

# THE WORKBOOK

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# Introduction

## ***Welcome!***

*The Workbook* has been designed to support you in creating a new future for yourself, for the people you love, and for your communities.

*The Workbook* offers you the opportunity to envision a new future. This future you envision may be so new to you as to be actually *unprecedented* in your life. By “unprecedented,” we mean that the future you envision may be unlike anything you have ever experienced in the past. Nevertheless, we invite you to believe that such a future is possible for you. Furthermore, we invite you to declare your commitment to your vision for the future; we invite you to commit yourself whole-heartedly to realizing it. Once you commit yourself to an unprecedented future, you can expect to encounter challenges. You may be challenged not only by external obstacles, but also by your own existing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. *The Workbook* will support you in meeting these challenges. Then, step by step, day by day, challenge by challenge, your vision will become a reality.

*The Workbook* begins with a brief introduction about what transformation is and how it works. The body of *The Workbook* is divided into six sections, with each section consisting of two parts. The first part of each section consists of a reading, which presents a set of transformational perspectives, ideas, and distinctions. Use the space provided after the reading for journaling any questions or reflections you have, or any insights or discoveries that you make, while reading. The second part of each section consists of a homework assignment. The homework builds off of the reading and offers

you the opportunity to take action toward the unprecedented future to which you are committed.

You will be receiving the support of a “coach” throughout *The Workbook* process. When you are playing a game or competing in an event, you often need to have a coach. A coach is someone who is committed to your victory and so comes alongside you to offer support and is even willing to risk your disapproval in order to see you win. Similarly, in “the game of life,” each of us sometimes needs a coach. So that your coach can best support you, please complete both the reading and the homework prior to your coaching session. The readings are dense and are not intended to stand alone but are meant to create a context for conversation with your coach. *The Workbook* need not be completed in six weeks but can be worked through over a longer period of time. Together with your coach, decide ahead of time how much time you will spend on each “week” of *The Workbook*. Full participation equals maximum value: If you work through the readings, complete the homework, and engage freely and openly in conversation with your coach, then you will transform your life.

### ***What is Transformation?***

How many of us find that we again and again seek to change things about ourselves or about our lives? But so often change seems impossible. Or else change seems to be happening, but later on we find out that we have only taken one step forward and two steps back. As the saying goes, “the more things change, the more they stay the same.” We may think we are really averting disaster, but then come to find out we were only rearranging the furniture on the deck of the sinking Titanic. What accounts for this experience of feeling stuck?

People often find themselves “stuck” in this way because they are trying to *change* things without being aware of their need for *transformation*. What is the distinction between change and transformation? Let’s take an example: If a person intends to improve in something that requires skill, for instance when an athlete trains to compete in a sport or when a musician learns to play a new musical instrument, she may have to develop her skills through practice over a long period of time. This improvement or development over time is an example of change.

But is it only a matter of the athlete or the musician showing up for practice? Perhaps it is true, as it has often been said, that the greater part of success is just showing up. (And for many of us, who in the past have avoided responsibility and failed to fulfill our obligations, or even just being physically present may be a genuine demonstration of our progress.) But doesn’t it also matter *how* the athlete, or the musician shows up for practice? Doesn’t it make a difference whether she shows up for practice bored and distracted, for instance, rather than enthusiastic and focused? It may be true that the greater part of success is just showing up, but we would suggest that it is just as true, or even truer, that success depends on attitude. If an athlete in training or a musician in rehearsal wants to maximize the improvement of his or her skills over a minimum amount of time, she may have to show up to practice with a new attitude. This instantaneous shift in attitude is an example of transformation. So, change is a difference in something, whereas transformation is a difference in *how we relate to* something. Any real change must be built on a foundation of transformation.

*The Workbook* invites you into an adventure of transformation. It is not just a matter of incremental development. This is an opportunity to take a radical leap in your life in

whatever areas are important to you. This isn't just about getting more of something, about getting better at something, or about becoming different than you were before. This workbook isn't offering you a personal growth model. Instead of "more," "better," or "different," transformation is about brand new. Transformation is not directed at the outcomes that psychology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, or other sciences are usually concerned with, such as solutions, formulas, prescriptions, or rules. To transform is to make the choice for a new attitude, a new perspective, a new way of being.

The philosopher Peter Koestenbaum describes the shifts in experience and in behavior which can result from transformation: "Yesterday, confronting people was an overwhelming threat. Today, after transformation, you use confrontation continuously and forget what it was like to fear it. Yesterday, you were paralyzed under the weight of bureaucratic detail. Today, after transformation, you cannot even remember what it was like to worry. Yesterday, fixing your attention was impossible. Today, after transformation, nothing has the power to distract you. Yesterday, it embarrassed you to be different. Today, after transformation, being different makes you proud."

### ***Transformational Inquiry***

With *The Workbook*, we invite you into a conversation about transformation. But we know there are many other, competing conversations going on at the same time, all vying for your attention. What do we mean by "competing conversations?" We are referring to your *internal conversations*—your self-talk, your inner-voice, your 'internal committee,' etc.—all those conversations that are continuously going on, as if of their own accord, inside of your head. In any given moment, there's the conversation you might be having out loud *with another person*. But there's also the conversation you are

having in your head *about the other person* while you are talking to them. And then there's also the conversation you are having internally with yourself *about yourself* at the same time you are talking to the other person. And there is even the conversation you are having in your head *about the conversation* you are having out loud. All these internal conversations are continuously competing with the external conversations we are having with other people, and with the external world. That's some pretty stiff competition!

Sometimes the competition between our internal and external conversations is so fierce that it is as if we can't distinguish between them. Sometimes we think we are responding to what the other person is saying to us when in fact we are only reacting to what we are telling ourselves about what he is saying. Nevertheless, you can choose to become aware of your internal conversations. Go ahead and try it out: Ask yourself, what is the conversation running in your head right now about *The Workbook*, as you begin to read it? "This is interesting," "This is boring," "This is a waste of time," "This is just what I need," "This is too hard for me," "I know all this stuff already," "This is program is just like CGA," etc. What else? What are you believing about this *Workbook*? What are you assuming about yourself? What are you already making up in your head about yourself and this *Workbook*? Based on what you hear in your own internal conversation, how would you say that you are relating to this process so far? Just some things to begin to notice...

Listening to your own internal conversations in this way takes discipline. This is a discipline we invite you to practice. Throughout *The Workbook* process, your coach will be there to support you in listening to yourself in this way. If you are willing to

distinguish what is being said to you from what you are telling yourself about what is being said—if you are willing to distinguish your internal interpretations from external reality—you will discover a powerful new resource with which to realize your vision for the future and transform your life.

How can distinguishing “what one is telling oneself about what is being said” be a powerful resource with which to transform one’s life? Being aware of one’s own internal conversations makes it possible to conduct a unique kind of inquiry; it makes it possible to ask very specific kinds of questions. As we practice listening to our own internal conversations, and as we more and more “overhear ourselves” when we are speaking out loud in conversation with others, we will become able to identify our own beliefs and assumptions. We will be able to identify our beliefs about ourselves. We will be able to identify our assumptions about others, and about the world. We will be able to identify how we think about the events that confront us and the challenges that we face. Then we can begin to ask ourselves questions such as the following:

- Are my beliefs and assumptions objectively true?
- If not, are my beliefs and assumptions useful for my realizing the vision I have for my future, or are they counter-productive toward my reaching the goals I’ve set for myself?
- How would a person behave who believed that belief? Would behaving in that way help or hinder the person from meeting his or her goals?
- What do my beliefs presuppose? Are these presuppositions consistent with



my values, with the values of the person I am committed to being?

- What are the consequences of my assumptions? If I continue down the road where my current assumptions are leading me, will I get to where I want to go in life, or will I end up back where I started, repeating the past?

What attitude or perspective on life—what way of being—do my beliefs and assumptions express? What would become possible if I shifted my attitude or looked at things from a new perspective?

For now, it's your coach's job to support you in conducting this kind of inquiry.

Eventually, you will be able to ask and answer these kinds of questions for yourself.

Upon inquiry, you may find that some of the beliefs and assumptions that make up your internal conversation are “catalytic” toward your vision. You may find that some of your existing beliefs and assumptions will of themselves work to cause and even accelerate the realization of your vision. But you may discover that some of your beliefs and assumptions are undermining your integrity and sabotaging your effectiveness. You may discover that the presuppositions or consequences of your current assumptions are not in alignment with your personal values or faith. You may discover that your current beliefs lead you to behave in a way that will inevitably cause you to fail or to repeat your past. Transformational inquiry will make it possible for you to reconsider these self-sabotaging beliefs and assumptions. Then, you can choose to think in a new way so as to practically assure that the unprecedented future you envision will be realized.

So welcome to *The Workbook*! Before you start, we invite you take time to meditate on the following questions: In what areas of your life are you experiencing being stuck? Where in your life do you desire to take dramatic new ground? In what areas of your life do you have the strongest desire to transform? What are you telling yourself about how things are? Are your beliefs and assumptions hooking you into a vicious circle, or are they opening up new possibilities? Also, in what further areas of your life would you like to experience freedom now? What does “freedom” mean to you? Is freedom only being free from prison? Is authentic freedom only freedom *from* something which you may have wanted to escape, or is it a freedom *for* something new? How can you transform how you relate to freedom?

## **The Workbook Coaching Contract**

By signing this document, you promise to abide by the following ground rules, which are established to facilitate this *Workbook* process:

- Be on time for each of your coaching sessions, which will be scheduled weekly in conjunction with *The Workbook* process.
- Read the weekly distinctions in *The Workbook* before each week’s coaching session.
- Complete the assigned weekly homework before each week’s coaching session.
- Make use of the “Journal” section of *The Workbook* each week.
- Complete the entire *Workbook* process.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Week 1: Vision

## *The Necessity of Vision*

A journey requires a destination. After all, you would not usually depart for travel without first looking at a map in order to mark your point of arrival. And yet, how often do we all travel throughout our day-to-day lives without pin-pointing our destination, without giving thought to what we are striving to achieve! So, we invite you to consider: What would become possible if you were to cast a *vision* for yourself, for the different arenas of your life, and for your projects and undertakings? Vision is your destination; it is where you are going to on the map of life. By envisioning the future, you generate the necessary clarity for purposeful action in the present.

