


Warren Veenman  
Sally Eichhorst



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# **A Pocket Full Of Inspiration**

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# **A Pocket Full of Inspiration**

**Warren Veenman  
Sally Eichhorst**

**Reach Publishers  
Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa**

## **By Warren Veenman & Sally Eichhorst:**

Unleash Your Full Potential  
Dare To Succeed  
Where Has My Ceiling Gone?

## **By Sally Eichhorst:**

If I can You Can

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*There is but one secret to  
success -*

***NEVER GIVE UP!***

**Unknown**

## *Dare to Risk*

*Love and risk being hurt.*

*Give and risk being taken for granted.*

*Help and risk involvement.*

*Speak out and risk disagreement.*

*Be different and risk criticism.*

*Make a valid attempt and risk failure.*

*Climb and risk falling.*

*Truly live and risk dying.*

*Life is a risk!*

*Those who avoid all risks*

*are avoiding Life itself.*

*Indeed Life's greatest risk*

*is not to risk at all!*

**Sally Eichhorst**

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*Chapter 1**Get The  
Balance Right*

*“The most important leg  
of a three legged stool  
is the one that’s missing.”*

**Lyall’s Fundamental Observation**

Rick arrived home late from work as usual, both tired and irritable. At the front door waiting for him with the biggest smile you could imagine, was his 6 year old son, Jamey.

Before his son could even greet him his father said, ‘Not now Jamey, I’m tired. I had a hard day at work so off to bed you go.’

‘Okay Daddy,’ Jamey replied in a hurt, soft voice. ‘But Daddy can I just ask you one question?’

Rick sighed impatiently, ‘Okay, but make it quick.’

‘Daddy, how much do you earn in one hour at work?’ Jamey asked.

‘Well son, I earn twenty pounds an hour. Now hurry off to bed, you’re blocking the doorway.’

‘Sure Daddy, but could I have two pounds please?’

Rick gave his son two pounds and with head down, Jamey shuffled off to his bedroom. Rick then made his way to the kitchen where his wife was busy warming up his dinner.

‘You know, you never ever spend time with your son,’ his wife blurted out. ‘Jamey has been waiting over three hours at the front door for you to come home. Every car that drove past, he thought it was you and started jumping up and down shouting, "Daddy’s home". You treat him like this every night. You really must try and make time for him,’ she said.

‘You know how busy I’ve been at work Honey,’ Rick replied. ‘By the time I get home, I’m so tired and all I need is some peace and quiet.’ But Rick did feel a little bit guilty and decided to go upstairs and tuck Jamey in. He opened Jamey’s bedroom door and proceeded to sit on the edge of his little bed.

Jamey was already asleep, clutching his

tattered old teddy bear, Bruno. As Jamey rolled over, Rick caught a glimpse of the two pounds he had given Jamey plus some more money under his pillow. He counted it and arrived at a grand total of eighteen pounds.

Now he was angry. Jamey wanted two pounds of his hard earned money and he already had sixteen pounds. What was the meaning of this?

He woke Jamey up and asked sternly, 'Son, what is all this money under your pillow for? Why did you ask me for money when you clearly had plenty?'

Jamey looked up at his father with his big, sad blue eyes and replied shyly, 'I'm saving up for twenty pounds Daddy, so I can give it to you, so that I can pay you for an hour of your time.'

*"It's good to have money and the things that money can buy, but it's good, too, to check once in a while and make sure that you haven't lost things that money can't buy."*

**Unknown**

*.Chapter 2*

*The Poison  
Of Envy*

by Sue Anne Baker

*" For every sixty seconds of envy,  
You lose an entire minute of happiness."*  
**Warren & Sally**

I'm a volunteer 'companion' at a frail care hospital and spend an hour a week visiting those in need of a little friendship and companionship. That night I had chosen to visit with Mrs. Aylesbury.

'Let me tell you about the poison of envy,' Mrs. Aylesbury said as I sat at her bedside. It was the first time I had visited her and I was told that she had taken a turn for the worse since her old roommate had passed away.

Mrs. Aylesbury gazed longingly at the empty bed beside hers and a large tear rolled slowly down her cheek. 'I miss Mrs. Darby so much,' she whispered. 'She and I not only shared this room for a long time, but we also shared our lives, our loves, our experiences and so many of our dreams during all our hours of chatting. Oh I was so happy then,' she croaked as she battled to choke back another tear.

'You see, Mrs. Darby and I were both bedridden, but she was still able to sit up whilst it is best for me to remain flat on my back as sitting up is very painful. She occupied the bed next to the window and because I could not sit up she would look out of that window and describe what she saw for me. She described a lovely park, full of colourful flowers and large trees. There was a lake with ducks and swans and all sorts of other lovely birds, which would come and go. She would excitedly describe them all to me in great detail,' said Mrs. Aylesbury with a sad smile.

'She would tell me about the people having picnics under the shade of the trees, the lovers walking hand in hand through the park and the mothers walking their prams. It seemed like there was always something interesting happening on the other side of that

window and Mrs. Darby described every detail to me so that it would be as real for me as possible and so I could also experience it all through my imagination. Those were the best of times. I lived for her stories of what she saw through that window as it somehow made me feel connected again to the outside world.

I'm not sure exactly when it changed, but it started as a nagging little thought and grew into an ugly boil of envy. One day whilst Mrs. Darby was describing the lovely swan she called Emma, gracefully swimming through the lake, I suddenly thought, "It's not fair! I want to see it for myself . I want to be in Mrs. Darby's bed by the window and be able to experience all those wonderful things first hand. Why should she get to have all the fun?"

