increasing your sense of accomplishment and self-worth. Now that you're beginning to get a picture of your overall Money Mindset, including how your money memories have affected you and where your limiting assumptions are keeping you stuck in destructive behavior, it's time to start working externally to create more awareness of your habits.

Starting today, I want you to keep all of your receipts - from a pack of gum to a new car - placing them each day in a special box or file that you've designated your Money Manager. You should also get a notebook (those speckled composition books are inexpensive and easy to carry) that will go with you everywhere. If you make a purchase (like a newspaper) for which you don't receive a receipt, write it down in your notebook at the time.

**You can do this exercise on paper, or check online for one of the free apps that will allow you to track income and expenses.**

**Live to the  
point of tears.**  
—*Albert Camus*

# MANAGE YOUR MONEY BY MANAGING YOUR MINDSET - CONT.

**For three full weeks**, at the end of each day I want you to write every expenditure in your notebook. Include the date, item, and price and any brief notes that qualify the purchase in case you want to remember it later.

**For example:**

## **WEEK ONE: Tracking Your Money**

Expenditures for January 25

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>\$2.50</b>
<b>Picture frame</b>	<b>\$36.27 (Mom's birthday present)</b>
<b>Lunch w/Wendy</b>	<b>\$12.93</b>
<b>Movie w/kids</b>	<b>\$32.00 (ordered tickets online, paid surcharge)</b>
<b>Phone bill</b>	<b>\$103.14</b>

Enter everything on the right-hand pages, keeping the left-hand pages blank for now. Just this step alone can be incredibly eye-opening (and often scary) in showing you where your money really goes, as opposed to what you've been telling yourself. Next, each day go through all the expenditures and ask yourself this question: Was this something I needed or wanted? In other words, was this a bill I was obligated to pay for services rendered? For example, the phone bill is something you use and must pay for, so that's a **NEED**. The newspaper is something you **WANT**. You may tell yourself it's crucial for you to stay on top of the news, and maybe it is, but you can go online, listen to the radio, watch TV or even go to the local library to get your news. Lunch is obviously a **WANT**, even though you need to eat, you don't have to eat out at a restaurant.

When it comes to spending on your kids, the same criteria apply. They don't need a movie and you certainly don't need to pay extra to buy tickets online. Now, you may **WANT** to take your kids to a movie and be able to afford a movie and, in that case, there's absolutely nothing wrong with enjoying yourself and entertaining your children. This is only to make you aware of the vast difference between needs and wants, which people who are stuck in negative financial patterns can easily disregard.

## **WEEK TWO: Recognizing Your Worth**

In Week Two, you'll continue your Money Manager activities by tracking your spending, but now you'll also begin tracking your income. Use the left-facing blank pages in your notebook to record all money coming in on a daily basis, as you keep recording money going out on the opposite page. Of course, you may only get paid twice a month, so you might only have one recording for this week or next. That's O.K., just make sure to include paychecks, but also any other forms of payment, like repayment on a loan, a rebate back from a purchase, a gift from your sister, or any other money that comes in. Not only will this allow you to see what's coming in, you'll begin to get a direct correlation between income and outflow, vitally important if you're going to build a healthy wealth future.

**Service to others  
is the rent  
you pay for your  
room here on Earth.**

*—Muhammad Ali*

# MANAGE YOUR MONEY BY MANAGING YOUR MINDSET - CONT.

## WEEK THREE: Settling Old Scores

In Week Three, I want you to think about any money that is owed to you. If you need to invoice a client, do it. If you need to collect for a dinner bill you agreed to split with a friend, ask her to pay up. If you need to press a customer to make good on a bill past due, start pressing. This is you sending a signal to the world, and yourself, that you're no longer willing to under-price yourself, get stiffed on your services, or pick up the tab when it's not appropriate. Watch yourself though, this can be so liberating that the pendulum can swing a little too far in your new direction and you can get overly aggressive. (Trust me, it happens.) So remain cool, calm and collected while you're collecting.