Vision is not about fantasy, illusions, or dreaming. Having a vision or pursuing a vision is not the same thing as “being a visionary.” Being a visionary can mean always thinking about or only thinking about possibilities; it can mean ignoring practical realities or leaving practical problems unsolved. The one who begins with his head in the clouds ends up by burying his head in the sand. Yet the person with a true vision manages to follow that vision through to completion all the while staying firmly grounded in reality. Why this distinction? To the visionary, in this derogatory sense, practical realities appear as obstacles in the way of realizing the “vision” or the dream. It’s a sort of natural law, a proportionate ratio: The more that a person is engaged in idle dreaming, the more that practical realities will appear as intimidating and discouraging. But to the one with true vision, practical realities appear as stepping-stones on the way to realizing the vision. Your vision will illuminate the challenges and obstacles that reflect your end goal, and in doing so, they will appear to be perfectly designed to get you to where you are going.

The clearer you become about your vision, the more practical realities will appear as encouraging and even emboldening. Fantasizing and dreaming can dry up practical realities and make really available resources seem to vanish, like a mirage. But vision has the power to uncover fertile resources in practical realities that previously seemed barren. Dreaming and fantasy conceal from us what resources are available, but vision reveals the provision.

But what if you are uncertain about your own vision for your participation in this *Workbook* process? What if you aren't even sure that you have short-term goals that matter to you, let alone a broader vision for your life? What if you just aren't the kind of person who can cast and realize a vision, or who can set and meet goals? Well, our stance is that you already have vision and are already proven effective at realizing it. We propose that, in essence, to be a human being is to be always setting and realizing visions and goals. We are suggesting that you wouldn't be where you are today, if you hadn't had some vision for it previously, and some ongoing commitment to realizing it. You may not have been using such terms for it. You may not have even been aware of it. (And depending on how you judge your current situation and how you view yourself, you might not have wanted to admit it was your vision even if you had been aware of it.) But we are asserting, on principle, that you must have had a vision that has guided you to where you are today, or you wouldn't be there now. Even if you don't like the situation you find yourself in, this is good news! This is not about blaming you for being where you are today, but about reminding you that you have already proven yourself able to cast vision and bring it to reality. If you got yourself in, you can get yourself out; if you've done it before, you can do it again. Casting and realizing vision is what you were made

to do and is what you do perfectly. *The Workbook* offers you the opportunity to do what you were made to do, to do what you already do perfectly, but now with full awareness and authenticity.

### ***Finding Your Vision for the Future***

What if you are still feeling stuck about coming up with a vision? What if you're still convinced you're just not the kind of person who has vision? How can you become aware of what your vision is so that you can take responsibility for it and develop it into what you choose for it to be? Spend some time meditating on the following questions: What disappointments have you suffered? The path to discovering what really matters to you is often through your pain, struggle, and disappointment... In what areas of your life are you living in resignation or despair? Despair is a kind of extreme hopelessness—the abandonment of hope. Hope contains the possibility of vision. So, use your despair to remind you of what you hoped for in different areas of your life, but at some point, have given up on. What do you hope for, or long for, in your own life personally and in relationship with others?... How have you been hurt or wounded through the course of life? What do you believe you have been excluded from or missed out on? Often our injuries or weaknesses also signal our greatest strengths. Often the places in which we've been wounded are the very places in which we can heal or support others. And the way to make up for whatever it is that we've missed out on or been excluded from is to offer it to others, is to include others as we would have wanted to have been included... As you meditate on these questions, don't resist the suffering. Use the space provided below to journal what comes up. Soon your vision will emerge...

Now is the time to cast the vision you will be pursuing during the next six weeks, and beyond. So, ask yourself: If I fully participate in *The Workbook* process, what will I have happen in my life? What results am I committed to achieve? What will be new in my life in six weeks, in six months, in a year? What am I standing for? Take time to write that down in the “Journaling” section below, before continuing with this reading.

### ***Refining Your Goals***

Now, re-read what you have written. Ask yourself: Is what I wrote clear, or is it general or vague? If you are like most of us, when you re-read your initial vision statement you will find it is not nearly as clear as you thought it was when you were writing it out.

When I first did this exercise, I wrote, “My commitment is to be more adventurous.” I didn’t ask myself what I meant by “adventurous,” whether it entailed something I could really do, or when I would get it done by, let alone why it mattered to me. It’s no coincidence that six weeks later, I was still lying on the sofa, watching “Raiders of the Lost Ark” on the television, and eating potato chips! How come it is such a temptation for people to avoid being clear when they are casting vision?

Vagueness is often an effective strategy for avoiding accountability. If my goals are sufficiently vague, it’s as if no one will be able to say whether or not I’ve met them. If my goals are sufficiently vague, I won’t have to risk failure. Vagueness may allow us to avoid accountability, but it can cost us our futures.

Go again, if necessary, and rewrite your vision in terms that are clear. Vision is most powerful when it is articulated in goals that are *specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound*.

- **Specific:** What exactly will you accomplish? What specific results will be present in your life if you meet your goal? Eliminate general statements such as, “I’m going to look into signing up for college.” Instead, write out precisely what you will do, for example: “My goal is to complete my GED by July 1st in order to sign up for the Fall semester at Coastline College.” Instead of referring to feelings or qualities, define your goal in terms of objective facts.
- **Measurable:** How will you be able to measure your progress toward your goal? Write out smaller goals that can be registered as achieved along the way. So, if your goal is to “call fifty potential employers by the end of the week,” how many calls will you make on Monday? How many on Tuesday? Etc. Make sure to transpose an ultimate goal that seems qualitative into measurable terms. For example, if your goal is to “rebuild a relationship with your mom,” you could commit to cooking her dinner or writing her letters two times per week, every week for two months.
- **Attainable:** The challenge here is to avoid the twin pitfalls of self-depreciation and pretentiousness. This *is* an opportunity to envision as possible a future that previously seemed impossible to you. However, it is unrealistic to think you will achieve something that is prohibited by current reality or by your state in life. If you have never written a book before or managed a legitimate business, it is unrealistic to envision directly publishing a bestseller or franchising your new business model; if you are doing two more years in prison, chances are you are not going to become an astronaut. Don’t let circumstances determine your life but be circumspect. Ironically, the more you are willing to put aside your pretensions, the more you will find that through this transformational process you are able to have

an unprecedented experience in all arenas of your life. ... Also pertaining to “attainability,” remember that, in relation to others, you can only declare that for which you have the proper authority. Don’t formulate your goals in a way that would require you to control others through bullying or manipulation; don’t make it your goal to change other people.

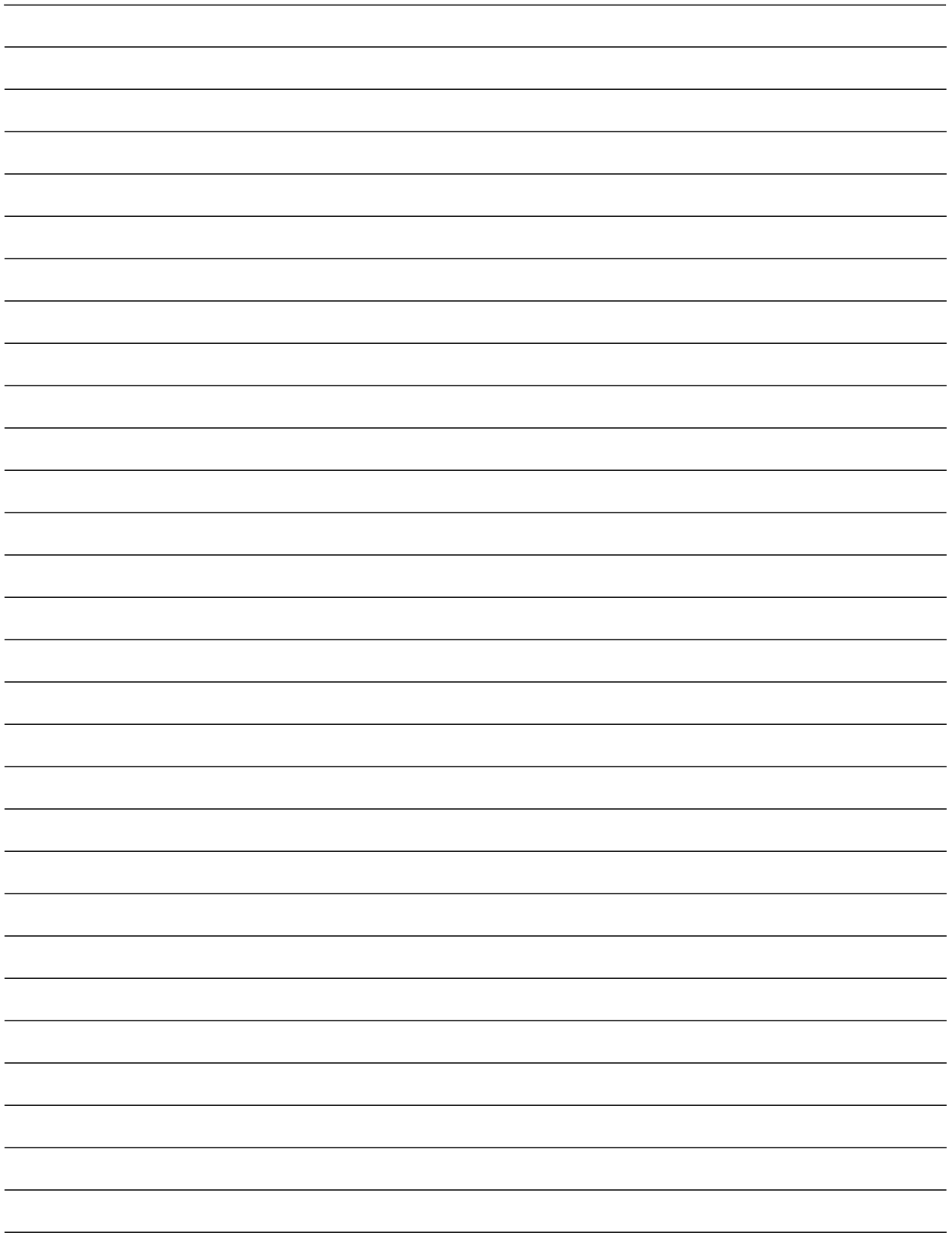
- Relevant: Why is this goal significant to your life? Some things would be great to have if they didn’t really cost us anything. But when we find out there’s a price to pay in terms of time, effort, money, etc., to get them, we discover we never really cared that much about them in the first place. If your concrete goals don’t express your authentic values and concerns, you won’t be able to find the wherewithal to meet them. Here we are asking you to get honest with yourself about what you value, about what really matters to you and why. So, ask your yourself, “What is my purpose in declaring this goal?”
- Time-bound: Napoleon Hill, the original personal-success writer, is quoted as having said, “Goals are dreams with deadlines.” Deadlines will help you meet your goals by focusing your energy and attention on what needs to be done. But they also allow you to know precisely when you’ve failed to meet your goal, so you can account for what happened, learn from it, and set new goals with renewed self-confidence. This one is straight-forward. So... By when?