It was just a thought at first, but one thought led to another and then it got

stronger, growing and brooding within me until it became an ugly and obsessive envy, which seemed to have taken over my mind. I became truly obsessed with wanting what Mrs. Darby had. Obsessed with being in Mrs. Darby's shoes and being able to see all the wonderful sights through the window.

I was awoken late one night by Mrs. Darby's coughing. She seemed to be choking and battling to breathe. I just lay there watching her when instead I should have rung the panic button to alert the night nurse. It's all my fault! Why didn't I press that button? I remember just lying there and listening to her until there was nothing more to listen to - not even breathing!

Later the next day they removed Mrs. Darby and the bed by the window lay empty. Of course I asked to be moved

there as soon as was appropriate, for I was fixated on that window and the pleasure its sights could bring me during my last days.

As soon as I was alone I managed to lift myself painfully and very slowly to a sitting position and strained to look out of the window. It faced only a blank brick wall. Mrs. Darby was making up the scenery for me. Do you understand - she knew how much I enjoyed and lived for her stories. She was doing it all for me!

Now Mrs. Aylesbury was crying hysterically as I sat white-faced and shocked at her story.

Envy only causes unnecessary pain, grief and resentment. Don't be too quick to envy another as you may not know the full story! So always **'Put your brain in gear before you put your thoughts in motion.'**

## *Chapter 3*

# *Face Your Fears*

*You gain strength, courage,  
and confidence by every experience  
in which you really stop  
to look fear in the face.*

*You must do the thing,  
which you think you cannot do.*

**Eleanor Roosevelt**

It was late, dark and secluded as the man walked briskly home.

An unmistakable rustle and commotion from the bushes stopped him in his tracks. He listened intently for what seemed like a lifetime but was really mere seconds. He could distinguish the muffled screams and frantic struggling of a woman and the low guttural bark of a man.

Then a tearing sound - perhaps a blouse being torn open? He identified a single word, which seemed to echo endlessly in his ears - 'Help.'

Panic stricken, it dawned on him that a woman was being attacked right there, at that very minute and right in front of him.

Now what? What should he do? What could he do? He was not a big man and by no means strong or athletic. Surely

if he got involved he would be hurt, possibly even killed. If he were killed or badly hurt, what would become of his family? Maybe he should rather run to the nearest phone, call the police and then come back with help. But then it may be too late!

Fear seemed to paralyse him in a vice-like grip and seconds seemed like an eternity before he made up his mind.

To conquer his fear, he must take action, and take it fast before he changed his mind. He simply could not walk away even if it was for the life of a stranger. He would have to face his fear by tackling it head on. How could he live with himself if this unknown woman could have been saved, if only he'd acted with force and speed?

Once he had decided to act and even put his life on the line, he seemed to

gain courage and found an inner strength so powerful that he suddenly felt confident and capable of helping this stranger.

He rushed through the bushes and charged the woman's attacker, pulling him off her and wrestling him to the ground. A vicious struggle ensued until the attacker managed to escape.

In all this time, the woman sat crouched in a protective ball with her face buried in her lap, rocking and sobbing softly.

He hadn't been able to get a clear look at her and still couldn't as it was too dark. His heart went out to her as he sensed her shock and fear.

He was afraid to add to her fear by approaching her immediately and decided to rather say some comforting words to relax her and gain her trust. "Are you okay? I'm here to help you.

You're safe now. No one can harm you anymore," he said gently and soothingly.

The sobbing stopped and a long silence followed. Then the unknown woman asked with amazement and relief, 'Dad, is that really you?'

Shocked and choked with emotion and disbelief, the man watched as his youngest daughter, Kathy came forward, blouse torn, body bruised, eyes wide with shock, face swollen and red from a torrent of shed tears.

This man's selfless act of putting his own life on the line to save the life of a stranger went well rewarded, as the life he ended up saving was in fact that of his very own daughter.

**We all have to make some difficult choices in life, but most importantly we all have to live with the consequences.**

Imagine this man's consequences if he had let his fears paralyse his efforts and stop him from taking action to help the girl.

*We are like tea bags  
We don't know our own strength until  
we're in hot water.*

**Sis. Busche**

*Chapter 4*

*Don't Be The  
Judge*

*Never look down on anybody, unless  
you're helping him up.*

**Rev. Jesse Jackson**

We were in the pet shop the other day picking up some odds and ends for our five spoilt Jack Russell puppies. Whilst browsing, we happened to overhear a heated conversation between the storeowner and another man.

The storeowner was negotiating with a man selling him a litter of puppies. They seemed to be disagreeing about something and as we got closer we heard the storeowner say, 'I definitely don't want that one. I'll take the other five for the agreed price, but the one that's not normal goes.'

The man replied, 'But it's only a scar and it's barely noticeable. Anyway it happened over a month ago and the vet says he's fine.'

'I don't care what the vet says,' scoffed the storeowner. 'He's damaged goods, scarred for life. I know I will battle to

get rid of him because no one wants a puppy who is already scarred,' the storeowner half-shouted.

At first we hadn't noticed the woman and the boy who were in the store with us. Evidently, they had seen and heard what we had and now approached the storeowner and the other man. The woman seemed strangely angry and irritable. Her anger was directed at the storeowner and we were afraid she might wrestle him to the ground and beat him to a pulp.

'No one is ever scarred for life. It is people like you who label them as damaged goods and see them as abnormal that scar them for life!' she said angrily to the storeowner.

We looked at each other in silent agreement. This woman was definitely overreacting! We couldn't believe that

she was losing her temper over something that clearly was none of her business. Our first impression was, 'What an angry and rude woman!'

'Let me see that puppy,' demanded the angry woman. The man held out the puppy in question and the boy with her giggled delightedly. He immediately grabbed the puppy and hugged it close.

