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A VIEW FROM THE TOP: AN INTRODUCTION

Your view from the top is going to be better all the time.

I regularly meet people who don't focus on what is important, who have a skewed idea—or no idea at all!—of what real success is. Often, these people feel success equals money, and vice versa. After a lifetime of studying success, I'm here to tell you that it isn't so. This is what I know to be true about the success-money connection:

- Money will buy you a house…but it won't buy you a home.
- Money will buy you a companion…but it won't buy you a friend.
- Money will buy you a bed...but it won't buy you a good night's sleep.
- Money will buy you a good time…but it won't buy you peace of mind.

If your standard of living is your #1 priority, your *quality of life* probably won't ever improve. But if the quality of your life is your #1 priority, your standard of living will most definitely improve. That's what *A View from the Top* is all about—reaching your goals and being the very best person you can be. Tough assignment? Maybe. Worth the effort? Absolutely!

This guidebook is designed to help you help yourself. Here you'll find many exercises designed to get you thinking about what you really want out of life. More importantly, though, it will help you organize a step-by-step strategy for achieving all you want. At its heart is my philosophy that you can't just dream about and hope for the things you want—*you have to take action*. You'll find lots of Action Steps here, things you should do right now to live your dreams.

Maybe you think you have too many problems to succeed fully, too many obstacles in your way. Just remember that of 300 or so world-class leaders over the last century—a list that includes Winston Churchill, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Helen Keller, and Mother Teresa—a full 75 percent of them were raised in poverty or were abused or had some serious physical defect. But these great men and women understood that it's not what happens to you, it's how you handle what happens to you that's going to make the difference.

Can you have it all? That's mainly up to you. Are you willing to work for it? Are you willing to follow the formula? Are you willing to start with the right attitude, add the specific skills, and live by the Golden Rule? If you are, and if you're willing to put all that on a sturdy character base, then you have an honest, legitimate shot at complete success.

I promise, your view from the top will be magnificent!

Zig Ziglar

GETTING STARTED: YOUR PERSONAL COMMITMENT

I,	, am serious about setting and reaching my goals in
life. So, on this	day of 20, I promise myself that I will follow these sug-
gestions in setting and reachin	g my goals.
I am willing to forego tempora	ary pleasures for the pursuit of happiness and to strive for excel-
	ts. I am willing to discipline my physical and emotional appetites
to reach the long-range goals o	of happiness and accomplishment.
I recognize that to reach my g	oals I must grow personally and have the right mental attitude, so
	se my knowledge in my chosen field and regularly read positive
growth books and magazines.	I will also attend lectures and seminars, take courses in personal
growth and development, and	utilize my time more effectively by listening to motivational and
educational recordings. I will l	keep a list of these activities.
Persistence and commitment a	are prerequisite to reaching my goals, so I promise I will work
faithfully on my goals daily. I	agree to chart my progress daily. And I commit myself to reaching
the top, where I know I'll enjo	y a magnificent view.
	Signed:

SUCCESS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

You were designed for success. You were endowed with the seeds of greatness. But would you know success if it tapped you on the shoulder and gave you its business card? Sounds odd, but many people who come up to me and say they want to be successful can't answer one key question—*What is success*?

tion—What is success?
Answer the following questions to help you define what success means to you.
What is your personal definition of success? How will you know when you're successful?
How will it look and feel? Are you sure you'd recognize it?
How close are you now? Or, given your definition of success, have you already succeeded?
According to your personal definition, what specific things do you have left to do in order to be successful?
What three actions can you take starting today to move further down the path toward living you personal definition of success?
Action #1

Action #2				
Action #3				

YOUR DAY BEFORE VACATION

Isn't it true that most people get the most accomplished the day before they are to leave on vacation? It seems to be the day they have the best attitude and use their skills to the best of their ability. I magine what you could accomplish if you were that focused *every* day. You can work on this.

Are some people born for success while others are not? Is the passion to succeed due to nature or nurture, skill or attitude? What do you think? On the next few pages, let's begin to find out.

For each attribute or personal asset listed below, check whether you believe it is a skill or an attitude. Then, no matter what you check, decide whether or not you currently have it as part of your own personality.