This week’s homework gives you the opportunity to formulate your goals using these guidelines. As soon as you articulate your goals for this next six weeks with clarity—as soon as you get clear about your vision—you may decide you no longer want



circumstances to determine your life. Go ahead and get “sick and tired” of letting circumstances define you, and get “sick and tired of being sick and tired!” Instead of letting circumstances determine your reactions to life, you can choose to respond to circumstances based on your vision for your life. Ask yourself: Based on the way you’re reacting to present circumstances, what kind of a future are you creating for yourself? How do you need to respond to circumstances, how do you need to live in this present moment, in order to make the future you are envisioning become a reality? What vision for the future are you expressing in the way you are living in the present moment? If you are willing to engage these questions, then, instead of having life just happen to you, you will be able to determine your own life.





## Week 1: Homework

As a support to you in your *Workbook* process, the following homework is to be completed prior to your scheduled coaching session.

- 1) Write out a declaration of your vision for the next six weeks. What are you committed to having happen? What are you committed to making come to pass? What do you envision for your future, six weeks from today?

- 2) What goals are you committing to meeting in order to realize this vision? Be specific. Include “by when?” dates for each goal. Create at least 10 goals.

1)	By when?
2)	By when?

3)

By when?

4)

By when?

5)

By when?

6)

By when?

7)

By when?

8)

By when?

9)

By when?

10)

By when?

- 3) Why do these goals matter to you? Why are these goals significant to your life? Give separate consideration to each goal you listed above. For each goal, create a sentence beginning with: "This goal is important to me because..." Take the time and make the effort to be clear and thorough.
- 4) Take some time to listen to your own internal conversations. What are you telling yourself about yourself? About your goals? About yourself and meeting your goals? Which of these internal conversations could limit you during this *Workbook* process? Which of these limiting conversations are you committed to interrupt? Write them down here.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5) Share your vision and goals as written above with two different people. Take the time to meet with them each individually, either on the phone or in person. After sharing your vision and goals with each of them, ask them for their feedback. What feedback did you receive? Write it out here:

## Week 2: Current Reality

### *Discovering Current Reality*

We described vision as your destination, as where you are going on the map of life. But when you're using a map, you can't plan the route to your destination if you don't know where you are starting. The place where you are starting, as of today, on the map of life, we call "current reality." Your current reality includes all the objective facts about your situation now. But it also includes all the other levels of your current personal experience: Your automatic and habitual ways of reacting and behaving; your feelings; your thinking, including your beliefs, assumptions, and judgments; your intentions, attitudes, values, and decisions about life-strategies. This week of the *Workbook* offers you an opportunity to thoroughly investigate your total current reality.

After investigating and inventorying the facts about your situation now, you will probably realize you need to re-arrange or change some things in order to meet the goals you've set for yourself. For example, you may need to plan a move, or make or save an amount of money, or acquire a new skill. Similarly, after investigating and inventorying your thinking and your intentions, you may realize you need to *think in new ways* or *make new decisions* about some things, in order to have the possibility of a new future. Next week, you will have the opportunity to explore what new ways of thinking and what new decisions may be wanted or needed in order for you to realize your vision. This week, you will prepare by taking stock of two aspects of your current reality: 1) your beliefs, assumptions, and judgments, and 2) your intentions, values, and decisions.

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When investigating current reality, the objective facts about our external situation are relatively easy to identify. However, it is not always as easy to identify the internal levels of experience; we aren't always aware of our own thoughts, assumptions, and intentions. There are several ways to gain access to our thinking, which you are currently giving energy to inside of your head, but of which you might not be aware. Continue practicing the discipline of listening to your own internal conversations. And, when you are in conversations with other people, practice "overhearing" your own part of the conversation. Ask yourself questions such as, "Why did I say that? What did I mean when I expressed myself that way? Why did I choose that word?" Etc. What are the assumptions and beliefs expressed in what you are telling yourself and others?

The more you currently take a certain assumption or belief for granted, the more you will find room to move if you are willing to put the assumption or belief on the line. About what in life have you decided that it "just is the way it is" and that it could never possibly be any other way? About what, or whom, have you decided that your assessments or judgments are simply "true" and that no other perspectives are conceivable? "Judge not lest ye be judged," is a natural law. Whenever we are positioned about how something "is," we close down possibilities for creative response and limit our own futures. Over the next few weeks, with the support of your coach, you will have the opportunity to set aside some of your judgements and assessments, You will have the opportunity to consider, "What else is possible?"—for the sake of your unprecedented future. But before you can reconsider your judgements and assessments, you have to be willing to be wrong about them. So, we invite you to be willing to be wrong. Are you willing to give up the right to be right?... What are you so sure of, that you might be completely—



wrong about?

Our true intentions are often different from the intentions of which we are aware. How can this be? Well, we breathe without usually being aware that we are moving our lungs; we have memories that we are unaware we are retaining until the moment we recall them. Similarly, people often intend certain results without being aware they are intending them. We often have conflicting intentions of which we are not aware, but which make us “our own worst enemies.” But, although a person may be self-deceived about his or her own intentions, the physical universe doesn’t lie. Ask yourself, what is the world around you telling you about yourself?

What are the results you are getting in life telling you about your true intentions? What predicaments or conflicts do you find yourself repeatedly getting caught up in? What are you dissatisfied with right now? How are you yourself contributing to the predicaments, the conflicts, the dissatisfaction in your life? What feedback are you getting, directly or indirectly, from the people in your life? What are you pretending not to know? Take some time in the “Journaling” section below to inventory your current reality, both your external situation and your internal thoughts, assumptions, and intentions.

### ***Living in the Tension***

Getting clear about where we are today (our current reality) and about where we want to go (our vision) necessarily puts us at stake. Being honest about where we are today, and, at the same time, daring to declare a vision for a new future, creates both hope of success and fear of failure simultaneously. Inevitably, we will experience this hope and

this fear, this possibility of disappointment, as a stress or a tension.

How will you respond to the tension? Will you try to eliminate it or escape from it?

Indeed, many of us find ourselves desiring to eliminate this tension. Since this tension is generated *between* current reality and vision, it certainly seems as if you could

eliminate or escape from the tension in one of two ways: Either by getting rid of the

current reality, or by getting rid of the vision. Either by going back to living in denial of

your current reality, or by giving up hope in your vision for the future. These two

strategies tempt us when we are doing the work of transformation. Most likely, at some

point in life, you've succumbed to the temptation to implement one of them. Have you

ever chosen to believe in a fantasy about your future without being realistic about

yourself or your current situation? Or have you ever given up hope that the future could

ever be different, and instead resigned yourself to believing things will always be the

same? What vision did you give up on? What current reality did you resign yourself to?

Did you succeed in eliminating the anxiety and the fear? How did it work out for you?...

Perhaps one can temporarily escape from the tension between current reality and

vision, but at what cost? We suggest that, if the pay-off you get for either denying your

current reality or for giving up on your future is to avoid tension, then the cost you pay is

to live in despair—if you can even call living in despair really “living.”

The tension that comes from living between current reality and future vision is not going

away. It's part of life. It is even the energy of life itself! This isn't going to change.

But how we *relate* to the tension can shift! Is this tension of life something to complain

about and try to eliminate or escape, to stress over, to wish was different? Or is it

~~something to lament, but nonetheless to endure? Or why not view enduring this~~—————

tension as a challenge, or even as an act of bravery or as an adventure? Can this tension even be experienced as giving extra flourish to life? There are perhaps an indefinite number of ways to relate to this tension. We assert that you have the freedom to decide how you will relate to tension. Until now, you may have often sought to escape from the tension of life by avoiding being honest about yourself and what's currently happening in your life. From now on, conducting a thorough investigation of current reality can be a source of excitement, authenticity, and hope. This is transformation.

### ***Surrendering to What You Have Been Resisting***

A powerful way to discover where you are resisting current reality is to consider the actions that you know need to be taken but which you are avoiding in life. What are you procrastinating about? Where do you have “unfinished business?” Certainly, many times in life it is necessary to tolerate ambiguity for a period of time in order to get clarity about an appropriate course of action—in order to wait on Providence, as it were. But other times, things are already “played out” and the only reasons we are not acting quickly and decisively is avoidance and procrastination. We are asking you to distinguish between these two kinds of resistance. So, what items in your life are you tolerating as “un-done,” not out of patience, but out of avoidance and procrastination? Some of these may be simple practical items, like chores that need to be done or paperwork to be filed. But some of these may be relational or inter- personal, like conversations that need to be had or relationships that need to be repaired or nurtured. Some things will come to mind immediately, but take time to think about this... You may be surprised how much is un-done in your life.

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We wouldn't choose to avoid and procrastinate if we didn't receive a short term pay-off for doing so. By tolerating these items as un-done, what are you imagining that you are managing to avoid? Extra work, or the expenditure of scarce energy or financial resource? Added stress, annoyance, or discomfort? Confrontation and potential emotional disappointment? We all tend to live with a flattering idea of ourselves; are you avoiding something that might humiliate your self-image? What is the *cost* for tolerating these same items as un-done? What we resist, persists. Often, when we choose to settle for a short-term pay-off rather than pay the short-term price of making a responsible effort, it only costs us more down the line. By avoiding the effort, the work, or the conversation, are you only causing yourself more hassle, stress, and breakdown later on? What you resist persists, but what you surrender to transforms.