'Look mom, he has a big scar just like mine. Can I keep him? My friends at school say I don't look so good myself and the puppy will understand because he's just like me,' said the boy as he looked lovingly into the puppy's eyes.

Just then we saw the boy clearly for the first time. His face was terribly disfigured and a number of deep scars were visible even from a distance.

'I'd like to buy the puppy,' the woman said to both men.

Both men looked terribly uncomfortable and embarrassed and the storeowner sheepishly said, 'You can have him for free.'

The woman became even angrier as she replied, 'I said I'd like to buy the puppy. Just because it is scarred, does not mean that it is worthless. This puppy is worth just as much as all the others, if not more. I'll pay the full price, thank you.' And off she went with her son carrying one happy and soon to be spoilt rotten puppy.

That day we learnt a valuable lesson that we will never forget. 'Never judge anyone until you have walked in their shoes.' We had made the mistake of pre-judging this woman before we knew the full story. Yes, she may have come across angry and rude, but she had reason to be. She was feeling

emotional and frustrated because people probably labelled her son as abnormal due to his disfiguring scars. She was only being protective of her son. Looking through her eyes, we would have reacted the same.

The next time you have the opportunity to judge someone, think twice before you judge them too quickly and too harshly. Remember, if you had lived their lives, experienced their problems, had their family and friends and were faced with all that life had thrown at them, chances are that you would behave exactly like them. A little understanding in these circumstances goes a long way!

*Chapter 5*

*The Scars Left  
By Anger*

*Speak when you're angry,  
and you'll make the best speech you'll  
ever regret.*

**Lawrence J. Peter**

Joey was a twelve year old boy with a very bad temper, which often got him into trouble.

His parents had pondered often about how to rid their son of this bad character trait. They were at a loss until Joey's grandfather came to stay.

Grandpa Max was a wise old man who decided to take the matter of Joey's anger in hand. He sat Joey down and they had a long chat. He said a lot of interesting things, and explained to Joey that unless he controlled his anger, he would always be sure to lose out in life.

After speaking to Grandpa Max, Joey wanted to get rid of his anger but still found it hard to control. Grandpa Max decided to help him by making him agree to the following experiment.

In their backyard, they had a big white

wall on which was erected a basketball hoop for Joey to practice shots and play with his friends.

Grandpa Max told Joey that every time he lost his temper, he had to chip out a little piece of the wall with a chisel and keep all the chipped out pieces together in a pile in front of the wall.

On the first day Joey had chipped a grand total of thirty pieces out of the wall and they lay in a destructive heap in front of the wall.

As the days passed, this number slowly shrank. Joey found that it took more effort to chisel chips out of the wall than it did to avoid losing his temper. He also found that the wall looked ugly and damaged and he preferred it as it had been.

Finally, there came a day when Joey didn't lose his temper even once. He

proudly announced this to Grandpa Max, who told him that for every day he was able to avoid resorting to anger, he should pick a piece from the pile at the foot of the wall and fill one of the chips with it.

Many days later, Joey was eventually able to show his Grandpa that all the chips were filled.

Together they stood, hand in hand in front of the wall. Grandpa Max told Joey that he was proud of him, but although he had done a great job, the wall did not look the same. Joey had tried to fill the chips as best he could, but little cracks and small holes were still visible. It would take a lot of work to repair the wall properly and restore it to its good old self.

Grandpa Max told Joey that every time he loses his temper and says something

in anger or physically hurts someone in anger, he is leaving a wound or scar that may never heal, just like the remaining cracks and holes in the wall.

Sometimes no amount of 'sorries' can heal someone you've hurt with your anger, just as numerous attempts at painstakingly filling in the chips that you made may never restore the wall to its original self.

This was a lesson that Joey never forgot and always made him think twice before resorting to anger.

Whenever he felt himself becoming angry he remembered the following words of his Grandpa Max, 'The winds of anger will always blow out the lamp of intelligence.'

Next time you open your mouth to say something hurtful, remember that you may leave a wound or scar that may

never heal. The damage is done and is often very difficult to undo.

So always '**Put your brain in gear before you put your mouth in motion.**' All it takes is a little bit of self-control!

*Chapter 6**Words....  
The Power to Destroy  
or Strengthen*

*Kind words can be short  
and easy to speak,  
but their echoes are truly endless.*

**Mother Teresa**

A herd of reindeer was crossing a river when two of the weaker reindeer were swept downstream by a powerful current. Although the other reindeer battled, they safely reached the other side. They knew how strong the current was as they themselves had barely made it across, so they all agreed that the two stragglers were as good as dead. In a chorus they all shouted downstream to the two battling reindeer that they might as well give up. They would never make it and should rather relax and stop fighting it as they were just prolonging their agony.

But the two struggling reindeer did all they could to keep their heads above water and swim against the current. The other reindeer kept yelling for them to stop fighting the current, as there was nothing they could do. They should just resign themselves to the fact that they were as good as dead. Eventually

one of the reindeer started to listen to what the others were shouting. He resigned himself to the fact that he was as good as dead and simply gave up. The powerful current immediately swept him away and drowned him.

The other struggling reindeer fought with all his might against the current. He frantically kicked his legs and urged his body to pull out all the stops to save him. All the other reindeer again shouted to him to just give in, as no amount of struggling would help him. The reindeer tried even harder to push himself to his limits and to the disbelief of all the others, he finally made it to safety. When he reached the others, they asked him, 'Didn't you hear what we were shouting to you?' The reindeer sheepishly admitted that the reason why he has always been a little bit of a straggler is that he is almost deaf. You see, he couldn't hear what they

were shouting to him. He believed that they were actually encouraging him not to give up and to fight on the entire time.