			Have it?		
	Skill	Attitude	Yes	No	
Honest			O	O	
Intelligent			0	0	
Goal-oriented			0	0	
Organized			0	0	
Responsible			0	0	
Committed			0	0	
Caring			0	0	
Dependable			0	0	
Integrity			0	O	
Smart worker			0	O	
Optimistic			0	0	
Punctual			0	0	
Self-starting			0	0	
Enthusiastic			0	0	
Motivated			0	0	
Decisive			0	O	
Focused			0	O	
Disciplined			O	О	

Momentum			0	О	
Knowledge			0	0	
Experience			0	0	
			Hav		
	Skill	Attitude	Yes	No	
Loyal			0	0	
Competent			0	O	
Confident			0	0	
Extra-miler			0	0	
Team player			0	O	
Encourager			0	O	
Energetic			0	0	
Self-worth			0	O	
Hope			0	0	
Wisdom			0	0	
Having completed the preceding learnable attitudes? Defend you	•	<u>-</u>		s a matter of i	nborn skill or
Now jot a few notes about the any surprises? Did you have moded? What did this exercise mak	ore or fewer of	the ingredients for			

WANTING AND NEEDING: TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS

You can have everything in life you want if you just help enough people get what *they* want. Problem is, too few people know what they really want—and if the things they really want are things they really need. There's a difference, and today's the day you start sorting it all out. The following exercises will help you get organized.

Fill in the blanks below with things you really want out of life and things you truly need. Want Need How do you account for any discrepancies between what you want in life and what you truly need? How much time and energy have you spent trying to get what you want rather than what you need?

What three actions can you take starting today that will help you shift your focus from your wants to your needs?
Action #1
Action #2
Action #3
How many things on your <i>Needs</i> list do you already have?

FEAR AND GUILT: EASING YOUR BURDEN

Fear and guilt, we all feel them sometimes. The trick is to get past them in order to realize your fullest potential. And it's some trick—nothing easy about it. It takes work. But it's work worth the effort, for it lets you be your very best self.

In the space below, write down some of your fears. While you can list things like "I'm scared of the dark" or "Man, snakes sure frighten me," I'd rather you list the unexpected things you're afraid life might bring you—or what it might fail to bring.

What I fear in my career
What I fear in my family life
What I fear in the rest of my personal life

Now make a list of things you feel guilty about. What things prey on your mind, maybe keep you up at night—things you didn't handle well, things you wish you'd done differently.
What I feel guilty about in my career
What I feel guilty about in my family life
What I feel guilty about in the rest of my personal life

How are fear and guilt holding you back? What could you be doing—or doing better—if the guilt and the fear went away?
What three actions can you take starting today to start lifting the burden of your fear and guilt?
Action #1
Action #2
Action #3

PERSONAL EVALUATION: RATING YOUR LIFE-PLUS OR MINUS

Here's a simple exercise—or is it? For each of the categories below, please circle either Plus or Minus. By circling Plus, you're indicating that things are going well in that area of your life, that you see it as an asset right now. By circling Minus, however, you're telling yourself that something isn't the way you want it to be right now, the ideal indication that some serious goal setting is in order.

	Plus	Minus	
Healthy	Plus	Minus	
Reasonably Prosperous	Plus	Minus	
Peace of Mind	Plus	Minus	
Secure	Plus	Minus	
Friends	Plus	Minus	
Good Family Relationships	Plus	Minus	
Норе	Plus	Minus	
Now just jot a few notes about the experie would be? Was it difficult? Were there any			

A BALANCED LIFE: EVERYTHING STARTS WITH YOU

I remember watching the old Ed Sullivan TV show and seeing this guy whose job was balancing a bunch of spinning plates on tall sticks. (And you think your job is tough!) By the end of his act, he had about a dozen plates all spinning around up there, not one of them crashing to the ground. Life can be a big balancing act too. All that balancing can be done, but it takes effort. It takes concentration, commitment, and planning. And it takes understanding on your part that all the various aspects of your life are interconnected.

Your personal life affects your family life...
which affects your business life...
which affects you physically...
which affects you mentally...
which affects you spiritually...
which affects you financially...
which affects you personally.

It's an unending cycle of cause and effect, all spinning around like that guy's plates.