This week's homework will give you the opportunity to list items you've been tolerating as un-done, to surrender to them, and to accomplish them. The more items you check off of your toleration list, the more empowered you will be to pursue your vision for the future.





**Week 2: Homework**

As a support to you in your *Workbook* process, the following homework is to be completed prior to your scheduled coaching session.

- 1) List at least 26 items in your life that you are currently tolerating as “un-done,” as a result of avoidance or procrastination. Also, list the unfinished business associated with the toleration item, and the long-term costs to your life of leaving this undone.

Toleration	Unfinished Business	Costs
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		
8)		
9)		
10)		
11)		

Toleration	Unfinished Business	Costs
12)		
13)		
14)		
15)		
16)		
17)		
18)		
19)		
20)		
21)		
22)		
23)		
24)		
25)		
26)		



2) What are you noticing about your toleration list? Are there any patterns or themes? What are you discovering about what you choose to leave undone?

3) Consider the costs you pay for tolerating these items as undone, and the ways in which unfinished business in your current reality can keep you from realizing your vision for your future. Consider the rewards that would result from completing the toleration (i.e., less stress, clean space, financial, information, clarity, self-respect, friendship, peace of mind, etc. Be specific.) Then decide: Which of your tolerations are you willing to interrupt and complete? Highlight or circle them on your list above, then complete the following chart:

Toleration	Actions to Complete	By when?	Rewards
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			

Toleration	Actions to Complete	By when?	Rewards
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)			
9)			
10)			

4) What are some of the beliefs, assumptions, and intentions that you are discovering that you have, that you were not aware of before? How have these beliefs, assumptions, and intentions contributed to your having the results you have in your life now? What are you discovering about current reality?

**Week 3: What’s Wanted and Needed?**

***Curiosity and Neutrality***

By now, you’ve located where you are starting from on the map of life, and you’ve decided on your destination. How are you going to travel the distance from point A to point B? If your vision is of a future that is unprecedented in your experience, then you may find yourself facing a gap, if not a yawning chasm, between that vision and your current reality. How do you close this gap or bridge this chasm? How do you pull the current reality of your life up to meet the bar you’ve set with your vision for the future? What’s missing or wanting from your current reality that is necessary in order for you to

meet your goals and realize your vision? What's wanted and needed?

By asking, "What's wanted and needed?," we invite you to consider the power of this question, especially when it is asked with genuine curiosity and authentic neutrality. Asking with authentic neutrality means choosing to engage with this question so that the answers it elicits *inform* you, rather than *define* you. Resist the temptation to make "What's wanted and needed?" into a referendum on your personal worth. "What's wanted and needed in order for me to meet this goal?" is not the same as "What's good or bad about me, what's praiseworthy or blameworthy about what I've done or what I'm doing?" "What's wanted and needed?" isn't the same as "Whose fault is it that things are how they are?" or "How do I make this happen without the embarrassment of other people seeing me fail?" Nobody can ask a question with genuine curiosity about the answer when they are needing to confirm their self-image, anxious to maintain a cover-up, or desperate to gain a competitive edge. Instead, use the very occasion of asking the question, "What's wanted and needed?," as an opportunity to dispel the whole atmosphere of shame, of blame, of guilt, and of credit. Don't judge your answer to the question, but simply seek to gather new information and open up new possibilities: What will support me toward meeting this goal? What won't help me realize my vision? What's wanted and needed? That's it.

"What's wanted and needed?" is not a question to answer briefly and then set aside. Rather, this is a question to "live into" throughout your *Workbook* process, and beyond. It is a continuing dance that keeps your declaration and pursuit of your vision moving in rhythm with your investigation and reinvestigation of your developing current reality. Go ahead and take some time to write in the "Journaling" section below. Consider one or

several of your specific goals. As you've begun striving to meet your goal, what's working? What isn't working? What's wanted and needed?

### ***Way of Being***

“Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.”

- *Thomas Jefferson*

“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.”

- *Viktor E. Frankl*

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on my life. Attitude to me is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a family, a church, a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so, it is with you. We are in charge of our attitudes.”

- *Charles Swindoll*

These quotations are from three very different individuals: Thomas Jefferson, the American Founding Father and deist; Viktor Frankl, the Holocaust survivor and existential psychologist; Charles Swindoll, a non-denominational, evangelical Christian pastor. But they all express the same perspective about the power of attitude. What is

attitude? Attitude is the fundamental stance with which a person postures themselves toward the world; it is a person's way of being. According to the above perspective, the way of being with which you choose to offer yourself to the world determines the subjective experience, and much of the objective results, that you have in your life. It's a matter of sowing and reaping: What you sow by your attitude, you reap in results.

Perhaps you disagree with this "power of attitude" perspective; perhaps you are of the opinion that our lives are mostly determined by forces beyond our control. Well, feel free to disagree if you like. We are not asking that you agree with these three men, or that you agree with this perspective. Rather we are asking you to get curious and consider, "What would become possible in my life if I were to look at things from this perspective?" We are asking that you maintain sufficient neutrality and try this perspective on, like you would try on a new pair of glasses. After all, you don't need to "agree" with a pair of glasses to try them on and see what view they make it possible for you to see...

What attitude, what way of being, is wanted and needed in order for you to realize your vision? We already discussed neutrality and curiosity, which are examples of possible attitudes. What other attitudes, fundamental postures, or ways of being can you imagine for yourself? As another example, consider the way that water is, the way it finds whatever mode is necessary to overcome obstacles by moving over, around, beneath, and through; by rotting out wood, by eroding rock, etc. It doesn't matter how; it just finds a way. What if you had the same way of being as water? What if you had an attitude of fluidity, or of flexibility and improvisation, toward whatever got in the way of reaching your vision? Rather than being rigid, uncompromising, or only willing to do

things your own way? What would be possible then?... That's just one example, but there are an indefinite number of possible attitudes. What words would you use to describe the attitudes you have been choosing over the years, or recently in life? What new attitudes are possible for you? What way of being, what posture of spirit or stance

toward life, is it going to take from you to complete *The Workbook* and get the results you are committed to? Take some time to brainstorm possible attitudes in the “Journaling” section...

We invite you to consider that your attitude is a choice. We invite you to consider that the fundamental posture you take toward life is ultimately up to you. Have you sometimes had an attitude that has interfered with meeting your goals or that has prevented you from fulfilling your commitments? What pay-offs have you received (or imagined you would receive) for posturing yourself with such an attitude? A pay-off is a relatively short-term benefit. For example, as a pay-off for choosing an attitude of rigidity or superiority, a person might seem to get to avoid rejection by others; to get to withhold effort or be lazy; to save time or money; to get others to do things for them; etc. Attitudes have pay-offs, but they also have costs. What has your old attitude cost you in the long-term? A job or financial prospects? Relationships, trust, or emotional intimacy? Self-respect? Even your freedom? What else? On the other hand, if you choose to assume a new attitude, you will probably pay a price for the new attitude as well. A price is a relatively short-term cost. For example, a person who shifts to an attitude of fluidity might indeed suffer rejection again and again, expend more time or energy, or be called to take new account of others' concerns and feelings. But what rewards would you receive for making such an attitude shift? A reward is a long-term benefit. What rewards would you receive related to finances or work? In your personal relationships? In terms of your well-being or your spirituality?... Choosing a new way of being for the sake of your vision will take courage. But your old way of being is pretty much guaranteed to keep you recreating your former current reality again and again.

Which will you choose?

### ***As True or Truer?***

You are already in the process of realizing your vision. For several weeks, you've taken action toward meeting your goals by the deadlines you have set for yourself. By now, you have probably begun to encounter various obstacles and challenges. You may even have met with some setbacks or failures along the way. How are these failures affecting you? How are you reacting to them? It's certainly common for people to experience failure as annoying, depressing, exhausting, or discouraging, and to react with frustration, anger, resignation, or rebellion...

But is it failure that is making you depressed or discouraged, or is it how you are relating to failure? Remember: Sometimes the competition between our internal conversations and our external conversations, or the external world, is so fierce that it is as if we can't distinguish between them. You may think you are responding to your failures, when in fact you are only reacting to what you are telling yourself about failure. This is an opportunity to practice the discipline of listening to your own internal conversations, which you've been developing. Take some time in the "Journaling" section to write about your experiences with failure, either during this current *Workbook* process, or from the past...

Okay, now re-read what you've written. On your own or with support from your coach, work to identify what your journal writing, your internal conversations, and your thinking about failure assumes or presupposes. After considering the assumptions which are indirectly communicated in what you write, speak, or think, are your beliefs and



assumptions about failure moving you toward your vision, or are they sabotaging your effectiveness? Just as you may need to decide on a new way of being in order to realize your vision and meet your goals, you may also need to choose some new ways of thinking. Just as you may need a new attitude, you also may need some new thoughts, beliefs, and assumptions. What thoughts about the basic meaning of “failure” do we need to think, if we are to be in the best position to succeed?

Many of us are taught that failure is opposed to success. Perhaps most people operate with this assumption, most of the time. It seems obvious enough! By definition, after all, failure must be opposed to success, right? If we want to succeed, we must not fail. But it is not too difficult to see what kind of behavior will result from this assumption. If you think failure is opposed to success, you will find yourself resisting any event that brings with it the possibility of failure. If you believe that in order to succeed, you must not fail, then you will automatically react by shrinking away from the very opportunities which, along with the possibility of failure, also offer the possibility of success. In fact, you may not even be aware that you are giving energy to this belief about failure until you find yourself resisting or shrinking back from the very opportunities that could lead you to succeed. Since such a way of thinking about failure automatically leads a person to pass up opportunities, it dramatically reduces a person’s chances of actually succeeding... Based on what you can discover by listening to your own internal conversation or by observing your own automatic reactions, how much time and energy would you estimate you invest in thinking failure is opposed to success?

That failure is opposed to success may seem obvious enough. But is it really true? Is failure really absolutely opposed to success? What could be as true, or even truer?