What is the deep and powerful message within this story? **BE VERY CAREFUL OF WHAT YOU SAY!** A simple word of encouragement to someone who really needs it could be the very thing that helps them to rise above their situation and make it through a difficult patch. However, any destructive word, maybe a word to discourage or criticize someone who is already feeling down or in a pickle, could be the very thing that takes them over the edge and makes them give up on life.

*Ask yourself this, if we were to pay you fifty cents for every kind word you ever spoke and collect fifty cents for every unkind word you ever spoke, would you be rich or poor?*

*Chapter 7*

# It's Your Choice

## **Choices**

*I did not choose to be born.  
I could not choose my parents.*

*I had no choice regarding  
when and where I was born.*

*I had no choice about how  
I was brought up.*

*But there comes a time when I must take  
responsibility for the choices*

*I can make.*

*In the end, I can choose how  
I will live.*

**Sally Eichhorst**

We have known Alfred Jackson for many years. Alf is one of those rare breeds of people who has this wonderful talent called Optimism. He possesses this extraordinary gift to always see the bright side of any situation and we have yet to see him in a foul and gloomy mood or without a smile on his dial.

Alf has this natural ability to spread cheer and encouragement to all he comes into contact with. His favourite words are, 'Smile awhile and give your face a rest!'

Alf owns a large jewellery store in a prime shopping area and has employed the same staff for the past ten years. Why have all these people faithfully remained with him? No, not because of the money, but due to his ATTITUDE! They all maintain that Alf has an unshakeable, positive attitude

and he somehow spreads it to them by motivating, inspiring, encouraging and generally helping them to see that there are positives to be found even in the worst situations. When Alf is around problems become manageable challenges. 'He's like a breath of fresh air!' said one of his doting staff members.

We asked Alf why he is always so positive and he replied, "I am positive and see the brighter side of life, not because I was fortunate enough to be born like this, but because I choose to be.

"I believe that we can all control our thoughts and what we choose to think about affects who we are and what we are capable of achieving. So I choose to live my life smiling and not frowning, laughing and not crying, singing and not shouting and most

importantly, thinking positively and not negatively. Focusing on negatives never did anyone an ounce of good, but focusing on positives certainly does everyone the world of good!" Alf's parting advice to us was 'Smile awhile and give your face a rest!'

Approximately one year after this last chat with Alf, we heard that he had been hijacked at gunpoint, brutally assaulted, shot in the back and left for dead.

We went to see Alf in hospital and were greeted by his old familiar smiling face and the laughter of nurses around him. He told us that he had nearly died but thanks to the medical staff working around the clock to keep their promise, he eventually pulled through.

'What promise?' We asked him. 'Well,' Alf answered, 'While I was on the operating table and barely conscious I

noticed that everyone around me wore deep frowns of concern and worry, making it obvious that they believed me to be on my way out.'

'Before going under, I mustered up all my strength and said as loud as possible, "Wait, I'm allergic to something!" The medical team all froze in their tracks and everyone's attention was momentarily focused on my next words. "I'm allergic to death!" I said. This statement was followed by a roar of laughter from the medical team who seemed to relax a little. Whilst I still had the energy to speak, I asked them to promise me one thing. " Promise me that you will treat me like a new life coming into the world and not like an old life, leaving the world. Birth is a happy, positive thing, so focus on that when you work on me. Now smile awhile and give your face a rest!'

How did this experience affect Alf? When we asked him he said, 'You know I'm very lucky, as that bullet just missed my spine and I could have been left paralysed. My wife thinks the scars are sexy and to top it off, now I'm even more determined to live life to the full.'

Unlike Alf, who sees the positive in any situation, most people seem to focus on the negatives. They focus on their weaknesses, rather than their strengths and often blame everyone and everything but themselves for their circumstances and failures in life.

*'Feed your mind with the right,  
positive thoughts. Protect your mind from  
the wrong, negative thoughts.  
Now prepare yourself for  
unimaginable rewards.'*

**Warren & Sally**

*Chapter 8*

*Pick the bone  
that best  
describes you:*

*People who say it cannot be done  
should not interrupt those  
who are doing it.*

**Dennis Waitley**

**Wishbone** – a wishful thinker, who dreams, but never acts. Wishes and waits for others to do the work or for things to fall into his or her lap.

**Jawbone** – a big talker, with little or no action to follow. Excellent at whinging and whining, but not good at doing anything about it.

**Knucklebone** – stands back and knocks everything anyone else does or tries. Excellent at criticising although he or she won't try themselves. Even better at blaming people or other things for his or her lack of success and failures.

**Backbone** – the one who takes responsibility for the load. This is the one who does the work, takes action and makes things happen. Without this person everything collapses and comes to a grinding halt. Nothing can move forward or grow without the backbone!

*Chapter 9**Stop  
Procrastinating.  
ACT NOW!***By Mark Dublin**

*If you were going to die soon  
and had only one phone call you could make,*

*who would you call  
and what would you say?  
And why are you waiting?*

**Stephen Levine**

I was away on business the night my Maggie was attacked, ' said Mark. 'I heard the details from the police whilst I held her small, pale hand in mine and looked upon her bruised and battered face. She looked so small, fragile and vulnerable in that hospital bed and I longed for her to open her eyes to see that I was there to protect her from any more harm.

I was informed that burglars had sneaked into our lounge through the sliding doors. The police said they'd obviously broken the latch to gain entry and probably also disarmed the alarm to ensure their entry went unannounced.

A flood of guilt welled up inside me as it dawned on me that it was inadvertently my fault. The burglars didn't break the latch and disarm the alarm. I just didn't bother to fix them. I had all the time in the world to fix

either the latch or alarm or both, which could have prevented the whole incident or at least warned poor Maggie. I may as well have sent the burglars an open invitation!