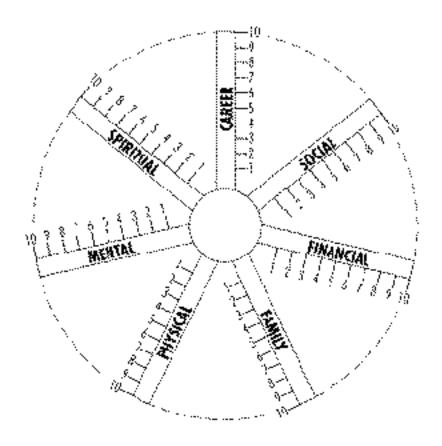
Remember:

Everything in your life affects everything else, and everything starts with YOU!

BALANCING THE WHEEL: YOUR LIFE'S PRIORITIES

On the "Wheel of Life" below, each spoke represents one aspect of your life. Rate yourself on each spoke—in other words, place a dot next to the number you think best represents where you are currently with that aspect of your life. How healthy, how secure it is right now.

A 1 means poor, and a 10 means absolutely excellent. When you're done rating yourself, connect the dots you've made with a curved line. You will probably find that the "bumps" you are experiencing in life are noted clearly on this wheel. These are the areas in which you need to set new goals.



COUNTING YOUR BLESSINGS: AN EXERCISE IN GRATITUDE

To be successful, you must be able to express your gratitude and appreciation for all those things going right in your life. In the space provided below, please count your many blessings. Make extra copies of this sheet if necessary. And consider referring to them at least once a week, if not daily. You never want to forget that gratitude fine-tunes the engine powering your success.

wnat	I am grateful for in my career
1	
2.	
3.	
4.	
<u> </u>	
What 1	I am grateful for in my family
1.	
2.	
3. —	
3.	
3	
4	

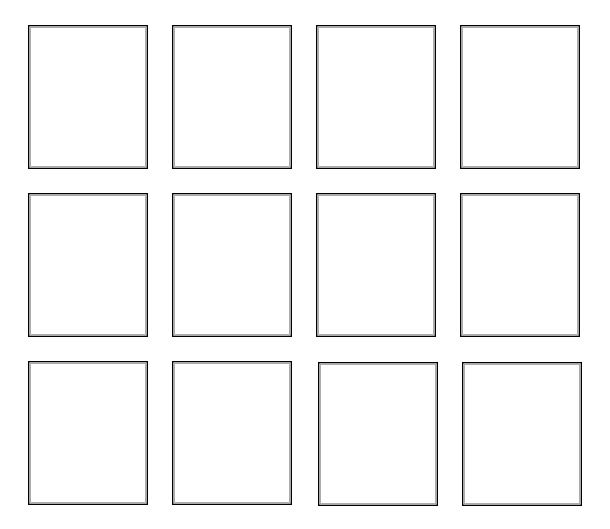
What .	grateful for in other parts of my personal life	
1		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

NO ONE IS ALONE: THE WALL OF GRATITUDE

Now let's pay tribute to people you're grateful for. Below there are ten boxes, a kind of blueprint for your Wall of Gratitude. Imagine these boxes are picture frames. In each frame, write a person's name—not just any person's name, however. Each name written there should belong to a man or woman who have made a positive impact on your life.

It can be a friend, an employer, an employee...it can be a teacher, minister, a member of your church...or it can be a family member or some other loved one. The only limit here is that they all are those you want to remember as people who have helped you along the way.

After completing this exercise, seriously consider creating a real wall of gratitude, with real pictures. Looking daily at these very important people will help you honor those who assisted you and remind you to be of help to others.



Now briefly write why you are grateful to each person you've included on your Wall of Gratitude. Remind yourself, in words, of they impact each has had on your life.

1.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
2.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
3.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
4.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
5.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
6.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
7.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
8.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
9.	Name:
	Why Grateful:
10.	Name:
	Why Grateful:

WRITING YOUR EULOGY

Now this exercise might seem spooky, but it is essential to complete if you are serious about being the very best person you can be. I want you to write your own eulogy. Yes, you read correctly—write your own eulogy.

In the space below, record how you want to be remembered. Then study it, and decide how close you are to being that kind of person. Ask yourself what you can do, starting today, to be the person you're writing about.

In Memory of	

SETTING GOALS: YOUR DREAM LIST

Now it's time to just do it, to get started on the specifics of setting your goals. We're going to use a proven-effective process consisting of seven action steps. By the time you complete this exercise, you will be armed with a complete set of well-written, achievable goals. Let's begin!