Maybe you have personally experienced a string of failures that have left you feeling like success was impossible. Even so, haven't you also ever had an experience where you learned something from a failure that made a future success possible? And if not—even if you've never once experienced failure as a springboard to success—then we invite you to use your imagination: Isn't it at least a conceptual possibility that failure, instead of being opposed to success, could be a necessary and inevitable part of a process that leads to success? If "failure is opposed to success," then we assert that it's as true or truer that "failure is the way to success." It's just as legitimate a belief to entertain. But how would a person who chose to invest their mental energy in this latter belief behave? He would probably jump at any opportunity, fully aware that he could fail but undeterred and even encouraged by this awareness. When such a person fails, instead of reacting with frustration or anger, he might respond with acceptance or even excitement and be quick to seize a similar opportunity as soon as it comes again. "Failure is a necessary step before success even becomes possible." Since such a way of thinking about failure automatically leads a person to engage opportunities with energy and enthusiasm, it practically guarantees ultimate success.

So, just by shifting how you think about it, you can transform your experience of failure. And that is just one example. What else in life could you relate to in a new way? What are your beliefs and assumptions about obstacles and challenges? About asking for support? About work and finances? About romance or intimacy? About freedom and responsibility? Etc. What could be as true or truer than the beliefs you've assumed to be true up until now? "As true or truer" isn't about objective truth vs. "epistemological relativism" or any such philosophical controversies. It's just a prompt. Its purpose is



### Week 3: Homework

As a support to you in your *Workbook* process, the following homework is to be completed prior to your scheduled coaching session.

- 1) This week's homework offers you the opportunity to choose a new set of attitudes—a new way of being—that will empower you to produce new results in your life. First, we invite you to take this opportunity to do some self-examination: What attitudes have you sometimes had in your life, which have interfered with, or taken you out of, keeping your commitments or meeting your goals? These attitudes don't describe who you are, just how you have sometimes shown up. Find three words that describe these ineffective or debilitating attitudes and use them to complete the following sentence.

Up until now, I have been \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, & \_\_\_\_\_.

- 2) What are the payoffs you have gotten for being this way? A pay-off is a short-term benefit you received for choosing to assume these attitudes. Complete the following sentence: "The payoffs I have gotten for being this way are..." Be thorough and specific.

3) What has being this way cost you in life? Again, with reference to your “up until now” statement, complete the following sentence: “The costs to me, my family, and my community have included...”

4) This is your opportunity to declare a new way of being for yourself moving forward. What attitudes are wanted and needed in order for you to meet the goals you have set for yourself for this *Workbook* process? What way of being will you need to have in order to be the kind of person who would realize the vision you have cast for yourself? Find three words that describe this new attitude or way of being that you are committed to having and use them to complete the following sentence:

From now on, I declare that I am \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, &  
\_\_\_\_\_.

5) If there weren't prices to pay for assuming certain effective and conscientious attitudes, we wouldn't have chosen to avoid or neglect them up until now. What are the prices you are willing to pay in order to live life with a new attitude? Complete the following sentence: "The prices I am willing to pay for being in this new way include..."

6) Again, with reference to your "from now on" declaration, complete the following sentence: "The rewards for me, for my family, and my community will include..." A reward is a relatively long-term benefit.

## **Week 4: The Freedom of Forgiveness**

### ***Stuck in the Past***

Let's recap: You've cast a vision for your future and committed yourself to meeting specific goals. You've inventoried and investigated your current reality. You've explored what's wanted and needed for you to make your commitments happen. You've checked your attitude and your thinking. You've discovered you've had beliefs and assumptions that you weren't aware of—your assumptions about failure, for example.

You may not have been aware that you ever decided these beliefs or assumptions were true. And you may not have been aware you were still reaffirming these old judgments; that is, you were still giving mental energy to these same old beliefs and assumptions, but upon inquiry, you discovered that some of these hidden beliefs and assumptions have actually been limiting you. So, you've taken this opportunity to choose new ways of thinking. Your chosen beliefs and assumptions will automatically produce the new behaviors you need in order to realize your vision.

Sounds great, doesn't it! But... what if you are still stuck? What if—even now that you are becoming aware of them, and of how they limit you—you are still finding yourself unable to give up some of these old beliefs and assumptions? Are they beliefs, assumptions, or judgments that you have about yourself, about other people or groups of people, or about certain kinds of experiences? No matter how hard you try to believe something else is possible, it's as if you just can't shift your thinking. Are finding yourself still stuck in the past and unable to break through to a new future?

Some of your beliefs and judgments may be difficult to give up piecemeal if together

they form a comprehensive strategy that you are still using in life. If you want to give up the individual beliefs and judgments, you may have to be willing to give up the whole strategy. What is this strategy? You may have been using it in life up until now and may even still be implementing it. But is it an effective strategy if it risks totally sabotaging your future effectiveness and success? This strategy is painfully simple: It is living in unforgiveness. And before we explore what unforgiveness does in our lives, know there is also a discipline that can expose this strategy for what it is and counteract its sabotage in order to break you free from your past and deliver you to your new future. This discipline is equally as simple: It's called forgiveness. In this chapter, we will uncover both the process of unforgiveness and the alternative discipline of forgiveness, which gives us another way forward.

### ***The Bitterness Cycle***

What is unforgiveness? We invite you to consider that forgiveness or unforgiveness is a choice. The choice for unforgiveness operates in such a way as to keep us repeating our past experiences, as we shall see. When a person refuses to forgive, they receive short-term payoffs, which can make unforgiveness appear to be a strategic choice. But the person's choice to not forgive will have severe costs over the long-term, which we suggest makes the strategy of unforgiveness ultimately self-sabotaging... To begin, let's look at the choice to not forgive, and what follows it, step by step:

- 1) *A person experiences being hurt.* It doesn't matter whether the person is only offended by a minor slight or is the victim of a heinous crime. All that matters is that the person experiences being hurt; the rest of the process follows the same way regardless of the nature of the situation.



- 2) The person who experiences being hurt has a choice as to whether they will forgive the injury or the offense. In this case, *the person refuses to forgive*. (Or, as is often the case, the person not only refuses to forgive but also refuses even to acknowledge that she has the freedom to forgive. In such a case, a person will say something like, "I can't forgive this," or "this is unforgivable." That person is being inauthentic; the person is denying responsibility for the choice she is in fact making to withhold forgiveness.)
- 3) *The unforgiving person becomes bitter*. With or without the person's being aware of it, the original hurt continues to fester inside them. Here is the definition of bitterness, from Webster's 1828 Dictionary: "In a figurative sense, extreme enmity, grudge, hatred; or rather an excessive degree or implacableness of passions and emotions; as the *bitterness* of anger."
- 4) *The unforgiving person becomes resentful*. The bitterness inside the person manifests outwardly as resentment builds toward whomever or whatever originally caused the hurt. Although it certainly can, it need not boil over and become an obvious desire for revenge; resentment can simmer indefinitely.
- 5) Out of resentment, the unforgiving person becomes judgmental; *the person passes judgment* on whomever or on whatever they are resentful toward. Here, we are not talking about making a judgment in the sense of exercising prudence or making a practical discernment; here, we are not concerned with whether the judgment is "true," but with the spirit with which the judgment is made. This is a judgment made

with the explicit or implicit intention of dishonoring whomever is judged, or a category of people with whom the one judged is now grouped. These judgments begin to exist as beliefs and assumptions in the person's internal conversation. But the person also speaks them out loud, through talebearing and gossip, and when he makes categorical generalizations: "She can't be trusted." "Well, he's just like that, that's just how he is." "Women always cheat." "People always abuse their authority." "Businesses never hire people with my background." Etc. (In the relatively few instances where a person does take external acts of aggressive or violent revenge, these acts are always preceded by this same internal act of passing judgment.)

- 6) The unforgiving person sets out to corroborate his or her judgment. Usually without even being aware of it, the person looks for any evidence available, about the person or category of people judged, in order to confirm the judgment; the unforgiving person ignores any evidence that would contradict it. In this way, when the person passes judgment, it's as if she creates a filter in her mind. Now only that which corroborates the judgment fits through the person's mental filter. Anything that doesn't corroborate the judgment is either distorted or generalized until it fits through the mental filter, or else is deleted altogether. Eventually, it will be as if the person doesn't even notice—let alone respond to—facts, details, or events that don't corroborate his or her judgment or fit through his or her mental filter. In this way, the person's judgment ends up determining his or her ongoing experience of life. And so ongoing life experience now seems of itself to corroborate the judgment: "That's just how it is." If someone's judgment is, "Bosses only look out for themselves," he will now find himself only encountering self-serving

managers. If his judgment is, “Businesses never hire anybody with my background,” he will find himself being turned down over and over again without even getting an interview. If, having experienced being hurt by another man’s actions, a man makes the general judgment that “All men are reckless,” not only will he find himself always encountering men who act without thought for consequences, he will find himself as if unable to act responsibly as well. In this way, *the person ends up experiencing being hurt in the same way all over again*, and even becomes exactly what she has hated in others. The cycle begins anew.

For the sake of clarity, we’ve described this “Bitterness Cycle” here as if it were really broken up into six stages. In fact, these six stages are all part of one continuous process; if a person refuses to forgive, all the other steps are already in motion automatically. A person can cast a vision for a new future and experience themselves as fully committed to meeting his or her goals. But if the person is persisting in unforgiveness, he will still find himself repeating the past over and over again, and unable to break free, like a sailboat that despite favorable winds remains anchored to the sea floor.

Unforgiveness can be viewed as a “strategy” because when a person chooses not to forgive, he gets certain payoffs. What are the payoffs we get from withholding forgiveness? These payoffs may include: Getting to be right; getting to enjoy the idea or the emotion of ourselves as being always in the right... Not having to look responsibly at our own contributions to the original breakdown, insofar as we may have had a contribution... Having somebody else to blame for our own failures, complacency, irresponsibility, or even criminality... A justification for receiving special exemptions or

entitlements from others... What else? Take some time to write in the “Journaling” section about some specific situations where you experienced being hurt and chose to withhold forgiveness. What payoffs did you get for choosing to be unforgiving? Was it an effective strategy? Were the payoffs you got from living in unforgiveness worth the cost of remaining anchored to your past? In the end, was it worth it?