I was horrified to hear how the burglars had discovered Maggie and beat her relentlessly, for fun it seems. They left her for dead and made off with everything and anything of any value, which they could carry.

Thank goodness a neighbour, returning from an evening out, noticed three suspicious men leaving our home. He called out to them and when they began to run, his suspicions were confirmed and he called the police.

I have always been a procrastinator,' said Mark. 'I guess I just accepted that this was how I was and would always be. I really couldn't see the problem

with putting things off for another day. What's the rush anyway? I mean it's not a matter of life or death! Or is it?

This last question haunted me for many days as I sat at Maggie's bedside. In the end, it was a matter of life and death and all because I procrastinated!

Maggie, my much loved wife and possibly the only thing I'm truly proud of in my life, had been on at me about fixing the latch on our sliding doors. The doors open into our lounge and the latch had been broken for over a month. At first it seemed urgent, as it was a major security risk. I mean anyone could just push the doors open and enter our home without the slightest effort.

However, after a few days had passed without anything happening, the urgency fell away and I consoled myself that the fixing of the latch could

wait a few more days until I felt like fixing it or having it fixed.

You see, I had the time, although I told myself I didn't. I simply had better things to do or should I say, more pleasurable things to do.

The faulty latch wouldn't have posed as much of a security risk if the burglar alarms were working. Of course this was another area of procrastination! Our burglar alarm had gone on the blink several months earlier and became yet another thing I added to my list of things to put off for another day. Something I've now learnt is that 'another day' never comes or comes all too late!

Maggie was unconscious for two weeks, the longest two weeks of my life. I promised myself that if she made it, I would never again put off anything I could and should do today for another

day. I would also tell her everyday how much I loved her and needed her. In fact, I would make an effort to spend more time with our family and not endlessly put off get-togethers.

It was during these two weeks that I read your book, 'Unleash your Full Potential.' The section on procrastination really hit home. I realised that procrastination had robbed me of so many opportunities and possibly even my wife. I also realised why I never seemed to get ahead at work or life in general. I was always putting things off! I simply had to stop procrastinating!

The day Maggie awoke, I was afraid she might hate me for inadvertently allowing this to happen to her. I know I hated myself for it! The first words she spoke were, 'I love you' and I am grateful that I have the rest of our lives

together to make it up to her and prove myself worthy of her love.

I adopted your phrase, 'Act Now!' to propel me into action when I find myself procrastinating. I felt a little bit silly at first when I sat in front of the TV watching rubbish and repeating the words 'Act Now' to myself. The funny thing is, eventually I couldn't just sit there anymore and had to get up and do something constructive.

I do the same at work now too. If there is something really important I have to do, but it's not a very nice job, I get it done first before I move onto easier and more pleasurable tasks.

I've become very good at prioritising and making things happen by just doing what needs to be done instead of continuously putting things off. The end result is that I've recently been promoted from Sales representative to

Sales Manager.

Mark learnt a valuable and life-changing lesson about procrastination. Since he has kicked this habit, (yes, it's simply a bad habit) it has had a profoundly positive affect on all areas of his life. No one is born a procrastinator and must stay one forever. Life is about choices. You can choose to stop procrastinating!

*Don't wait for your ship to come in...  
Swim out and get it.*

**Unknown**

*Chapter 10**Don't Miss The  
Magic Of The  
Moment*

*“Put off living whilst waiting  
for a better life  
and you may wait a lifetime!”*

**Warren & Sally**

A wise and ancient soul rocks gently in his chair. Head bowed and heart heavy, he speaks to the wide-eyed little boy before him.

'Don't be like me sonny. Don't miss the magic of the moment! I remember when I was a little lad like you, I couldn't wait to be all grown up. You see, I thought that things would get better as I got older. No more school. No more people telling me what to do and what not to do.

Suddenly, in a flash it seems, I was all grown up and then I couldn't wait to find that perfect job so I could be happy and earn enough money to be content. I found myself wishing it was the weekend already and wishing I was on holiday again. It seemed that when I wasn't wishing for weekends and holidays, I was constantly dreaming of and wishing for better things to come.

Eventually I was wishing for the day that I could retire and put my feet up. I thought surely then I would be happier and things would be a great deal better.'

A cold shiver ran through the old man as he looked at the boy and said, 'One day I woke up and I realised that I had somehow missed the point of it all. I missed out on so much that life had to offer because I was always waiting for and dreaming of better things to come. I forgot that my life wasn't a dress rehearsal, it was the real thing. I always put things off for a special occasion, but I only learnt later that life itself is a special occasion. I constantly wished my life away waiting for a better tomorrow.

I learnt too late that I had put off happiness, fun, love, feeling great about myself and ultimately living. I

discovered too late that life is in the living, the capturing of every magical moment.'

The old man leaned over, gently placing his weathered old hand on the boy's shoulder and said, 'Take it from a wise old man sonny, the best advice I can leave you with is this: don't miss the magic of the moment by focusing on what's to come.'

*The foolish man  
seeks happiness in the distance,  
the wise grows it under his feet.  
James Oppenheim*

## Chapter 11

# What Am I Worrying About?

By Michelle Peterson-James

*"I am an old man  
and have a great many troubles,  
But most of them never happened."*

**Mark Twain**

I woke up this morning and as I stared at the pale, familiar image in the bathroom mirror, I noticed a blind pimple on the end of my nose. There it was, standing out like a lone, but distinct flagpole on Mount Everest. I tried to hide it as best I could, but worried nevertheless that everyone I came into contact with would be drawn to that spot on my nose and have a conversation with it, instead of me. So there was my first worry.

