

Focus Now! – How to Maximize the I Can Mindset Easy One-Minute Reminders for Success



A guide for Intention, Commitment, Action and Now
To achieve your goals

By

Susan L. Gilbert

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Focus Now

*How to Maximize the ‘I Can’ Mindset
Easy One-Minute Reminders for Success*

**A Guide for Intention, Commitment, Action and Now
to achieve your goals!**

By Susan L. Gilbert

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Susan writes ***You Can! Newsletter – Focus for Results*** a bi-weekly newsletter helping individuals and businesses stay focused on what matters. She is the author of numerous highly successful books, tapes and info-products. Sign up for this free resource at <http://www.susangilbert.com> and look for these additional tools:

- ***The Land of I Can, An Adventure in Life.*** A beautiful keepsake gift book for people of all ages.
- ***Choose your Focus, Change your Life – Goal Setting that matters.*** In this 192 page book, Susan has created Focus 4 techniques to help you in focus on the steps that will help you achieve any goal: financial success, business, time management, stress reduction, weight loss, you name it! Available, Fall 2003.
- ***Secrets of Success.*** Do you have what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur? In this home study course, Susan will define, coach and encourage you to success.
- ***How to be successful online.*** This tape steps you through how to set up your product with Amazon and market online.

Susan lives in San Diego with her two Yorkshire Terrier's, Sam and Spencer. Spencer accompanies Susan when she travels, and has his own website with tips for small dogs called <http://www.my-small-dog.com>



(Sam on the left

Spencer on the right)

Hello Focus Initiates ~

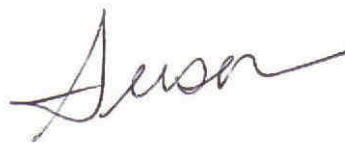
Welcome to an exciting journey into self-discovery!

What you are about to read are a series of articles with inspirations, quotes and affirmations that will guide you on your journey to creating the **mindset** of ‘I Can!’

Staying focused and on course with your goals will help you to **make money, save money, save time, avoid unnecessary effort and get more results** – the results that matter to **YOU**.

Combine this e-book with our tele-classes and home study courses to keep you focused and moving towards the goals of your choice. Remember, you choose what you create in your life. Let’s create together with intention and the knowledge that ‘you can’ have the lifestyle you desire.

With your success in mind,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan".

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Chapter 1

Using the 3-I's - Intention, Imagination and Intuition

Tools for Creating.....	Page 6
Managing Information Overload...	Page 9
The Link Between.....	Page 13

Chapter 2

Commitment

The Next Step.....	Page 18
Seeing is Believing - or is it?.....	Page 22

Chapter 3

Taking Action

Dreams, Wishes and Goals - oh my!..	Page 26
Time and Balance	Page 30

Chapter 4

The Gift of Now

Know thyself	Page 34
Focus Now.....	Page 38

Chapter 1

Using the 3-I's - Intention, Imagination and Intuition

TOOLS FOR CREATING

“Believe. Know that you can. The power is in the knowing.”
~ Page 40, The Land of I Can

Anyone who has repaired or built something knows that it's much easier when you have the right tool. We all have a toolbox that we have assembled on our journey through life. We choose what tools we will use as we design our lives. Some of these tools serve us well, get easier and easier to use over time, and become precious treasures. Others were needed at one time in life, which we have now outgrown the need for – yet, out of habit, we retrieve that tool and use it where it is no longer appropriate.

The first part of teaching ourselves to design our lives on purpose is by understanding how to use the best tools to create the space in front of our face. The second part is understanding that what comes to us presented itself from the place of what we believe to be true. Choosing what we desire in life and then using the tools to create it is a part of our evolution and in fact, we as individuals are the human physical aspect, or tool, for part of that evolution.

Many of us have desires that we pay attention to. Others of us choose not to pay attention, at least not yet. What is the difference between the two?

It's the difference between reaching into our toolbox of our thoughts and saying 'Yes!' to what we are presented with as we live our days, opens up many more things to say yes to. However when we continually say 'No', or add judgment to events and people, then that again presents us with the difference between being open to life, or saying no. It's the difference between being thankful for what enters our life, because we have designed it to be there. Or by grumbling and complaining for that which we have created, which is constricting, or limiting our possibilities. What would make us choose the later, which stops any creative flow? Not paying attention to the information flowing our way from everywhere as to how things REALLY work!

Have you been paying attention to what you are constantly being shown? And if you are, are you then taking the next step and honoring without question what is showing up for you?

The first step is always to state a clear intention about what you are wanting for your life.

