

Yes! You Can Do This! Charting Your Way to Health, Wealth & Success

by

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Chapter 1: Terra Incognita—Your Old World versus Your New World

I was hanging onto the edge of the world. Salty water was pouring over me. I think I was holding on to a root or a piece of seaweed and as I looked to each side, the water rushing past me looked like Niagara Falls. I thought, I *knew* I was going to be swept off the edge of the earth, into the great abyss yawning under me, and die.

To my left I saw a great black sailing ship flying a pirate flag, its skull and crossbones fluttering in the ferocious wind, its ropes and sails being flung about. A cannon rolled forward as crew members dangled from the ropes and fell into the churning sea. The ship came to the same edge I was clinging to, and dipped; I could see below the waterline when the stern rose in the air, and amid the screams of the crew, the howling of the wind and the sound of breaking masts and boards, the ship fell into the dark void below.

Something big caught my eye on my right, but as I turned my head to see it, something enormous emerged from the water in front of me. All I could see was a huge

yellow eye surrounded by scales, scales that covered the gigantic head of some kind of sea monster, with fins that rose in peaks off its back. As it swam past me, it looked as long as a train. A school of strange fish, and even what seemed to be a mermaid, followed in its wake. By the time I focused on whatever was on my right, I realized it was another huge ship. This one looked more like an ocean liner, and it, too, was about to experience the same fate as the pirate ship had just moments ago.

Then, I saw *her*. I'd have known her anywhere; she was the most beautiful girl in fifth grade, and there she was, Betty Mosher, my secret love. Betty was wearing a white dress with puffy sleeves and a pink sash. With outstretched arms, desperation on her face, she called out my name, "Gary Art!" in that sweet little voice of hers. ("Gary Art" is my name in Texan.)

Her lips moved again, and she called out, "Gary Art, what is the answer?" But this time the voice wasn't hers. Now, I distinctly identified the voice of Miss Long, my fifth-grade World History teacher at Sudie L. Williams Elementary School in Dallas, Texas.

Suddenly I found myself back in my classroom, and three of the fingers on my right hand were still clutching on for dear life—to the inkwell on my desk—and my left hand gripped the top of the desk.

"Gary Art, please answer the question," Miss Long said.

The question? What question? Where were we? Where was I?

Then came that sinking-stomach feeling of *Here it comes again, I've been called on and I don't know the answer, and my reputation for being stupid is going to get another notch in it*. The feeling rushed over me as surely as those gallons of water had

moments ago while I was clinging for life on the edge of the world. Except the cause of this feeling was familiar: Thanks to my many “out of the classroom experiences,” I had the reputation for being stupid, and whenever I was called upon, I never knew the answer.

In spite of this familiar experience and its predictable outcome, a little spark of self-defense said, *Wait, I know this*. I’d always been intrigued by this place, but I never knew it had a name. I reminded myself I had just learned the name, and, using the “peg” system my uncle had taught me, I had placed a picture of this place on a “peg” in my mind; today this process would be called remembering by association. I rushed into my retrieval system of thoughts and memories to find the answer, not just for Miss Long, but also for my reputation as the stupid daydreamer who never got anything right. I knew I had just learned the answer to the question, and I truly believed I could find it. But I had to hurry; Miss Long was waiting.

I frantically started searching for that peg I had just created. The first thing I saw was Scarlet O’Hara, on her knees in the turnip patch, tears in her eyes and her hair askew. She straightened up, and with fists of dirt in her hands, she gestured toward the heavens and she swore something—

I had found it, or at least a part of it. I blurted, “Tara!”

Miss Long cocked her head slightly and had a ... well, she had a *go-ahead* look on her face.

Then I went searching for that second peg, and conjured up a picture of my aunt Effie May. She hated the name “Effie” and preferred to be called “May.” Aunt May was my favorite aunt. Not only was she a character who always had something fun and funny

to say, but she could sing, and she sounded exactly like Patsy Cline. She also looked like Patsy Cline: so much so, she was often stopped and asked if she was Patsy Cline. In response, she would adjust her sunglasses and put a finger to her lips in a *don't tell anyone* gesture. Then she'd say, "These sunglasses always make me—"

And that's when I blurted out the rest of the answer: "Incognito!" Then I repeated the answer, "Tara incognito!"

Close enough. With a look of utter bewilderment combined with praise and recognition, Miss Long said, "You're right."