Action Step #1—Let your imagination run wild. In the spaces below marked "Dream," print everything you want to be, do, or have. (Printing allows you concentrate more.) If you have a family, be sure to include your mate and children when you set your goals. Don't limit yourself at all—that's why we call it a Dream List.

For now, just fill in the "Dream." We'll take care of the other items later on. Make multiple copies of this form prior to beginning.

Dream List (or Everything I think I want to be, do or have)

Dream:	
Why?	
Dream:	
Why?	

Action Step #2—Wait 24 to 48 hours after completing your Dream List, and then for each item on it, ask yourself, "Why?" Now you can fill in the "Why" line on the Dream List on the previous page. If you can't verbalize in one sentence why you want to be, do, or have what you have written as a dream, then it truly is a dream, not a real goal. Cross it off your list.

Action Step #3—Once you have completed your Dream List, concentrate on each dream individually and ask yourself these five questions about it. You must be able to answer "Yes" honestly to each question in order to consider that dream worthy of being a goal at this time.

1.	Is this really my goal?	Yes	No
2.	Is it morally right and fair to everyone concerned?	Yes	No
3.	Is it consistent with my other goals?	Yes	No
4.	Can I emotionally commit myself to finish this goal?	Yes	No
5.	Can I "see" myself reaching this goal?	Yes	No

Strike from your list any Dream List item for which you couldn't give all "Yes" answers to.

Action Step #4—Then, for each remaining goal on your Dream List, ask yourself the questions:

1.	Will reaching this goal make me happier?	Yes	No
2.	Will reaching this goal make me healthier?	Yes	No
3.	Will reaching goal make me more prosperous?	Yes	No
4.	Will reaching this goal make me more friends?	Yes	No
5.	Will reaching this goal give me peace of mind?	Yes	No
6.	Will reaching this goal make me more secure?	Yes	No
7.	Will reaching this goal improve my relationships with others?	Yes	No

If you couldn't answer "Yes" to at least one of these questions, eliminate that item from your list.

Some cautions: Don't confuse pleasure with happiness when answering these questions. And be sure to consider your family when answering them.

Action Step #5—Divide the remaining Dream List items into three categories:

- Short-Range (can be achieved in one month or less)
- Intermediate (can be achieved in one month to one year)
- Long-Range (can be achieved in one year or more)

Go back to your Dream List and, for the items that remain, fill in the category section with the appropriate choice: SR (short-range), I (intermediate), or LR (long-range).

Remember:

- 1. Some goals must be **big** (out of reach—not out of sight) to make you stretch and grow to your full potential.
- 2. Some goals must be **long-range** to keep you on track and greatly reduce the possibility of short-range frustration.
- 3. Some goals must be small and **daily**, to keep you disciplined and in touch with the reality of the nitty-gritties of daily living.
- 4. Some goals must be ongoing.
- 5. Some goals (sales, educational, financial, weight loss, etc.) might require **analysis and consultation** to determine where you are before you can set the goals.
- 6. Most goals should be specific. A "nice home" is not as good as a "3,000 square-foot, Tudor-type home with 4 bedrooms, 3 full baths, 2 living spaces." Some goals—such as improving your self-image, becoming a better parent, or getting a better education—are more difficult to pinpoint. Those that are less specific by nature should be broken down into specific tangible steps. For instance, a step to becoming a better parent could be "spend one hour per week one-on-one with each child."

Action Step #6—From your remaining list, choose four goals that are the most important to you, things you need to work on right now. Enter them in your journal, Weekly Planner or Palm Pilot, or simply rewrite them on a separate sheet of paper you can keep with you at all times.

It's essential to track your progress toward your goals. This is where a journal or Day Planner really comes in handy. By recording your progress, you will be encouraged greatly as you work to reach your goals. If this is your first goal-setting effort, you might want to start with two or three short-range goals instead. No need to set the bar impossibly high in the beginning.

Action Step #7—Take any additional goals left on your Dream List and figure out schedules for each. Plot your strategies on these, once again using your journal or Planner or Pilot.

Take this step NOW. Motivation only comes after you start a project.

Congratulations!

You have now invested more time in planning your future than most of your friends, relatives, and associaltes. But there is one more step remaining:

Once again using your journal, Planner or Pilot—or even a regular calendar will do, although you'll need one with some space to write on —plot your strategy for achieving your goals over the next 12 months, including completion dates. This will give you not only a clear map of where you are going on your trip to the top, but, after the fact, a permanent record of your accomplishments as you journeyed there.