The second step is to pay attention to what shows up.

Something will show up.

The third and most important step is to Honor what you have been shown. Follow through on the idea, the inspiration, which often times we dismiss thinking that the next step has to show up in a physical event or person. The next step can very well show up in an event or person, but just as real and valid are the ideas and inspirations that gently flow into our mind.

This is how we all walk on water. The rocks come up before us to step on, and in our new understanding, we know beforehand that the rocks will show. This is not about having faith that the rocks will show for us to walk on water, it is the KNOWING that as we intend/choose/decide, then we are placing those rocks out in front of us on purpose.

We purposely design our lives and the path of the rocks on which to walk. Teach yourself those 3 steps. And watch the magic of your life unfold.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I will get clear on my intention about what I want to create in my life.

Write your own affirmation.

What intention will you affirm to help you focus on what matters to you?

Chapter 1

Using the 3-I's - Intention, Imagination and Intuition

MANAGING INFORMATION OVERLOAD

"What we play is life."

~Louie Armstrong

Workaholics are usually poor time managers, and doing too much at once can be the #1 time waster. I know this. Yet, what we know in our hearts we should do and what we actually live in this hectic, demanding, and overwhelming society are often different. Sometimes just coping seems impossible.

In my frenzied attempts to manage the multiple tasks of my business and personal life, I was delighted when my email management software added a “task” feature. Now I could list my “to do’s” on the screen that held me captive and keep them ever-present in my desktop sight and mind. To remember them would remind me to accomplish them, wouldn’t it?

Funny how as the list grew, I had a way of not seeing the list anymore. When I acquired a PDA a personal digital assistant-- that would sync with my desktop, I was overjoyed to think I could keep this ever-growing task list with me wherever I went thinking that to have the tasks more accessible

would help me to click them off more easily. This assumption gave me the shaky illusion that I had some control over my life.

Imagine my dismay when I realized that this marvelous new technology just made it easier for me to accumulate more “to do’s” than I could possibly finish. Unless, that is, I accomplished one of the more recent “to do’s” which read: Create more hours in a day.

As the task list continued to grow and I filled my head with more information, I growled internally at my inability to get ahead of the game.

I finally stopped spinning out of control long enough ask myself what really matters here? Am I making my life simpler with technology’s assistance or am I postponing the steps that will actually help me accomplish my goals?

Maybe simply taking action, taking one step and making the uncomplicated decision to prioritize and move on one item is more important than tackling “more.”

Lesson One for the over-achieving me was to accept that less can be better. I realized that I had all the information and tools that I needed to move through my day, and that learning to trust that inner voice would return me to a gentler life. That letting my own inner strengths guide the order of my priorities instead of using exterior tools to manage my life would lead me to the happiness and fulfillment I was looking for.

In the movie, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, a golf caddie mysteriously appears to teach that “inside each and every one of us is one true authentic

swing, something we were born with, something that's ours and ours alone. It can't be taught and it can't be learned. Just something that's got to be remembered." He teaches his protégé the powers of visualization and seeing "the field." His metaphor compares golf to life: "It's a game that can't be won, only played. So I play. I play often. I play for the moments yet to come looking for my place in the field."

How would our days be different if when we the alarm clock went off each morning, we looked forward to a day of play? And in our play of imagination, pursue goals that would be imponderable otherwise – taking imagination into action and making better decisions from new insight.

Imagination is that function of one's mind, which causes the unreal to become reality. New ideas surface as we tap into the wizard in us all. In today's what-have-you-done-for-me-lately environment, nothing is more valuable than new ideas. Ideas with the potential to transform, accelerate, extend, invigorate, grow, challenge, reinvent, produce.

"First comes thought; then organization of that thought, into ideas and plans; then transformation of those plans into reality. The beginning, as you will observe, is in your imagination." ~Napoleon Hill.

Innovation comes with the belief that we as individuals are important and our ideas make a difference. George Bernard Shaw said, "Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire; you will what you imagine; and at last you create what you will."

Begin to create the life that you dream with the imagination you held as a child. A creative mind needs the resiliency and flexibility that results from the imagination. Creativity is about taking risks and this can be approached as play. When we are willing to make this shift of perception, it also takes us into the childlike attitude of exuberance and acceptance of life.

Imagine now the feeling expressed in a happy toddler who falls down giggling as he experiments with first steps without the known balance to walk. He relishes in the experiment of learning with joy. Start your day with this feeling and everything that comes your way will be sweetened.

So maybe we need to remember not to play “beat the clock” or to play to win. Just simply play for the joy of the game, and remember, as we play, to enjoy the Journey.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I will educate my soul.