Then came my outfit. I worried whether it was really suitable for this particular interview. Was I overdressed or underdressed? I then worried about whether the person I was to interview would like me and open up to me. Would I do a good job and be able to create an interesting enough story? Worry, worry, worry!

This was a typical morning for me, full

of trivial worries, which I obsessed over. It seemed I was never able to relax, as there was always this cloud of anxiety hovering over me.

So here I was worrying myself into a state again for no apparent reason. I wasn't sure what this interview was all about, as my boss had rushed in the previous afternoon and asked me to take her place. She said it would make a great story but unfortunately she was too busy and anyway she felt I would benefit from the experience. All I was given was a name, time and a meeting place. John at the House of Coffee in town at 9 a.m.

On the way to this meeting place I worried whether I would find John and worried that he may not want to speak to me as he was expecting my boss. Was I good enough to do as professional a job as she would have?

I thought about my job as a journalist and worried about whether it was what I really wanted to do with my life. Would I ever earn enough to live the way I wanted to and do all the things I wanted to?

I arrived at the designated meeting place at 8.50 a.m. and as I entered I was bathed in the delightfully cosy and warm aroma of coffee hanging lazily in the air.

After scanning my surroundings, I came to the conclusion that John had not yet arrived. There was only a young couple whispering sweet nothings into one another's ears and an old lady sipping a cup of coffee over the morning paper.

I ordered a cappuccino and settled in at a booth facing the doorway so I could spot John the moment he arrived. Patience is not one of my virtues and waiting just allowed me to worry

further. As I was undoubtedly about to launch into another list of worries, something caught my eye.

Just outside the entrance, leaning against the window, was a man I had often seen around town. In fact, he had been there when I entered the coffee shop, but I hadn't paid him much attention as I was focused on looking for John, the mystery man who I was supposed to interview.

The only reason I had ever noticed this man leaning against the window was because he was a cripple and his only mode of transport was a dilapidated old skateboard. I'd seen him pushing his way around town on gloved hands whilst his crippled and useless stump-like legs remained limp and lifeless on the skateboard.

Thinking back, I remembered seeing him around town often and what struck

me now was the fact that he had always been genuinely smiling on all those occasions and yes, right now there was also a huge, happy grin on his face, stretching from ear to ear. Maybe he's not only badly crippled, but also a little dumb, I thought. Surely he has nothing to smile about in his life, so he must be slightly retarded to be looking so happy with everything.

Suddenly our eyes met and before I could guiltily avert my gaze, I realized that he was pushing his way into the coffee shop and heading in my direction. 'Oh, no!' I thought, he's actually coming right at me. What could he possibly want? Money of course! What if I can't get rid of him and he messes up my whole interview with John? I really do feel sorry for him, but now is just not the right time or place.

I reached into my bag and scrabbled around for some small change to offer him. As I looked up from my purse, triumphantly clutching some change, I was startled by a softly spoken male voice asking politely, 'Are you perhaps Mrs. Norton?' 'You're John?' was my shocked and embarrassed reply as the grinning cripple nodded in response.

There we sat chatting for two glorious hours. Who would have guessed that these would be two of the most important and enriching hours of my life? John turned out to be anything but retarded or stupid. The truth is he was actually quite bright with a wonderful sense of humour and a contagious smile.

It turns out that John is always smiling because he is genuinely happy. Here is a man who is badly crippled, illiterate due to lack of education, unemployed

and reduced to begging, yet he has no worries and is happy and content with the life he has. Not because he is stupid or knows no better, but because he chooses to make the most of what he does have and can do. What he does have is a skateboard to get around on and a friendly, likeable and happy disposition, which endears people to him and makes them want to help him.

I admit I was totally taken aback and fascinated by this humble man. Not once did he harp on about the negatives of his life or the unfairness of his situation. Instead, he pointed out all the things he had to live for and was grateful and happy about.

Worries especially, were things he never wasted his time and energy on. He simply didn't see the point of upsetting himself over things he could either do nothing about or things that may never happen.

I suddenly became profoundly aware of all my days, weeks, months and years of endless worrying. Thinking back to my recent worries this morning, I was overwhelmed by guilt and embarrassment. My major concern for the day up until this point had been the pimple on the end of my nose. How pathetic!

Simply talking to John for two hours had opened up a new world for me. A world free of worry. I realized that all of us, especially myself, have to put our worries into perspective. The moment we start to worry, we should think of those who are far worse off than us and truly have major problems, which they would willingly trade for ours in a split-second.

Often the things we worry about are things we cannot change or are simply trivial things, which certainly don't warrant upsetting ourselves over.

*Worry is like a rocking chair that gives  
you something to do but never gets you  
anywhere*

**J Jelinek**

Now, every time I start to worry, I think of John, who in my eyes should have a mountain of worries considering his circumstances. Then I think of my situation. I have a home, a car, a job, a supportive family, I'm well educated and want for nothing. What could I possibly worry about? So worry for me is a thing of the past and I hope that my story has encouraged you to think twice before you worry.

*" Worry does not empty tomorrow of its  
sorrow;  
it empties today of its strength."*

**Unknown**

*Chapter 12**Limiting  
Beliefs*

*If you believe 'I can,'  
you are correct.*

*If you believe, 'I can't,'  
you are also completely correct.*

*It is a fact that you become like the person  
you think and believe you are.*

**Warren & Sally**

*“I Believe I Can!”*

*I fell,*  
you were there to catch me  
and offer support.  
*I cried,*  
you were there to wipe my tears  
and encourage me.  
*I failed,*  
you were there to help me.  
*I succeeded,*  
you were there to praise me.  
*When there was laughter,*  
you laughed with me, not at me.  
*I said I can't,*  
you said I could.  
For all these reasons, today  
*“I believe I can!”*

*Sally Eichhorst*

Ever wondered how Flea Trainers stop the fleas from escaping their enclosure? Well, it's a simple theory of belief that works every time.