The pendulum swings both ways, of course, and if you're the one who's been shorting people, that needs to change this week. For example, if you've been so busy chasing the Big Dream that you're shirking your responsibilities on your day job, that stops now. Though there's nothing wrong with having aspirations, there's something very wrong with acting on them on someone else's dime. It's time for you to honor your commitments to others just as you're teaching people they need to honor commitments to you. If you're overspending, living on credit or writing checks on money you don't yet have, that behavior also needs to stop.

Give yourself the full three weeks to observe money coming in and going out, request payment on old debts, and stop debting and other destructive behaviors. Even if this is only the tip of the economic iceberg for you, doing the exercises above fully and completely will help you understand your own behavior. Taking action will also alleviate stress, giving you the courage to formulate your plan for moving forward. As always go back to the Clarify, Simplify & Execute model and start expanding your vision for a financially free future.

### To recap the route to becoming a successful money manager:

- Week One: Start tracking your money.
- Week Two: Recognize your financial worth.
- Week Three: Settle old economic scores.

### Fill in your first three week's Money Manager activities:

#### Week One:

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#### Week Two:

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#### Week Three:

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## LOSE THE LIMITING ASSUMPTION, LOSE THE WEIGHT

### Sometimes great success

comes at the expense of your health. As you work through these exercises and begin to see improvement in your life don't forget to spend an equal amount of time on your health. Being physically fit is just as important to your career health as being mentally fit. One of the most telling signs that you aren't at your physical peak is being overweight. Although the reasons may be complex, I suggest you again start by looking at any Limiting Assumptions that are providing you with a convenient excuse not to change. Try the following exercise and see what it brings up for you.

There's enormous release (not to mention relief) in writing things down and then learning to let them go. If you can clearly identify your own belief about what's keeping you stuck, you've got a better shot at changing it. You've got to be willing to do the work, however. I can give you the tools but you've got to put them in action.

Starting right now I want to end your negative self-talk, some of which may have been broadcasting inside your brain for years, by using the thought - stopping technique or the pity party kitchen timer -which allows you to wallow in your self-pity for a timed period and when the timer goes off you let it all go. Whatever it takes to tone down that negative noise that you've been feeding yourself along with the donuts or pasta Alfredo.

**Now let's start turning that assumption around. Ask yourself the following Challenge Questions:**

- ◆ What is my Limiting Assumption? \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ Is my Limiting Assumption accurate? \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ Do I have evidence of its being true? \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ Does holding onto this assumption help me in any way? \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ Would it be healthier for me if I let go of this assumption or reframed it in some way?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**For example,** maybe your limiting assumption is "I've tried everything and I just can't lose weight." Ask yourself if that's really accurate. Have you tried working with a nutritionist, joining a weight support group, talking to your doctor, or starting a fitness program through your job or local hospital? Have I made my point? I could probably give you dozens of suggestions, but it still wouldn't be enough if you continue to cling to the belief that you've "tried everything."

**If you said,** “I don’t have time to make nutritious meals,” let’s just take a minute to see if you’ve got any hard evidence to back up your assertion. You probably don’t leave the house without taking a shower or brushing your teeth, so obviously you can find the time for things that are important. And even if you are busy (like most of us) it doesn’t take much longer to prepare a nutritious meal to bring for lunch than it does to drive through your local fast food outlet or dig into that plate of doughnuts on the conference room table. Maybe it’s time to reframe your limiting assumption to something more like, “It’s important to make the time to cook healthy meals so I spend a couple of hours on Sunday afternoon listening to music and cooking my new favorite dishes, then freezing them for handy meals throughout the week.”

What will you be doing differently from now on?

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## WORK OUT YOUR WORKOUT

Now it’s time for you to write out your ideal (for now) workout program. At the moment, I’m not even asking you for a long-term commitment. What I want you to do is commit to your new program for three weeks. You can do almost anything for three weeks, right?

If resistance is rearing its unmotivated head and you’re tempted to say, “I don’t have time to work out,” start going to bed a half-hour earlier so you can get up and exercise each morning. If your excuse is money, as in “I can’t afford a trainer,” try, “I’m going to start walking with my neighbor” or “I’ll check out a fitness video at the library.” Here’s what I want you to do next:

Pick a time of day that you can consistently work out for approximately thirty minutes at least five days a week for the next three weeks. If you have to move a couple of workouts around to accommodate your schedule, that’s O.K., My goal is that you find the best time for your fitness program and then stick to it as much as you can. Now, put those times on your calendar, PDA, bulletin board or whatever rules your schedule.