Write your own affirmation.

How could you affirm the use of imagination to be more focused on your goals?

Chapter 1

Using the 3-I's - Intention, Imagination and Intuition

THE LINK BETWEEN

"The soul without imagination is what an observatory would be without a telescope."

~H. W. Beecher

If imagination is the link to the soul, I believe imagination is the link to our intuition. When we have full permission to use our imagination - the way we did when we were children - our intuition expands and we have a greater capacity to trust ourselves, and the decisions that we make.

In its simplest form, imagination is thinking. It's the ability to make pictures appear inside your own head.

Through the ages, human beings have turned their imagination into works of art--into paintings, sculptures, buildings, poems, novels, symphonies, operas, motion pictures, and more. Scientists and inventors have turned their imagination into discoveries and inventions that have shaped the world and our human experiences.

Imagination and Intuition work together as a link to our soul and to our inner wisdom. Yet, how many of us use this birthright - this gift - that resides in

you and I right now? When we use our imagination, ideas begin to release and bubble up from that deep well within. These ideas are a release of what is already there, yet lay hidden behind boxes of disbelief and fear.

Imagination is like a beautiful Tiffany box, wrapped and given to you, and it sits, waiting patiently, for you to discover it. You just can't see it in the day-to-day confusing and overwhelming choices set in front of us. Once aware of this beautiful gift, you still have free will or choice whether to open it or not. If you do, the gift you receive is your own deep well of wisdom called intuition.

We can choose between change that is thrust upon us from outside, and change of our choosing which comes from the inside. Intuition helps us to know what decisions to make and can act as our guide into the future. Decisions made from the inside out are what I call positive change. It 'changes' the way we look at life, which after all, life is a series of constant change. Intuition is that gut feeling you get when you know instinctively what to do - but aren't quite sure why. Learning to trust and follow that voice opens us to a flow that is like knowing how to breathe without learning how.

This pathway - Imagination and Intuition - opens you to your Innate Intelligence. It is our coming into wisdom. Mark Twain said, "You can't depend on your judgment when your imagination is out of focus." Imagination allows something to seemingly come through that wasn't here before.

You may be wishing for a fairy godmother to waive a magic wand and grant you your wishes. Or you may want to find Aladdin's lamp and have three wishes to make your dreams come true. Yet, within you lies the power to create your own destiny - a great gift you possess right now!

Albert Einstein said, "The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."

Honor your natural gift with focus and attention. Imagination and Intuition are like muscles. The more you exercise it, the stronger it gets.

Maybe you feel listening to your intuition is easier said than done. But the truth is that most of us make listening to our inner guidance out to be harder than it actually is. Try not to get bogged down with any nagging NEED TO KNOW when you are given a particular message. Explanations come along with intuitive messages on a "need to know basis" and are not readily apparent. Learn to trust the process.

Here are some simple ways you can tune into your inner dialogs:

~ Turn off that car radio. Giving your physical hearing a rest can expand your inner ear.

~ At home, turn off the computer, the television, and the stereo. Spend a half hour or so in quiet meditation or solace.

- ~ Spend some quiet time alone in nature.
- ~ Pay attention to energy shifts in your physical body. Pain is telling you something is wrong.
- ~ Keep a journal. Record your thoughts, dreams, inspirations.
- ~ Take moments in each day to clear your mind of distractions. Visualizing a chalkboard being erased often helps with this exercise.
- ~ On your way home tune in to see if you can "guess" how many pieces of mail are waiting for you in your mailbox. You will be amazed how accurate you will become at this over time.
- ~ Keep a synchronicity notebook to write down all your so called "coincidences."
- ~ Follow your hunches. Prepare to be amazed where they lead you.
- ~ Notice scents around you. What emotions or memories do they stir up?
- ~ Take cues from your pets. Animals can be especially sensitive to psychic energies.
- ~ Start noticing how your body feels or reacts to certain situations, people, or places.

Notice which of these practices work best for you.

"Trust your hunches. They're usually based on facts filed away just below the conscious level." ~ Dr. Joyce Brothers ~

AFFIRMATION:

Today I will practice listening to the voice of wisdom that resides within me.

Write your own affirmation.

What affirmation about following your intuition will help you with your current goal?

Chapter 2:
Commitment

THE NEXT STEP

"Desire is the key to motivation, but it's determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek."

~Mario Andretti

Success - however we as individuals define it - is achieved by using tools and systems combined with a mindset. One without the other will not produce results.

The mindset I use is the "I Can Mindset".