Then she went on to repeat what she'd said earlier. "Terra incognita is that place on ancient maps where most explorers were afraid to go to make new discoveries. They were afraid because they thought the world was flat, so they'd either fall off the edge or be killed by sea monsters."

Then she looked at me with that oddly divided expression again, as if checking to make sure I'd actually been paying attention, and still in disbelief that I correctly answered the question though I'd had my familiar faraway look on my face. She must have been satisfied, so she said again, "Gary Art gave us the right answer."

For the first time in an exceedingly long time, I felt great about myself. I even thought it possible that my reputation as being "slow and stupid and out of it" might have a chance of changing. And things did get better. So much better, the sun broke through the clouds, and I could hear soft harp music and birds singing when I looked at the row of desks on my right and caught the eye of Betty Mosher, the prettiest girl in fifth grade ... who gave me the biggest, brightest, most approving smile before turning her attention

back to Miss Long.

I thought I had died and gone to heaven. Two near-death encounters in one day, and I survived both of them!

This experience helped me create my first formula for success. Here it is:

I was hanging on the edge of the world. Life asked me the question. I woke up with the answer. Having the answer and giving the answer, I became a success, and collected my reward.

That day, on some level, I realized that for the rest of my life to be a success, and to yield all I was hoping for, I'd have to keep coming up with answers and solutions—*answers and solutions I now believed were within my reach*. I also knew I was the dreamer type, easily distracted and with a wild imagination. I knew I'd have to discipline these traits if I was going to be a success.

As you read and process this book, I hope you'll feel the same way I did that day, as if you're having an adventure as you enter the uncharted and undiscovered possibilities that await you. I believe this area, this place, is where the discoveries, the riches, the treasures and the "loot" wait to be found. You can find these things, and then bring them back to your old world, to use as building materials for your new world and to create a new reputation for yourself.

Manifesting results has an impact on the "old you" *and* the "you" you are creating. There might be roadblocks, challenges, sweat and even a tear or two, yet I strongly believe that accepting the invitation and meeting the challenge will be worth every bit of effort and application.

Sparking the Beginner's Mind

The idea of beginning again can be challenging. That lazy part of us says, “Well, if you don’t like me the way I am why don’t you just go away?” But a new spark of *possibility of what can be next* says, “Yes, let’s go for it.” The new spark seems to know that it can light the way to new possibilities, and that things the way they are now are worn out. The new spark of creativity says, “We’ve done it before and we can do it again, only better. Let’s go!”

A great place to start is with a *beginner's mind*. Creating a beginner’s mind requires coming to any situation clear of all the preconceived ideas, concepts, techniques and methods that would prevent you from receiving the new experience and all it has to teach and bring out in you. One attitude that might limit your ability to absorb all the new information that awaits you is the “I already know this stuff” little voice that shares so freely from within. How many everyday things occur that are missed because we think we’ve seen it all, done it all, and been there for it all? How much more wonderful and adventurous could each day be if we practiced developing a sense of awe? What if you became excited and had an *expectation* of wonder and adventure? If you project this kind of aura, I expect others around you would give you their attention and be curious. At that point, you might be able to solicit their help and give yours, so everyone around you reaches their goals too.

My passion for this process of going from the familiar into the unknown with the spirit of an explorer is the motivation for creating this book. I’ve devoted my life to

teaching and living out this philosophy, and my journey has been an incredible one. On my own route to terra incognita, I encountered the privilege of being coached by many teachers and individuals who helped me further my understanding of how this process works. I've also encountered my share of "monsters" who I thought would eat me alive, but who actually turned out to be sources of some of my best learning experiences.

Likewise, I trust I've been an inspirational teacher and example to the many people who attended the Unity Church I founded and where I served for thirty-eight years.

In the chapters that follow, I've included many examples of what awakened individuals have done with their lives. While I consider myself an expert on this subject, I must emphasize that the results others have achieved might have *started* with a spark of inspiration from my passion, but they brought themselves to the desired results through their own determination and the hard work they did while using many of the steps I call "my map to terra incognita." Read on to discover what others have done using these principles. And as you read, perhaps you'll discover and uncover *your* "next greatest journey" through *your own* unknown, bring back a wealth of capabilities, and use them to expand and embellish your responsibilities, projects and dreams.

As you read this book, keep looking for those uncharted territories and new shores; you're bound to discover something new. Through these pages, I'll be with you every step, and our adventure will be awesome. Bon voyage!