The fleas are put in a box with the lid on. The fleas repeatedly try to jump out of the box, but are unable to as the lid prevents their escape. After some time when the lid is eventually removed, the fleas continue to jump, but they will not jump high enough to escape the box. Why not? Because they believe they can't!

Of course they can, but by repeatedly trying unsuccessfully with the lid on, they eventually resign themselves to the fact that it's impossible, with the result that it literally becomes impossible even with the lid off. They have conditioned themselves to jump only so high and that is all they believe they can do.

In the same respect, if you have limiting beliefs about yourself, you are restricted from creating the life you want and achieving all you are capable of.

**Here are just a few examples of some people's ridiculously limiting beliefs....**

*"Learn secretarial skills or else get married."*

**Modelling agency, rejecting Marilyn Monroe in 1944**

*"Can't act or sing. Slightly bald. Can dance a little."*

**A Film Co. verdict on Fred Astaire's 1928 screen test**

*"Everything that can be invented  
has been invented."*

**Director of the US Patent Office, 1899**

*"The aeroplane is scientifically impossible."*

**Royal Society president Lord Kelvin, 1897-9**

*"Brain work will cause women  
to go bald."*

**Berlin professor, 1914**

*"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the  
way out."*

**Decca Recording Co. rejecting the Beatles, 1962**

*Chapter 13*

# Game Plan

*The minute you start talking about what  
you're going to do if you lose, you have lost.*

**George Shultz**

# *THE GAME*

*The Game of Life  
is what you make of it.  
You choose to win or lose,  
sink or swim,  
fall or rise.*

*Every day the Game starts over  
and each player has a chance to try  
again - to play his music,  
to run her race,  
to win a battle,  
to save face.*

**Sally Eichhorst**

Try this! Before you even attempt to go out and start your day, devise a game plan to help you win before you even begin.

What are we talking about? Every morning when we wake up:

- § If we feel depressed, we whistle our favourite tune.
- § If we feel angry, we will laugh at ourselves and others.
- § If we feel fear, we will face it and move forward.
- § If we feel worried, we will take positive action to expel it.
- § If we feel incompetent, we will remind ourselves that we have succeeded before.
- § If we feel sick, we will think of those far worse off.
- § If we feel unsure, we will make sure!

- § If we feel inferior, we will raise our heads, stand up straight, push out our chests and stride forward confidently.
- § If we feel that we don't matter, we will remember that everyone matters and has something special and unique to offer.

This is our GAME PLAN. What is yours? If you don't have one, why not adopt ours from this moment?

*Chapter 14**Is It A Problem  
Or An  
Opportunity?*

*The block of granite which is an obstacle in  
the pathway of the weak, becomes a stepping-  
stone in the pathway of the strong*

**Thomas Carlyle**

Legend has it that there once lived a wise old King who was looking for a new advisor. This was a position of great importance and required a special kind of man. The wise old King had a plan. He had a gigantic rock inconveniently placed in the middle of the roadway to his Kingdom. He then hid in nearby bushes so that he would have a clear view of all that passed and came across the obstacle.

A number of highly respected officials came past. They cursed and groaned about the state of the road, complaining that the King should take better care of his roads and of them. None of them even attempted to move the great rock and all walked around it. Wealthy merchants and others of position and standing did the same. Most complained and yet not one did anything about the obstacle in question. They all walked around it.

Just when the King was losing hope, a

young peasant walked past laden with baskets of fruit to sell at the market. He approached the rock and without hesitation, placed his baskets down and attempted to move the great rock from the road. It wasn't an easy task and took much effort and some time before the peasant managed to successfully move the rock aside.

The King was thrilled. He summoned the peasant to his chambers and pronounced him the new King's Advisor, easily the most respected and sought after post of all officials. Why? Because it took a special kind of man not to complain about problems or obstacles. It took a special kind of man not to blame others for obstacles or problems in their path. Indeed it took a special kind of man to rather take action and remove the obstacle without hesitation instead of walking away from it or avoiding it.

When the wise old King made the

announcement to his Kingdom, he told them that every obstacle, more often than not presents a hidden opportunity. An obstacle is a challenge to either learn from or improve one's condition, even if the reward is not always clear or visible. The new King's Advisor had learned what many never understand and was thus a special kind of man.

Think about it - what 'huge rocks' or obstacles that are in your life at the moment, may actually be hidden nuggets of opportunity for you to gain from?

*Two men went to the Australian outback  
to sell shoes for their Shoe Company.*

*One called his boss and said.*

*"Sir, there's no opportunity here,  
no one wears shoes.*

*The second man, called his boss  
and exclaimed*

*"Sir, there's tremendous opportunity here,  
no one wears shoes!"*

*Unknown*

*Chapter 15**Think Of Those  
Far Worse Off*

*Whatever your situation, there are always countless people who would trade places with you at the drop of a hat.*

**Warren & Sally**

It all started late October 1992 with a visit to the Dentist and then a referral to a Periodontist to cure a simple abscess.

Dozens of injections later, Sandy Potgieter went into convulsions as a major nerve was hit. Little did she know that this would be the least of her worries and only the beginning of her traumatic journey.

The following day Sandy awoke to a violent headache, which progressively worsened. She was hospitalised and diagnosed with meningitis. Two days later she could not move from the waist down as paralysis set in.

Six weeks later, doctors told her that the damage was irreparable and she would be paralysed for life.

Sandy learned to accept her fate and cope with life as a paraplegic. In her

wheelchair she felt she could still manoeuvre herself and make herself useful.