I = Intention

C= Commitment

A= Action

N= Now

In the Chapter 1, we talked about the power of intention combined with focus to create a desired result. The first step is Intention. The next step is commitment.

Staying focused is the continuing thread.

Oh-h-h - I heard that sigh. That C word. Commitment. Sounds like work, doesn't it? Not so. It's thinking bigger. Thinking bigger and being willing to believe it is possible BEFORE you see evidence of.

Commitment is holding true to your course. Webster's Dictionary defines it as "The act of pledging or engaging". Princeton University defines it as "the act of binding yourself (intellectually or emotionally) to a course of action". I'd like for you to take a moment, and write down what you are willing to commit to in order to create your success.

(Pause)

Now, tell me what happened. Did you write down what you really want, or what you think you can achieve based on your current reality?

In order to pledge or bind yourself - commit yourself to a course of action - the tendency for most of us is to play small. A little voice says, "Don't over commit. Write down what is possible." Yet, what if your wildest dream was possible? What would you write down if you used the "I Can Mindset"?

You'd probably think bigger! Let's try this again now.

(Pause)

Did you notice what happened when you began to think bigger than what you can possibly do on your own? We stretch beyond our current ability and open ourselves to ask for help. The key word here is "open." When we can do it by ourselves, we can pretend that we don't need anyone else. We can remain closed, contracted. When the vision is bigger than us, we have to do it with others. No great man or woman has ever achieved his or her success without a great team. "Great" means accomplishing things that are bigger than what any one individual's effort can achieve.

What happens when our dream seems impossible? Reverend Michael Beckwith, spiritual leader of the Agape Church in Los Angeles describes the mechanism: "You are culturing the ability to hear the inaudible, to see the invisible, so you can do the impossible."

Another way of saying it is, "Let go and let God." Substitute Universal Force if you are more comfortable with that. Whatever we call it, when we can be open enough to allow the flow of evolution to move through us, without resistance, to break the boundaries that have kept us where we are, then the impossible becomes possible. When we find ourselves resisting, fighting, pushing back, it's a sign that we are hanging on to the things that have kept us from realizing our dreams.

To remain open, to know that it's bigger than us as individuals, this is the technology to realize a vision that none have been able to imagine before. And it will happen as each one of us steps on to a place where we are able to

freely give and receive help, with the utmost of integrity, with the highest ethical values, with absolute commitment to ourselves and to our world.

"When you're more focused on what you're giving than what you're getting, people will want to give to you." - Marshall Sylver

Practice focusing on setting your intentions and then being willing to commit to it.

Know that the resources will appear.

Be proactive in your life and make your own choices rather than react to life occurrences.

"It is in the ordinary events of every day that we develop the proactive capacity to handle the extraordinary pressures of life. It's how we make and keep commitments, how we handle a traffic jam...It's how we view our problems and focus our energies."

--Stephen R. Covey.

Affirmation:

Today I will focus on what I want to achieve and then take the next step - by committing to make my dreams a reality.

Write your own affirmation.

What can you affirm about your commitment to your goals?

Chapter 2
Commitment

SEEING IS BELIEVING – OR IS IT?

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science."

~Albert Einstein

How many times have you heard – I'll believe it when I see it? How many of us have that message subliminally and deeply ingrained inside of us? And if we do believe that saying, how does this message keep us from looking for the job of our dreams?

You've worked hard to achieve the knowledge and credentials of your education. As you embark upon the search for your perfect job, be open to what is possible, rather than what others may say. You WILL encounter people who will tell you why you are not the one for their job, and others who will tell you the kinds of jobs that are available that you should settle for – which might not be what you desire. Be willing to believe that you can and will create the life you desire.

Albert Einstein said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge”. Every man-made creation first existed inside someone’s imagination. First comes the vision; then comes the reality. Your life and job search is no different. What you can do is limited mainly by your ability to imagine it. In fact, imagination may be the most powerful gift you possess.

Words, pictures, feelings in your imagination, seen vividly, create your new reality. High-performance people use their imaginations all the time to help them achieve their goals. And that’s why you, too, will benefit from using visualization as part of your goal-achievement strategy. If you can see it, you can be it!

You don’t have to worry about how you’ll do that, either. The Wright Brothers weren’t sure how they would invent the airplane, but they believed in their ability to figure it out. That’s exactly what you need to do. Be clear about what you want, imagine it repeatedly, and don’t let the truth of your current reality stop you. Believe in your ability to invent the how-to’s as you go along. Remember, your imagination is like a muscle. The more you exercise it, the stronger it will become and the more you’ll be able to do with it.