Our perspective is that, ultimately, unforgiveness is a strategy that always backfires. It’s a strategy in which the long-term costs always end up outweighing the short-term payoffs. Are you willing to consider this perspective? What would open up for you if you looked at things from this point of view? What self-sabotage would be averted if you were to give up your strategy of unforgiveness? What would become possible if you were to break out of your cycle of bitterness?

### ***The Discipline of Forgiveness***

Let’s start out by getting clear about what forgiveness is *not*. Despite some common cultural misunderstandings, forgiveness is not *minimization*, *justification*, or *cynicism*. Let’s explore each of these misconceptions.

First, forgiveness is not minimization. Minimization tries to make the offense into something less than what it is; it tries to make the offense out to be so small that forgiveness seems unnecessary. When we minimize, we try to convince ourselves and others that “it’s okay,” “it wasn’t that bad,” or “he didn’t really mean it,” “it was just a mistake,” etc.

Next, forgiveness is not justification. If we buy into, or even sell, a story as to “why” the offense was committed, we are not forgiving. Rather we are simply attempting to explain away or excuse the offense. This is the case even when the story used as an explanation or an excuse is told using complex psychological or sociological terminology. Justification tries to make the offense or injury into something different than what it is. For example, it tries to make something that needs to be *forgiven* into something that needs to be *understood*. But, according to the perspective we are asserting here, understanding and forgiving are not the same. Although true forgiveness can open up new possibilities for understanding, we have not forgiven an injury or offense just because we’ve been able to understand the reasons it happened or speculate as to the motivations for its having been committed. To “understand” something is to justify or excuse it rather than to forgive it.

Finally, forgiveness is not cynicism. Cynicism tries to deny the offense altogether. We are all familiar with various versions of cynicism’s refrain, which is sung so frequently in our culture: “You are taking it too seriously,” “Get over it,” “You’re too sensitive,” etc. But by not acknowledging the offense, cynicism forecloses even the possibility of forgiveness. Whereas forgiveness leads to mercy, compassion, and reconciliation, cynicism leads to permissiveness, desensitization, and detachment.

What do minimization, justification, and cynicism all have in common? They are all attempts to escape prematurely, or avoid altogether, the suffering caused by the offense, as well as the pain of the event which was experienced as injurious or hurtful. We become bitter when we choose to define ourselves by the hurt we experience. And

it's certainly tempting to think that forgiveness must be whatever can provide us quick relief from that hurt. As a result, it's possible to be self-deceived: It's common to feel sure we've forgiven someone, when in fact we have only been engaging in minimization, justification, or cynicism. But we can't truly break the bitterness cycle just by escaping or avoiding the suffering or the pain. What you resist, persists.

When we attempt to avoid or escape the pain and suffering through minimization, justification, or cynicism, we just cover up what we are genuinely experiencing. Secretly, we continue to be consumed by unforgiveness, which, like a spiritual cancer, spreads all the more when it is undetected and untreated. Forgiveness is to minimization, justification, and cynicism what a legitimate business is to a racketeer's storefront facade: Under the cover of minimization, justification, or cynicism, the strategy of unforgiveness continues to return its cheap payoffs.

So, what is forgiveness, and how do you forgive? Forgiveness is a choice. It is the choice to feel the hurt, but without letting the hurt define who you are. It is the choice to *be* hurt without *being* the hurt. It is the choice to *have* the hurt without the hurt *having* you. It is the choice to feel the hurt without letting it become part of your identify in the present and the future. It is the choice to surrender to the hurt without resigning yourself to it.

There is no recipe or set of instructions as to how to forgive; if you have the will to forgive, you will find the way. Nevertheless, we invite you to make use of this meditation: Take some time to reflect upon the hurts, resentments, or judgments you are still carrying from your past that have not yet been reconciled. What are the people,

places, events, etc., that you are still bitter about? You may find yourself going back to major areas of unforgiveness which you thought you had already addressed. Or you may discover that there are other, more subtle areas of your life where unforgiveness has taken a hold. Be honest with yourself; be genuine. Let the memories come up, along with whatever pain, anger, or emotion is associated with them. Be open to whatever is there... When you are ready and willing, make the choice neither to escape from the pain or the emotion, nor to be defined by it... Once you are holding yourself in right relationship with the hurt, you can surrender to it, which is powerful because that to which you surrender, transforms. Now, without being defined by it, you can feel the hurt, mourn for the loss, and receive comfort. So, go ahead: Allow yourself to surrender to the hurt... Finally, as you pass through the suffering, you will find that you are able to resist the temptation to deploy the strategy of unforgiveness, which would only keep you spinning in the bitterness cycle and repeating your past again and again. Finally, instead of reacting in resentment, you can respond to the hurt from the past based on your present commitment to a new future. With neutrality and curiosity, go ahead and inquire, "What's wanted and needed?" Now, you can exercise prudence or make any necessary practical discernments in order to avoid being hurt again without lapsing into dishonoring or judging the person by whom you were hurt. Go ahead and exercise prudence and discernment, if appropriate. Now you can view things from a different perspective—from a higher altitude— without minimizing. Now you can seek a new understanding without justifying. So, ask yourself, "What *new* thoughts or beliefs about the people and events involved with the offense will I choose to think or believe in order to be best positioned to meet my goals and realize my vision?" This is forgiveness.

Forgiveness is never once-and-for-all. Imagine your vision was to build a home in the forest. After you surveyed the land, you would have to clear the plot before digging down to lay a foundation. But even after your home was built, you would have to continually clear away new growth to keep the surrounding forest from reclaiming the property. Forgiveness is akin to continually “clearing” the environment upon which you are building your vision. The strategy of unforgiveness will tempt you over and over. In order to maintain effectiveness, you will need to keep clearing your mental property. You will need to make the choice to forgive again and again. You will need to keep clarifying and re-clarifying your decisions to forgive. It is in this sense that forgiveness is an on-going discipline.







## Week 4: Homework

As a support to you in your *Workbook* process, the following homework is to be completed prior to your scheduled coaching session.

- 1) Identify 10 people toward whom you have been living in unforgiveness. What happened? What are your judgments? What repetitive patterns in your life are the result of your bitterness?

Toward whom have you been living in unforgiveness? What happened?	What are your judgments?	What repetitive behaviors or “self-fulfilling” experiences are resulting from your judgments?
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		

5)		
6)		
7)		
8)		
9)		
10)		

2) Choose at least 5 of these people whom you are willing to forgive. Do the work of forgiveness; make use of the forgiveness-meditation in this week's reading if it is useful to you. What new possibilities for thought and action does forgiveness make possible? As part of your work of forgiveness, complete the following chart:

Whom are you willing to forgive? Retell what happened from a responsible perspective; own your contribution to what occurred.	What are you now choosing to believe about the event, or the person/people involved? What might be as true or truer than your previous judgments?	What new behaviors will you be choosing in relation to this situation? What creative responses are possible?
1)		
2)		

3)		
4)		
5)		

## Week 5: The Power of Promises

### *Promises and Requests*

It's time to move into action. Of course, concrete actions are necessary in order to realize your vision. In fact, for weeks you've probably been taking actions toward meeting your goals. But just as you can transform your attitudes and your thinking, you can also transform your action. As we've discussed, you can transform your attitude by choosing a new way of being, and you can transform your thinking by choosing to forgive. Similarly, you can transform your action by choosing to make it the object of a *promise*. Any course of action can be transformed in its effectiveness—that is, it can be made effective in a whole new way—just by being set in a context of promise-making and promise-keeping. To supercharge their effectiveness, the actions you take must be promised, and must be carried out in fulfillment of a promise. So, now that it's time to move into action, it's time to start promising.

What is a promise? The etymology of promise—the meaning of the Latin word from which our English word “promise” is derived—is “to send forth, to send forward.” So, to promise isn't just to speak something; it isn't just empty conversation. To promise is to do something, to send [something] forward. To promise is in and of itself already to take action. We invite you to consider this definition of “promise,” which is taken from Daniel Webster's 1828 Dictionary:

In a general sense, it is a declaration written or verbal made by one person to another, which binds the person who makes it either in honor, conscience, or law to do or forbear a certain act. A declaration that gives the person to whom it is made a right to expect or to claim the

performance or forbearance of the act.

Drawing on this quotation from Webster's, we would suggest that there are three criteria which define a promise: First, a promise is essentially an act of giving. Second, a promise is freely performed. Third, a promise is characterized by perseverance.

First, a promise is essentially an act of giving, rather than an act of taking or of receiving. When I make a promise, I choose to transform a right I have to myself—to my own time, to my own energy or effort, to own my satisfaction, etc.—into a duty I have to another person. (This is the case even if that “other person” to whom I make the promise is myself, or God.) So, by definition, a promise is essentially responsible or even charitable and can be characterized as self-giving or generous, as given for the sake of others or for a higher ideal or purpose. We don't often think about this aspect of our promises. Instead we are only aware of the content of our promises, not our underlying intention which gives our promises context, especially in the cases of our trivial and mundane promises. On the other hand, one cannot meaningfully promise to engage in irresponsibility or criminality. For example, a married man can never make a promise to a woman with whom he is committing adultery that he will leave his wife to be with her; a gang member isn't keeping his word when he “puts in work,” no matter how much he may feel himself to be motivated by “loyalty.” It might seem like a promise; the people involved might convince themselves it's a promise. But in such situations, the person would be choosing to transform an actual or possible duty she has to other people into a right to indulge herself—the very opposite of a promise. If a person has “promised” to engage in irresponsible behaviors or criminal activities, she may even have the moral and practical obligation to “break” the so-called promise!