**Meals are just one aspect** of getting fit obviously. Another part of the equation is fitting in time to get physical. Sure, breaking a sweat for half an hour five times a week probably isn’t high on your list of things you want to do, but having a workout routine can have important benefits to your health, to keeping you trim and to keeping your mind alert at work. In fact, consider fitting in a brisk lunchtime walk to break up the stress of the day. You’ll find that you’ll return refreshed and often with a new perspective on that project you are working on.

# YOUR HEALTH UNSTUCK - CONT.

**Decide on your primary form of exercise**, including walking, jogging, running, biking, or swimming. If you'll have more fun and be more accountable in a class, try cardio kickboxing, aerobics or spinning. Commit to that exercise for at least four of your five workouts.

**Your Primary Form of Exercise:**

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**Now, decide** what will be your secondary form of exercise. You can pick from the list above or add yoga, dance, tennis, weights, or anything else that will make you work to the point that you're sweating. Remember if you've never exercised before or you're changing your program, you will want to check with your doctor first, especially if you've had any injuries or illnesses.

**Your Secondary Form of Exercise:**

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**Decide how you will hold yourself accountable.** Designate someone you can check in with after each workout for the next three weeks, including a spouse, friend, or exercise partner. Write out your three-week plan below, including what you'll be doing, where you'll be doing it, when you'll be starting, and, who, if anyone (trainer, class instructor, friend) will be joining you:

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**Check back in three weeks and see how closely you stuck to your self-prescribed program.**

Did you follow through? If so, what made it work for you? (Keep doing that and add to it!) If not, what held you back? How can you remedy that moving forward? Be prepared that this can be very much a two steps forward, one step back practice. So just be patient with yourself and get back on track if you backslide!

**Have you ever noticed** how some companies just seem to excel at the customer experience? Have you ever wondered why? It's because they are driven by purpose. Having a defined purpose goes a long way toward creating a cohesive workforce which will ultimately deliver a great customer experience. However, it does more than just that. Having purpose also creates a powerful corporate culture based on that unifying purpose.

All great companies have this quality. Think Google, Apple or Zappos. They have infamous corporate cultures and provide products and services that are innovative, sought after and top-notch. Whether you run a company or your own career, at the core should be a desire to provide value to others. This value becomes your WOW factor and when applied to your career you create a WOW career. In order to put this in motion you need to identify the core values for your WOW career.

**When your physical self is fit your mental fitness has an edge. That's important when you are shaping your career path or developing a way to set your business apart. Companies -or individuals for that matter-that have that certain pizzazz get it from running on all cylinders enabling them to fine tune their purpose.**

## CREATING CORE VALUES FOR YOUR WOW CAREER

Though you may work for a company that has a mission or value statement of its own, that's not what we're looking for here. I want you to create core values for you as a professional. Not just for a job or a company, but for your very own wow career.

**Take a moment to reflect on your work life, looking back at some high and low points you've experienced over the years.**

**Describe three high points of your past or current work life:**

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**Describe three of the low points of your professional life:**

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*Now imagine wiping the slate clean of those low points and focusing on a career that includes just the highs - all the things you love to do.*

**Take a few deep breaths** and conjure up a vision of the career you really crave. A career that puts your skills, passions, strengths, temperament, and personality to work. In a moment, I want you to list all the things that you would need to flourish in your career, including the right balance of people, projects and environment. But first here's an example. This is my list, by the way, and you're welcome to borrow from it if it speaks to you:

- ✦ **Be authentic, real and respectful**
- ✦ **Give great value to our customers**
- ✦ **Help people learn and grow**
- ✦ **Collaborate and communicate as a team**
- ✦ **Take risks and innovate**
- ✦ **Be open to change and growth**
- ✦ **Build robust relationships**
- ✦ **Be creative and resourceful**
- ✦ **Laugh and have fun**
- ✦ **Care for friends, family and community**

**Now, write out your core values list**, which should include about 6-10 items. Make sure you've got enough on your list to cover your career bases, but not so much that you lose focus or end up trying to be all things to all people.