During recent employee interviews conducted with my new manager Thomas, we collectively looked for each person’s strengths and interests with a desire to create individually rewarding work while building a cohesive team. Thomas and I worked on the premise that if we could tap into everyone’s individual strengths and desires, we would create a strong work environment that benefited all. Thomas commented that some of the

things we were discussing reminded him of a Disney movie titled The Balloon Farm. Intrigued, I had to rent it.

The Balloon Farm takes place in a small farming town that is experiencing a draught, and it clearly paints a picture of the scenarios and issues that present themselves during this seemingly uncontrollable act of God.

Townpeople support each other's misery and fail, dare I say refuse, to SEE the message of hope when it arrives. The messenger of hope, sent in the disguise of the new farmer, maintains a sense of love, humor and goodwill despite that all everyone else sees only adversity. As the townspeople complain of a draught, and SEE no available water for crops - hot baths, car washes and plenty of coffee are commonplace.

Meanwhile, our new farmer makes the sweetest lemonade with one lemon, the best pecan pie with one pecan, and grows crops of balloons (yes, balloons) overnight with just one special seed. He BELIEVES you've got to use what you have. Everything starts with a seed, he says. A tree, grass, flowers, cows, me – you. We all started out as a seed. So use what you've got, and BELIEVE.

A new paradigm is suggested: It's not what you see, it's what you believe. Think about that for a minute. If what you see is draught, and you believe in prosperity – which is more real? If you see, or visualize your intention, despite what is outwardly apparent, then you have the ability to co-create your existence. Like creates like. Plant negativity and this is what you will reap.

What seeds of possibility would you sow if you believed before you saw evidence of? Plant your thoughts wisely, and plant seeds of positive intention. Then BELIEVE. No matter what you SEE today. As The Land of I Can teaches, “First see it, then believe it, and know that it can be. The power is in the knowing.”

AFFIRMATION:

Today I will be aware of my thought patterns and be willing to commit to my goals.

Write your affirmation.

What can you affirm that will help you stay committed to reaching your goals?

Chapter 3:
Taking Action

DREAMS, WISHES AND GOALS

“A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and a deadline.”

~Source: Harvey Mackay's United Features syndicated column

Dreams, wishes and goals – oh my. Dreams, wishes and goals, oh my! sung in the rhythm of Dorothy’s chant as she followed the Yellow Brick Road. As was true for Dorothy, do your ‘dreams, wishes and goals’ get mixed with confusion and fear?

Our dreams and wishes live in the wonderful land of imagination. Goals make them a reality. When Dorothy was on her path to Oz, she had to face many obstacles and fears. Yet, she was determined to reach Oz. What kept her going amidst the confusion and fear was that she had set a goal and had decided to stay with it!

What stops us from setting a goal? Or better yet, what stops us from putting a timeline on our goal? Fear! We’re afraid it’s really not what we want. Or, we’re afraid we really can’t achieve it. We’re afraid the goal is too big. Or, we’re afraid of – whatever! We rationalize why we can’t or shouldn’t and then don’t set goals at all, and then wonder why the universe doesn’t respond.

Setting a goal is choosing and realigning our priorities. “Priorities are not written in granite. They need to be flexible and change as we do...It takes peace of mind and clarity to recognize and reorder meaningful, personal priorities. Maybe that is why so many of us procrastinate,” says Sarah Ban Breathnach. Setting a goal virtually sends a call out into the universe that says, “This is what I want in my life. This is what is important to me.” Examine the priorities by which you are living your life and then choose your goals according to the life you WANT to be living.

The only way to turn dreams and wishes into goals is to take action.

Creativity lies within the imagination, and action brings it into reality. So in order to Create the Life of our Dreams, we need to pick one thing, set a goal, write it down, set a timeframe, and take action. The movement sends a signal to the universe that you mean business!

You’re not just daydreaming – you really WANT this, and are willing to be committed to the desire with action. You are willing to believe it is possible by setting a deadline. This is when magic happens.

You were born with a unique coding. A special form of being. Just like the orange was coded to be an orange – not an apple or a rose or a tree. When we are willing to move out of fear, and into the realm of creation, we naturally blossom. Steven Covey says, “Be patient with yourself. Self-growth is tender; it's holy ground. There's no greater investment.”

Dreams and goals, planted together with a timeframe, will activate your unique coding like water and soil mixed together activates a seed planted in fertile soil. You probably won't see the results overnight. DO believe that it is possible. Be willing to set a goal WITH a timeframe. Trust. Be willing to receive what shows up.