Second, a promise is freely performed; the performance of a promise is not dependent on the conduct of other people, or on circumstances. If you'll perform a promise only on the condition that the person to whom you've made it does what you want or expect them to do, then it's not a "promise" at all. Instead, it's an exchange with negotiated terms, however informal, implied, or imagined. A promise can't be repealed, like a contract, just because the other person doesn't keep up his or her end of the deal. If one's keeping of a promise depended on circumstances—on external causes or factors—then keeping a promise would be a natural reaction or a statistical phenomenon. Yet one keeps a promise not *because of*, but *in spite of* circumstances—circumstances which inevitably involve unforeseeable complications, x-factors, the unknown, etc. A promise is not a natural reaction or a statistical phenomenon. A person doesn't keep a promise reflexively or because of unconscious motivations, or because she is a member of a certain demographic. Rather, a promise is an act of will. I can't control other people or guarantee circumstances, but I can control my attitude and thinking, and therefore guarantee my own responses.

Finally, making a promise is not a one-time decision but rather is a commitment to engage in an on-going discipline. Promising is an extended action drawn-out over time that involves both the making and the keeping of the promise. Promise-making equals promise-keeping: When someone asks you to promise something, they aren't asking you to make the promise but to keep the promise; if you habitually break your promises, people will eventually come to doubt that you ever really intended to make them. It may seem obvious, but it deserves emphasis: A possibility doesn't become a reality just because I say it's so, but because I do whatever it takes to make it so. For even a

seemingly small promise, a person might end up paying with 'blood, sweat, and tears.' A promise, by definition, requires perseverance, consistency, endurance.

In order to move into action toward realizing your vision, you will be making promises. You will also be making *requests*. Making a request is the other side of making a promise: When you make a request, you ask someone else to make a promise to you. A request is not only your expression to another person of your need for his or her help or support. Whether it is something "small" like asking someone to join you to see a movie or something "big" like asking someone to invest in a business, a request is really an invitation to the other person to join you in your vision. A request can sometimes even be an opportunity for the other person to join in the experience of casting vision and realizing a new future—to join in the whole experience of transformation. In other words, making a request isn't just about receiving; it is also about giving.

When you make a request, we invite you to have a full conversation. Take the time to share your vision, to enroll the other person in your cause, to bring your diverse missions into alignment, and to come to agreement on a common commitment. Be aware of "power dynamics," as the person of whom you are making the request must have the freedom to say "yes" or "no." Otherwise, it's not a request but a demand or a threat. Making requests will bring you into a greater appreciation of those with whom you are in relationship. By making requests, you can tap into the power of community. We assert that, if the person's intention is authentic, anybody can achieve anything using promises and requests.

## ***Accounting***

How is an action transformed by being the object of a promise? An action by itself is just an action; a person either does it or doesn't do it. But when an action is the object of a promise, a person either keeps or breaks a promise when they do or don't do the action. A promise kept helps bring vision into reality, beyond just accomplishing the action. This is because the person who keeps a promise not only accomplishes the promised action, but she also builds trust with others and gains self-confidence through keeping the promise.

Conversely, though, even a broken promise can be resourceful for bringing about a new future in a way that an action simply left undone could never be. This is because every broken promise, however compromising or destructive, is nevertheless an opportunity for self-discovery and empowerment. If a person breaks a promise, he has the opportunity to *account*. Accounting allows us to recuperate the power we already have at our disposal, which we could use to bring our visions into reality, but which we have been deploying for other purposes without being aware of it.

What does it mean to account for a broken promise? Accounting is a counting, a comparing, a weighing of the scales. On one side of the scale, keeping my promise was important, but on the other side, breaking my promise was *more* important. Keeping your promise was important to you, otherwise—unless you were in “bad faith” and never had any intention of keeping it—you wouldn't have made the promise in the first place. But based on results, if you have a broken promise, then something other than keeping your promise was more important to you. This is

when we ask the following question: “What was more important to you than keeping your promise?” This is a question your coach will use to support you again and again. It’s also a question you can pose to yourself for the purposes of self-inquiry. But whether you’re asked this by your coach or ask it of yourself, this is a question you’ll want to answer whenever you have a broken promise, as you journey from your old current reality to the realization of your new vision.

When the time comes to account for a broken promise, pay attention to your own internal conversations and to your automatic reactions upon being called to account. Notice the resistance that comes up for you when you are asked, “What was more important than keeping your promise?” Do you rush to make subtle or exaggerated excuses or justifications? Do you “confess” rashly and excoriate yourself with guilt or shame? Do you become silent? Do you try to change the subject, or are you even tempted to lie? Do you experience yourself becoming genuinely confused? What else? We all have different strategies we use, with more or less awareness, in order to avoid being held accountable. Which strategies do you use?

Use the *Journal* section below to write about strategies you use to avoid being held accountable... Notice the resistance as it comes up, but choose not to give yourself over to it. Instead of throwing yourself into feelings of guilt and shame, choose an attitude of neutrality and curiosity. Instead of scrambling to evade being held accountable, choose to make use of the accounting process for the purposes of discovery. You may well be genuinely unaware of what was more important to you than keeping your promise, so be willing to take the time and energy to give it real

consideration. Make this an open inquiry for the purposes of gaining new awareness. Instead of resisting, surrender to the accounting.

So—what *is* more important to you than keeping your promises? What's more important to you than keeping the promises necessary for you to realize your vision? When you think back to your genuine experience of what happened when you broke a promise, you may find yourself still attributing the power to external circumstances and offering an explanation. For example, "I was late to our date on Friday night because of terrible traffic." If this is the case, then keep pushing through the resistance... Use your imagination and be willing to wonder about yourself... Be skeptical of your own explanations... Get rigorously honest... Keep pushing through until you hit up against your authentic responsibility and your answer takes the form of an accounting, a weighing of the scales. Using the same example, that could sound like, "I was late to our date on Friday night because it was more important to me to stick around and win an argument with my roommate than it was to leave extra time in case the traffic got bad." Upon inquiry, with the support of your coach, you will likely discover that in each instance, rather than keeping a promise, you gave greater importance to meeting some variation of one of four basic, self-centered needs: Looking good, feeling good, being right, or being in control.

Rather than keeping a promise, you may have chosen to avoid the risk of doing something wrong and of looking foolish in front of others, rather than doing whatever it took to realize your vision. You may have chosen to "stay in your comfort zone" or maintain your old, predictable routines... So, with each broken promise, investigate your choices. What was the pay-off for you in choosing to break your promise? Get specific.

By accounting, you will likely come to realize that you have been deploying power—power that you could have been using to accomplish your goals—on making yourself look good. You will likely come to admit you have spent time and energy that could have gone into realizing your vision on avoiding tension and discomfort, or on maintaining a hollow sense of being in control. You expended your precious resources to gain payoffs that are cheap and fleeting. You squandered your own power. Allow this realization to pierce your heart. But also know, this is not about *feeling* guilty or ashamed, rather about actually *doing* something new. Now that you have discovered certain choices you've made without even being aware you were making them, you can clarify and reconcile your confused and conflicting intentions and make new decisions with full awareness. Now you can take the power you've had all along and redeploy it toward realizing your vision, thus reaffirming what's authentically most important to your commitment for the future. This is an opportunity to go again, to take new action. This is an opportunity to make, and keep, new promises. You'll be surprised by the amount of time and energy you'll recuperate just by accounting for your broken promises, which is time and energy you can now put toward creating a new future. You'll be surprised by the tremendous power for effective action that accounting for broken promises will unleash in your life.

### ***Living as Your Word***

We suggest there is a distinction between “keeping your promises” and “living as your word.” Living as your word certainly includes keeping your promises, but it also involves so much more. Living as your word is about how you relate to your promises, as much as it's about how you relate to the promises you break. Living as your word means

keeping the promises you make and accounting for the promises you break. It's about relating authentically to all aspects of promising. Living as your word takes "the power of promises" and makes it into a whole way of life.

Living as your word means promising to take the actions that you've decided are wanted and needed in order to create a new future for yourself, for the people you love, and for your communities. Living as your word means giving of yourself generously. It means keeping your promises regardless of the circumstances. It means being willing to persevere, to do whatever it takes. Living as your word means renegotiating your promises, when necessary, before they become undeliverable. You might need to renegotiate when a promise is due, for example, or you might need to send someone else to fulfill a promise in your place when you realize you won't be able to do it yourself. Renegotiating allows you to seize opportunities to make new promises without compromising your ability to keep the promises you already made. Renegotiating allows you both to promise abundantly and to maintain integrity. Living as your word also means making requests responsibly. It means understanding that making a request doesn't unload responsibility onto another person. Living as your word means maintaining relationship with the people of whom you make requests in order to support them in fulfilling their promises to you. This includes being open when they need to renegotiate their promises, and to when they need to account for their broken promises along the way.

Lastly, living as your word means accounting for your own broken promises authentically, that is, without making excuses or justifications, without offering

explanations or stories. Living as your word means asking for forgiveness when you've broken a promise. People who genuinely humble themselves in asking for forgiveness and who authentically account for their broken promises are usually forgiven and are able to reestablish trusting relationships.

In summary, living as your word means forgiving others when they break their promises to you, giving them the opportunity to account, and supporting them in their own empowerment. Living as your word means accounting for broken promises and then keeping new promises. It means failing and succeeding—over and over again until finally your vision becomes a reality.

Ultimately, either you break your promises, or your promises break you. Instead of breaking your promises, let your promises “break” you. That is, let the rigor of keeping your promises transform you by pushing you beyond the limits of who you think you are and of the results you think you are capable of producing. “Living as your word” is for the whole person what “basic training” is for the soldier. Promises will “break you down to build you up again.” As you approach the conclusion of *The Workbook* process, we invite you to make living as your word your new way of life.







## Week 5: Homework

As a support to you in your *Workbook* process, the following homework is to be completed prior to your scheduled coaching session.

1) What are the internal conversations you have about promises, about yourself and how you relate to promises? What have you been telling yourself about requests, and about asking for help and support? What is opening up for you regarding promises and requests?

2) What promises do you need to make in order to meet the goals you have declared for this *Workbook* process, in order to realize your vision? List at least 6 promises. Make sure to include to whom you are making the promise and by when you will be delivering on the promise. Afterward, you can return to this worksheet to mark the outcome.

Promise	To whom?	By when?	Outcome?
1)			
2)			
3)			

Promise	To whom?	By when?	Outcome?
4)			
5)			
6)			

3) What requests do you need to make in order to meet the goals you have declared for this *Workbook* process? List at least 6 requests. Include of whom you are making the request and by when you are asking that the request be fulfilled. Again, when you reach the “By when?” date, return to this worksheet to mark the outcome.