- ✦ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ \_\_\_\_\_
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**Take a day or two to revise your list, making sure that it accurately reflects the core values that are truly authentic to you. You may want to ask for feedback from trusted friends or colleagues. When it feels right to you, post it somewhere where you can reflect upon it often!**

**A big part of financial freedom is having your heart and mind free from worry about the what-ifs of life.**

*—Suze Orman*









## Where Will You Be One Year From Today?

At this point if you've been diligently completing the exercises and honestly searching within yourself for the answers then you've built a repertoire of risk-taking tools to help you create the next level of your personal and professional life. Now it's time to take all that information off the page and apply it to the real world.

## LOOKING BACK AT YOUR LIFE ONE YEAR FROM NOW

**Let's talk** about the Merlin Factor. The Merlin Factor refers to the Harvard Business School study that found that corporations that created radical visions for their future, even without a plan to get there, had much greater success at realizing their visions.

**Expand your vision** Merlin-style by projecting yourself one year into the future from today. You can start by giving some thought to the following questions about your one-year-from-now life.

### ★ **What is your workday like?**

Are you in the same job or something new? Do you find it fulfilling? What projects, people or events do you see on your calendar?

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### ★ **What's going on at home?**

How is the quality (and quantity) of your relationships? Do you have a loving partner? Are you happily single? What's your family life like? Do you take time for important connections?

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### ★ **How's your fitness?**

Are you healthy, fit, fat, feeling energized, or constantly exhausted? Do you choose nutritious foods and take care of your body? Do you get plenty of exercise and sleep? Are you on top of regular medical and dental check-ups? Taking preventative measures to keep yourself healthy?

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### ★ **What's your financial situation?**

Are you finally through with all the money worries of the past and on your way to an abundant future? Or are you still working to get unstuck? Do you have the support you need as you move toward your money goals?

**If we're  
headed in the  
right direction,  
all we have to do  
is keep on walking.**  
—*Buddhist Proverb*

# LOOKING BACK AT YOUR LIFE - CONT.

Now that I've posed some questions to get you thinking, here's where the heavy lifting comes in. After you read the rest of this paragraph, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and meditate on a delightful image of your future for a few minutes. It may be you sitting in your fabulous new office, at the dinner table enjoying a meal and conversation with your family, or lobbing a tennis ball on your local court. Maybe it's a combination of all those things.

Keep that future image in mind as you project yourself forward, exactly one year from today. Fill out the following exercise from that perspective by looking back at all your accomplishments of the past year. Take your time as you write out your responses, relishing each answer and making it as vivid in your mind and heart as you possibly can.

**Today's date (one year from now) is \_\_\_\_\_.**

- ★ **I am so grateful for everything that I have accomplished in this past year to move from stuck to success. My accomplishments include:**

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- ★ **Getting unstuck has helped me accomplish (or move toward accomplishing) my life's true purpose, which is:**

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- ★ **Having been able to accomplish so much in the past year makes me feel:**

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- ★ **I learned that the limiting assumption(s) that was stopping me in the past was:**

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- ★ **Now I counter that limiting assumption by doing or saying this:**

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**I'd like to  
live as a poor man  
with lots of money.  
—Pablo Picasso**

# LOOKING FORWARD TO YOU UNSTUCK

✦ I feel fortunate to have met so many mentors, advisors, coaches and colleagues who have helped me get unstuck and on track. These include:

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✦ I was able to manage my stress this year by:

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✦ The specific risks I took to get unstuck and move closer to my vision include:

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✦ The measurable milestones I have reached along the way are:

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✦ I am so proud of getting myself unstuck, because:

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✦ My vision for the next year includes:

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✦ The most wonderful thing I have discovered about myself through the You Unstuck process is:

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My **ME UNSTUCK** mantra for the next year is:

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Never mistake  
motion for action.  
—Ernest Hemingway