Things will appear that are unexpected. The bigger the goal, the more room the universe has to work within. You'll think, "Where did that come from?" – yet, it was your signal to the universe that you were ready to receive. Sometimes it will be exactly what you put in your goal. Sometimes it will be something entirely different – equally desirable. That's the magic and mystery of it all, as you marvel, "I would never have picked that – and yet, it is perfect."

I had that experience with "The Land of I Can" when I discovered that it had been chosen by the Leadership Academy to gift to each school principal within the San Diego Unified School District last August. My goal had been to have one large customer the first year and for that customer to have a far-reaching, long-term effect for the world. I was in constant movement as I marketed and spoke to the New Thought community and women's groups. Yet, I was open to what the universe had in 'mind'. While I was surprised that the response came from the schools – where I had not been personally present – I knew that the call that had been sent out to the universe had been answered.

Today, pick a goal, write it down, set a timeframe, and take one step each day towards that goal. Visualize yourself living that goal. Nurture the fertile ground in which you have planted your seeds of possibility and see it flourish in your mind's eye. Don't just sit and wait for it to happen. Take action each day, and receive joy just for the sake of the creating.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I have a vision not clouded by fear and am willing to make that dream a reality.

Write your affirmation.

What action step can you affirm?

Chapter 3
Taking Action

TIME AND BALANCE

"There are only two ways to live your life:
One is though nothing is a miracle -
The other is as though everything is a miracle."
~Albert Einstein

As we get older, the questions about the nature and quality of life come up. By then, we're so mired in the car payments and the daily routine that we may not know where to turn.

"Why am I not happy?"

"Why is life a struggle?"

"Why doesn't work, work?"

We probe our soul with questions like these, but we will never hear the answers if we don't take time off in our hectic days to listen. Unless we slow down and take a deep breath, we cannot hear the subtle responses that come from within.

We are so used to looking for answers outside ourselves, that we fail to recognize the simple truth: We need to find enough quiet space so that we can listen to the answers locked deep inside. We need to stop and let them surface.

Once we take that time, we can reflect on all we have done and all we hope to do, and decide if we are living the life we want - or if, instead, it was programmed for us by others or circumstances. Only then can we listen to our own voice, our own intuition, our own inner wisdom. Only then can we tap into our inherent skills, talents and inner creativity, which form the work for which we were individually designed. Then we will truly reap the rewards of joy and fulfillment, in addition to a paycheck.

Regardless of how we use it, time goes by and then it's gone. So, in the end, the only thing that counts is how we used the time. Is what we're doing meaningful enough that if we were still doing it 10 or 15 years from now, we would be satisfied with that?

If you just keep going the way you are, ask yourself what you will miss and how it will affect you and the ones you love? If you are losing some of your spirit every year, what kind of husband, wife, father, mother or friend will you end up as after half a lifetime goes by? If you need to take time off to stop the downward momentum, isn't it worth it?

It takes the balance of time and perseverance to find the work and life of your dreams. Here are some characteristics to cultivate that will support you:

Vision -- great clarity about what you want. Describe your vision in detail and visualize yourself in your new condition. The more you do this, the more possible, even probable, it seems that you will get there.

Strong intention -- determination to get what you want. Pursue your goals when you are thinking, writing, talking, exploring, reading and being, as well as in your actions. Be resolute that you will achieve your objectives. Be committed.

Unwavering belief -- a belief so strong that it stands up against challenges. Other people, sometimes believing they are being helpful, try to persuade us to be realistic, meaning that we shouldn't aim too high. Successful people keep their goals high and their expectations inline. People may tell us we are being a dreamer. Successful people are practical dreamers. They have dreams, and they figure out how to make them come true.

Action approach -- know what you need to do and do it. If a person wants to drive a car, he gets behind the wheel. To dance, he moves his feet to the rhythm. To find a new job, career or better skills, he researches his options, decides on a plan and implements it. Everything requires movement. Move toward your goals, one step at a time.

Focus -- stay on course. Don't stop on the way or get sidetracked by fear or the myriad other things that hold one back. Even the best get waylaid now and then, but those who are sure of the path they are on don't let themselves procrastinate for long. Pick one thing you can do, today.

Faith -- truly believe you can do it. Know it is just a matter of time. If things don't move as fast as you would like, if something goes wrong, if you get unavoidably sidetracked, trust with a deep knowing that you can and will achieve your goals. Don't let the truth of your current reality stop you.

Walk holding faith and trust at your sides - hand in hand. Believe that you can until the world shows evidence and keep putting one foot in front of the other - one step at a time.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I will take time for myself and create the balance of being in this world with doing what is necessary.

Write your own affirmation.