This was short-lived as seven months later a violent and worse headache again struck. Sandy awoke the following morning to find she was paralysed from the neck down except for partial use of her arms.

They operated on the top of her spine with little effect. She had to learn all sorts of things again, including feeding herself.

With her third attack, Sandy was eventually diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis, possibly triggered off by the meningitis.

Sandy did not however allow herself to be depressed. Her husband and family willed her not to give up. She had always been a fighter and fight she would.

Another major attack came and she lost complete use of her arms as well as becoming paralysed on the one side of her face. She couldn't swallow or talk and everyone felt it was over. 'Tickets', as she would say with her positively contagious sense of humour.

She attended speech therapy where she learnt to talk again on a breath of air. Through putting a spoon on her tongue they also taught her to swallow again.

" I very seldom feel really down, ' Sandy said. 'I don't want sympathy or even to talk about it. Not that I want to block it out, I just want to get on with things. I accept it and live one day at a time."

With her next attack she lost her eyesight completely. First it was blurry, then darkness came.

She recalled waking in the morning and asking her husband, John, to please open the curtains, but they were open, only she could not see.

Each attack seemed to take a bit more away from her but her philosophy remained that it was no good complaining as it made herself and everyone else around her miserable.

Sandy continued, 'Every day I would peer out and try and see, until one day I did! I have really learned to appreciate what I still have.'

She said she wished she could tap into the ninety something percent of her brain she didn't use, as she was sure she would then be able to move freely again.

This was clearly an extremely positive lady. 'Once you come to terms with it,

you either give up or fight on' she said. 'I really believe that if you're going to think negative thoughts and complain all the time, it pushes people away. Friends don't want to come and hear about how ill I am. I've got to think positive. I don't like to be treated differently.'

Even though each attack seemed to lead to further deterioration, she said she didn't dwell on what was going to happen in the future. She lived day to day and appreciated every one, knowing she just had to persevere and learn to manage herself.

'Somehow you do cope – you get this inner strength and carry on.' She said many people may think, what's the reason for living if things can't improve? But every attack made her more determined to fight and keep going.

She was grateful for the things she did still have, saying one thing she had really learnt to do was appreciate things she once took for granted.

Listening to people complaining, Sandy often wished she could make them realise how silly their complaints were.

She may have lost a few things but she still had a strong will and belief in herself. She still had her wonderful husband and daughters, she still had her sense of humour and felt it was incredibly important to keep one sane and happy no matter what the circumstances.

What a wonderful, brave and courageous lady this was!

Sandy passed away in April 1998 and remains a shining light of courage and encouragement to all the lives she touched.

Whenever we are feeling depressed or sorry for ourselves, we take a moment to think about Sandy's five year ordeal.

This makes us aware of just how insignificant our worries and problems are.

Next time you are feeling depressed, take a moment to think about this yourself!

*Chapter 16**It's A Funny  
Thing ... This  
Time We Live  
In!*

*" If you look at what you have in life,  
You'll always have more.  
If you look at what you don't have in  
life,  
You'll never have enough."*

**Oprah Winfrey**

It's a funny thing - this time we live in. A time of wide and complicated highways, but narrow and simple viewpoints. A time of increased spending, but less to show for it.

What about all the conveniences to save time, yet we have less time? There are also plenty of experts, but more problems. There are so many more medical options, yet less wellness.

We watch our possessions grow whilst our values shrink. We know how to make a living, but have forgotten how to make a life. We seem to buy so much more and yet enjoy it so much less. Our incomes may have grown, but our morals have shrunk. It's a time of quantity rather than quality.

Above all this however, it's a time when you can choose to do what it takes to make a difference for the better.

Whether it means simply keeping an open mind or building strong, respectable values and morals or making the most of your life and enjoying it to the full.

It is definitely a time of greater opportunities and an abundance of choices for you to make the most of.

# MORE

*It seems in Life we always want more.  
More to see, more to have, more to be.  
It's funny how more never seems enough  
and how more often means less of  
something else.*

*The truth is; there is always more  
to everything that meets the eye  
if only we choose to truly see it.*

**Sally Eichhorst**

# *Conclusion*

*"If you can dream it you can do it."*

**Walt Disney**

Life has led us to the following conclusions....

- § We've concluded that it's not what you have in life, but who you have and who you are in life that counts.
- § We've concluded that you should never compare yourself to the best others can do, but rather to the best you can do.
- § We've concluded that it is not what happens to us that's important. It's what we do about it.
- § We've concluded that we can all keep going long after we believe we can't.
- § We've concluded that becoming the people we want to be is a constant process.
- § We've concluded that we are responsible for our own actions, choices and decisions, no matter what.

- § We've concluded that maturity is not age related. It's more a matter of what types of experiences you've had and the lessons you've learnt from them.
- § We've concluded that we should never tell anyone that their dreams are impossible or far-fetched, especially ourselves because people without dreams don't have much.
- § We've concluded that who we are may have been influenced by our background and circumstances, but at the end of the day, we are all responsible for who we choose to become.
- § We've concluded that money, material assets, power, fame, knowledge, intelligence and credentials on the wall do not necessarily make you a decent human being.
- § We've concluded that great love and

great achievements involve great risks but are well worth it.

- § We've concluded that you should not judge others by their relatives or the life they happened to be born into.
- § We've concluded that you never lose unless you lose the lesson.
- § We've concluded that you should always judge your success by what you had to give up or sacrifice in order to get it.
- § We've concluded that life's too short to leave things for another day, as we may not have another day.

‘Today’ will never dawn again. ‘Today’ is a precious gift that can slip away with alarming speed. Wasted, it will eat a chunk out of your life, but lived well, it will fulfil your life and make it whole.

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