Request	To whom?	By when?	Outcome?
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
5)			
6)			

- 4) This is an opportunity to practice accounting for broken promises. List four promises you have made and subsequently broken. For each broken promise, answer the question: "What was more important than keeping your promise?"

1)

2)

3)

4)

5) Living as your word: Do you have any irresponsible or criminal “promises” which you have a moral obligation to break? Do you have any promises you have excused yourself from keeping by blaming either circumstances or other people “for not keeping their end of the deal?” Are there people of whom you have previously made requests, whom you could support in keeping their promises to you? Is there anyone to whom you need to make an account of a promise you have broken, in order reestablish trust, regain self-confidence, and move forward to realize your vision? Do you have any outstanding promises that you need to renegotiate?

## Week 6: Finishing Well

### *Congratulations...*

You've reached the last chapter of *The Workbook*. If you have fully participated along the way, then you are also at the point of reaching your destination. Stated differently, it means you are realizing your vision. Perhaps *The Workbook* was able to serve as a map, but it's you who completed the journey. Looking back, your point of departure was a state of affairs that was your current reality just six weeks ago. To get from there to here, you've transformed your way of being, you chose forgiveness, and you began living as your word. It's not so much that the road you took was challenging. Rather, the challenges *were* the road. And now, a future which once seemed impossible to you, but that you had the courage to envision, has not only become possible, but also your new current reality! Yes, you are reaching your point of arrival. Now is the time to finish well.

There is a notable distinction to make between just being finished and really finishing well, with excellence. Notice if you are tempted to make finishing *The Workbook* to be only about results. Instead, we invite you to make finishing *The Workbook* about the process—about completing the whole process with excellence.

Results matter. In one sense, certainly, nothing else matters *but* the results. After all, "at the end of the day," when all goals come due, when all promises have either been kept or broken, all that really matters is "the bottom line." So, investigate your new current reality and take stock of the results you produced: What has happened? What

has come to pass? Did you realize your vision? Did you meet your goals? How has your experience of life changed? Have you transformed? That is, have you transformed your way of relating to yourself, to others, to circumstances? What feedback are you getting now? From other people? From the physical universe?

In the end, all we ever have to show for ourselves is our results—or perhaps more accurately, our results plus our excuses! Yes, in the end, all we ever have is some portion of the results that we were expected to produce plus—in place of the rest of results that we failed to produce—the excuses we use to try to compensate for them! So, notice if you are making excuses, offering justifications, or telling stories about why the results you were committed to producing didn't happen. If you came short of meeting your goals, if you failed to realize your vision, this is the time to account: What was more important to you than keeping the promises needed to produce the results you were after? What was more important than meeting your goals or realizing your vision?

In one sense, then, nothing else matters but the results. But in another sense, nothing else matters but the process. Finishing well isn't just about what gets done. It's also about how it gets done. It's not about the accomplishments and results so much as it is about the way of being with which goals gets accomplished and results get produced. This isn't about New Age cliches, like "It's about the journey, not the destination," etc.

Rather, it's our view that there are no results apart from the organic process that produces them: Our basic intentions find expression in our way of thinking and perceiving the world. At the same time, our way of thinking and perceiving the world



leads to our specific behaviors. Then, ultimately, our specific behaviors produce our results. Our way of being precedes what we do, and what we do precedes the results.

So, notice if you are primarily concerned about what to do in order to have the results you need or whether you're relying on these results to identify as the kind of person you want to be or think you should be. Notice if you are putting the "doing" and "having" parts of life first and giving them more importance than you are giving to the "being" part of life. Do—have—be. Check-in with yourself: In your haste to be done with this *Workbook*, are you finding yourself overwhelmed with activities and busyness? Are you overanxious about how things are turning out? Are you just trying to be finished already, to get it over with and done, regardless of how you get there, regardless of how much "collateral damage" you cause along the way?... As you finish *The Workbook*, we again invite you to concern yourself first and foremost with your choice of how to *be*—since what you *do*, and therefore the results you will *have*, both follow from your way of being. Be—do—have. We invite you to put the "being" part of life first and to have faith that the "doing" and "having" parts of life will follow. As you approach the completion of *The Workbook* process, ask yourself, how are you being? However you related to *The Workbook* up until now, you now have the opportunity to complete this process with excellence, with a full level of participation, and with conscientious integrity of character. This time of completion is another opportunity to choose anew your way of being.

Finishing well isn't about being perfect. No matter what, there's always something that's just not perfect. There's always something left over that we can complain about. So much along the way probably didn't go as we planned or as we would have preferred it to go... Our vision never really looks the same when realized as it did in our

imagination... It never feels quite as good as we expected it would feel... One might wonder, "Is that all there is?"

Perfectionism is jaded and always finds problems, defects, and faults with which to dismiss a result, or even the entire process that produced the result, as not being good enough or as not being worth the effort. Perfectionism is self-centered. When we have an attitude of perfectionism, we think any imperfections in the end result reflect badly on us personally. If you are worried about making everything perfect because you are concerned about how it will reflect on you personally, then you might end up never being perfectly finished with anything!

But imperfection is not the enemy of an excellent finish. We don't have to be naive or Pollyanna-ish in order to escape perfectionism. We don't have to pretend everything is perfect. We simply need to remain aware that imperfection is part of the very nature of things. Since something is always still lacking or imperfect at the end of every process, we don't have to take any imperfections in the end result personally. And the fact that things don't turn out perfectly is no reason to dismiss either the process of accomplishment or what was accomplished. Perfectionism prefers to look for what there is to complain about, but finishing well means choosing to see how much there is to celebrate and appreciate.

Finishing well means not only celebrating your end results but also appreciating the discovery, the empowerment, and the transformation you experienced along the way. So, take the time to survey all the ground you have taken. Take time to appreciate the

people in your life, those around you who've supported you and inspired you. Take time to celebrate, together.

**...Now Get Back to Work!**

At this point, you may feel good about *The Workbook*. You may feel comfortable with this process of meeting goals and realizing vision. You may feel satisfied with your accomplishments so far and confident in your ability to accomplish more in the future. If so, that's great. But—enjoy it while it lasts! The fantastic feelings that accompany a sense of accomplishment are wonderful to experience, but they are not a constant. All feelings come and go. As you complete *The Workbook*, know that whatever good feelings you are having now will pass, just as the negative feelings you may have experienced in getting here did too.

Concentrating on your accomplishments, or on the good feelings that come with a sense of accomplishment, can sabotage whatever it is that you have actually accomplished. When we pride ourselves on our results and accomplishments we can become self-satisfied and convince ourselves that we are “all done”. At best, this sense of self-satisfaction will cause a person to have an attitude of complacency, to stop setting new goals and casting new visions, to stop moving forward in life. At worst, self-satisfaction will cause a person to have a sense of entitlement: “I’ve accomplished so much, don’t I deserve [to take some extra time off / to have a drink / to spend over budget / etc.]?” Such a sense of entitlement will inevitably end up leading to rash risk-taking, irresponsibility, or even criminality. So, by priding yourself on your results and accomplishments, by indulging in the good feelings that come with believing you’re done, you risk developing a sense of self-satisfaction, complacency, or entitlement, and

you may end up not only losing all the ground you've taken, but you may be worse off than when you started.

It's not the level of success we are enjoying in the current moment that carries us through to completion. It's not the way we feel moment to moment that will make it possible for us to endure. All that matters is our commitment to a vision for the future. As you finish this *Workbook*, instead of priding yourself on your results or indulging in good feelings, choose to remain aware that there is always more to be done and stay committed until the "bitter end." Demonstrate your commitment by making use of this time for honest self-examination and productive self-criticism: Are you living as your word? Do you need to renegotiate any outstanding promises? Have you not only forgiven but continued to choose forgiveness as an on-going discipline? Have you had all the conversations and completed all the tasks that you had promised to have or to do? What about details? Are there any details left to which you could attend? "The devil is in the details." How about other people in your life? How has realizing your vision or meeting your goals impacted those around you? Has your transformation created any expectations in others that you may not be aware of? Don't assume that because you feel that you have met your goals and reached your vision, that other people who are affected see it that way. Ask the questions and have the conversations necessary to find out if something is objectively unfinished or incomplete...

Ultimately, it's not the results that matter so much as how you choose to relate to the results. So, even as you celebrate your results, we invite you to continue to live with a posture of learning and discovery. Are you willing to make what you've accomplished a real foundation for continued transformation moving forward? Such a posture or attitude

cuts off smug self-satisfaction and fosters humility and meekness.

Such a posture safe-guards your accomplishments by perpetuating continued responsible action. Such an attitude serves as a guarantee to secure the future.

### ***Ending at the Beginning***

Your vision of six weeks ago is now your current reality, and this new reality is yet another point of departure for the realization of a new vision to come. Indeed, the moment when you realize a vision is the perfect moment for you to cast a new vision. So, ask yourself: What now seems possible for your future that seemed impossible only six weeks ago? What is your new vision for the next weeks, months, or even years of your life? Are you willing to cast a long-range vision—say, for the next 10 years of your life? This *Workbook* is not meant to be over and done with, but is to be worked again and again. Consider working it over a shorter or longer timeframe or applying it to another arena of your life. Today's results make tomorrow's results possible. The ending of any process is an opportunity to begin a new process. The poet T.S. Eliot captures this phenomenon perfectly: "We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time."

**Week 6: Journaling**

Lined area for journaling, consisting of 26 horizontal lines.







4) Write out a declaration for a *new* vision for the next six weeks. What are you committed to having happen? What are you committed to making come to pass? What do you envision for your future, six weeks from today?

5) What goals are you committing to meeting in order to realize this new vision? Be specific. Include “by when?” dates for each goal. Create at least 7 goals.

1)	By when?
2)	By when?
3)	By when?
4)	By when?
5)	By when?

6)

By when?

7)

By when?

- 6) Imagine it is ten years into the future, from today. Write the story of these 10 years of your life, with you as the hero of the story. Where have you arrived at, and what has it taken for you to reach your vision? Include any challenges that you have had to face, and how you have overcome them, on your journey to “today,” ten years into the future.