What action step can you affirm that is specific to reaching the goal that matters to you?

Chapter 4

The Gift of Now

KNOW THYSELF

"Know thyself!" ~ Oracle at Delphi

"To thine own self be true." ~ William Shakespeare

I was recently reminded in my own life, how important it is to 'know thyself'. When we know our own natural likes and dislikes, and learn to follow our intuition, "To thine own self be true", we live in the flow of our lives, not the struggle. Intuition, not the emotional knee-jerk reaction from past hurts or experiences, is that inner voice calling to us - guiding us to our highest truth.

Intuitively, I know that I need quiet time, yet fill my days with the busy-ness of business. Intuitively, I know that I make my best decisions from how I feel, yet, force a task list upon myself daily. Learning that I am who I am - "Know thyself" - combined with honoring that person, "To thine own self be true", brings me into knowing my greatest self.

I think that's what we all want for ourselves, and certainly the world needs that from us. As we approach the anniversary of September 11th, and prepare for the memorials and media that will bring up sadness and hurt for what began one year ago, I hold for each and every one of us to claim who we are as individuals, and aspire to 'know ourselves' - leading you to your greatest self, and taking that out into the world.

We need leaders now perhaps more ever. And we have them. They surround us, ready to guide us. People who will solve our most confounding social and economic problems, our new captains of responsible industry, our reformers poised to unknot the impossibly complex issues in the world. They just don't know they are leaders.

But you are.

Most of you think you are here to follow. Many believe you can barely lead yourselves through the critical demands of daily life, let alone lead others to a glorious new world. Yet, every person on this planet is a leader. For leadership is a far more basic quality than is commonly considered; leadership is a fundamental need of the human condition and is perhaps also the most slighted. It is time to come to a new understanding of leadership, seeing it as a quality that emanates from within.

Know thyself. This ageless wisdom, at the core of leadership, is about self understanding. Finding a process by which each of us can come to the fullest possible understanding of our nature and character as a child of God, we each come to perceive our true calling, which inevitably is always positive and giving. We then create our own 'story', a statement of self understanding that allows us to focus our energy and intent.

To thine own self be true. Leadership begins within. After identifying your own central nature and story, you can then remain true to that nature, which also sustains focus.

The challenge for many of us in being true to our own selves is that we often don't sense ourselves as true people. We don't easily trust ourselves at core levels, which drive our behavior. If we don't trust ourselves, we cannot trust others; and consequently constructive, lasting bonding becomes very difficult. When we examine how to trust ourselves, we begin to give ourselves our own direction and be confident that our self-guidance is sound and always "leads" us to betterment. We exchange the "I can'ts" with the knowing of "I can" because our self-guidance comes out of a profound new understanding of our true nature.

Making our way in this world is like walking through mud wearing white shoes. How do we protect ourselves against destructive tendencies around us? When we are clear about who we are, and are willing to take a stand for ourselves in the world with confidence and surety, we stay true to our own nature - trusting ourselves and thereby others. We become not only islands of safety for ourselves but, as a natural consequence, for those around us.

We don't merely escape the mud. We begin to transform it.

When we are on purpose, and learn how to focus, we create reality in the physical world. We want to use our energies and our intentions as cutting edges of transformation, within ourselves and around us. This kind of focus arises from clarity of two kinds of purpose - internal and external. Externally we want clearly defined desired outcomes to fix our sight. Internally, we understand purpose as a different kind of sight, fixed on the eternal values and truths we are placed in this world to realize. Understanding the respective purposes of the worlds we live in - physical and spiritual - allows us to direct ourselves with astonishing power and precision.

We tie everything together to discern a life course true to our nature and calling. Even if we never head a company or lead a Scout pack, the very character of the people we become inevitably makes us natural leaders in our daily lives. We provide comfort and support for ourselves and all around us.

Find a system, pick a path, and stay true to your course in life - now.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I recognize that I am the leader of my life, and I choose my course of action.

Write your own affirmation.

What can you affirm specifically for today?

Chapter 4
The Gift of Now

FOCUS

"Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered - either by themselves or by others."

~Mark Twain

There are stars that have been in existence since the beginning of time, that we have been able to see only recently through a new and more powerful lens.

If you could use a more powerful lens through which to see your life, would you use it?

One of the more important points I have made in my teachings under You Can! has been the idea that you really do create your own life and your own reality.

It's a fact that whatever you focus on manifests as reality in your life. You are always focusing on something, whether you are aware of it or not. If I spent some time with you, I could tell you what you are focusing on.

How?

By looking at the results you are getting in your life. The results you get are always the result of your focus.

The problem is, this focus is usually not conscious focus. It's automatic focus. We unconsciously focus on something we don't want, and then when we get it we feel like a victim and don't even stop to think that we created it in the first place. And what is more, we don't realize we could choose to create something completely different if we could only get out of the cycle of unconsciously focusing on something other than what we want.

Focusing on what you do NOT want, ironically, makes it happen.

Focusing on not being poor makes you poor. Focusing on not making mistakes causes you to make mistakes. Focusing on not having a bad relationship creates bad relationships. Focusing on not being depressed makes you depressed. Focusing on not smoking makes you want to smoke. And so on. I think you get the idea.

The only thing you have total and complete control over is your own mind, your own thoughts and the way you communicate these thoughts. The words you use when you are communicating is a dead giveaway for what you are really thinking.

Luckily, this one thing - your mind - that you do have control over gives you tremendous power. Remember, The Land of I Can states, "The Power is in the knowing." Know that you have the power to focus your attention and your thoughts and therefore achieve the results you desire.

Athletes understand focus. They imagine the shot, feel the movement, and focus on the results BEFORE they act. They KNOW this works. We as individuals, business people, or employees can do this, too.

On November 15, 1993, Dr. Tom Amberry made 2,750 consecutive free throws and stopped without a miss. He was seventy-two years old at the time and had only been practicing for a year and a half. Dr. Amberry wasn't a trained athlete, nor did he want to become one. He did this to demonstrate the power of focus and concentration. Most of the time, for most people, all the focusing and thinking is going by at warp speed, on automatic, without much, if any, conscious intention. Your job is to learn how to direct this power by consciously directing your focus to the OUTCOMES you want. If Dr. Amberry can do this, you can, too.

When faced with a particular action or decision, it is ideal to learn to narrow focus for that one desired outcome and widen focus in-between. By practicing in one minute increments you are retraining the way your mind auto-focuses.

Let's use a typical dilemma some of you might face: If you want the day off, and your boss thinks you need to be in the office, staying focused on the outcome and creating a win/win solution is the only way you will create the desired results. Desired results that have you both feeling like winners.

You know your boss will want you to work that day, and from his perspective, you understand why. He's on a deadline. You also know that you would love to spend a day with a high school friend you haven't seen in twenty years and who is in town just this one day. Bartering with why your needs are more important than your bosses is not focusing on the thoughts, the words, the action needed to create your desired outcome.

Focus on creating a solution that will work- a way to create a win/win, acknowledging both party's needs, and go into the discussion understanding that the other person involved in the decision has a valid reason for his or her position. Remove emotions from past interactions, stay away from concern or fears for the outcome and stay present. Focus on resolution. Stay present on a common goal that serves both of you. Could you stay late the night before and come in early to complete the project? Could you complete the work at home and deliver it to the office first thing before picking up your friend at the airport? Focus on achieving a solution that serves both of you. Focus not for an entire 24 hours, but for 60 seconds, one minute, when it really counts.

Concentration is really the partner of focusing. It does not mean "trying hard".

Imagine when you are focusing that you are wearing blinders. As you begin your project or enter into a critical conversation, narrow your blinders to focus only on your desired outcome. The blinders should shut out both internal and external distractions. Afterwards, widen the blinders to sustain energy. Repeat this over and over for the duration of your day. As you practice concentrating on those outcomes that you desire in small, one-minute increments, you are re-training yourself to 'think' differently. You are intentionally choosing your thoughts.

This is the power of intention magnified by focus.

The result you desire will unfold. Trust this.

Practice Focus. One minute at a time.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I decide what I focus on - one minute at a time.

Write your own affirmation.

What do you affirm for your focus today?

“Do not try to satisfy your vanity by teaching a great many things. Awaken people’s curiosity. It is enough to open minds, do not overload them. Put there just a spark. If there is some god flammable stuff, it will catch fire.”

~ Anatole France

I hope that this e-book has provided the kindling and the focus that will create the results you desire in your life. Remember, the ability to direct your focus is an art. All creative work is the result of clarity and the expansion of focused intent.

You CAN achieve your goals – with intention, imagination, and intuition, be committed, take action, and do it now!

With your success in mind,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan".

P.S. Let me continue to help you on your journey. If you do not already receive my bi-weekly newsletter, or would like to learn more about my classes or products, visit <http://www.changeyourfocus.com>

Get focused, today!

"Be brave enough to live creatively. The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. You can't get there by bus, only by hard work, risking, and by not quite knowing what you're doing. What you'll discover will be wonderful: yourself."

~ Alan Alda