REACHING YOUR GOALS: REQUIRED WEEKLY READING

- 1. Make the commitment to reach your goal. "One person with a commitment is worth a hundred who only have an interest."—Mary Crowley.
- Commit yourself to detailed accountability. Record your progress toward your goals every night, and list the six most important things—in order of their importance—you need to do the next day. Daily discipline is the key to reaching your goals.
- 3. Build your life on a solid foundation of honesty, character, integrity, trust, love, and loyalty. This foundation will give you an honest shot at reaching any goal you have set properly.
- 4. Break your intermediate and long-range goals into increments.
- 5. Shape up physically, mentally, and spiritually. It takes energy, mental toughness, and spiritual reinforcement to deal successfully with life's opportunities and to reach your objectives.
 - A. Motivation is the key, and a positive attitude is a must. Read or listen to motivational material on a daily basis.
 - B. Take care of your physical health—proper diet, reasonable sleep, exercise, and the elimination of poisons (alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes).
 - C. Don't let others rain on your parade—or don't be a SNIOP (Susceptible to the Negative Influence of Other People).
- 6. Be prepared to change. You can't control the weather, inflation, interest rates, Wall Street, etc. Change your decision to move toward a goal carefully—but be willing to change your direction to get there, as conditions and circumstances demand.
- 7. Share your "give-up" goals (give up smoking, being rude, procrastinating, being late, eating too much, etc.) with many people. Chances are excellent they're going to encourage you.
- 8. Become a team player. Learn to work with a team—such as your family, corporate associates, etc. Remember, you can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want.
- 9. See the reaching. In your imagination, see yourself receiving that diploma, getting that job or promotion, making that speech, moving into the home of your dreams, achieving that weight-loss goal, building that financial nest egg, etc.
- 10. Each time you reach a goal, your confidence will grow so that you can do bigger and better things. After accomplishing any goal, record it in your journal, Weekly Planner or Palm Pilot.
- 11. Remember, what you get by reaching your destination isn't nearly as important as what you become by reaching your goals—what you will become is the winner you were born to be!

ON THE ROAD TO THE TOP: FORGIVENESS

No matter how well defined and actionable your goals are, you're not going to truly reach them until you do two very important things. There is no question in my mind that if you do these two things honestly and completely, you will reach the top.

Action Step #1— Make a list of all the people who have assisted you in your journey. That step's already taken care of if you did the exercise on page 21 of this guidebook.

Action Step #2— Make another list, this one of the folks who have wronged you along the way. This list is important because you need to forgive them for whatever it is they've done to you.

Use the following space to draw up your forgiveness list. Copy this page if you need more space.

Person I Need to Forgive:	
Why I Need to Forgive Him or Her:	
Person I Need to Forgive:	
Why I Need to Forgive Him or Her:	
Person I Need to Forgive:	
Person I Need to Forgive:	
Why I Need to Forgive Him or Her:	
D IN 1 E '	
Person I Need to Forgive:	
Why I Need to Forgive Him or Her:	
Person I Need to Forgive:	

YOU ARE WHAT YOU THINK: THE POWER OF SELF-TALK

What you say to yourself is extraordinarily important. As you work toward achieving your goals, I want you to listen to your "self-talk" for a few days, those internal messages you send yourself sometimes without even being aware. Today's the day you start paying attention!

Listen to your self-talk for no longer than a week. Jot down any messages as you become aware of them. Then, after dividing them into positive and negative messages, record them below.

If all your self-talk is positive, good for you. If you have negative self-talk—and who doesn't?— get to work turning those debilitating messages on their heads! Copy this page and the next page if you need more space.

. <u></u>				
•				
egative S	Self-Messages			
Rewri	te the negative in	nto a positive.		

Positive Self-Messages

How You Know You're at the Top: 15 Final Truths

- 1. You're at the top when...you clearly understand that failure is an event, not a person—and that a failure doesn't break you, in the same way that success does not make you.
- 2. You're at the top when...you understand that yesterday ended last night and today is your brand-new day.
- 3. You're at the top when...you've made friends with your past, are focused on the present, and are optimistic about your future.
- 4. You're at the top when...you're filled with faith, hope, and love, and live without anger, greed, guilt, envy, or thoughts of revenge.
- 5. You're at the top when...you're mature enough to delay gratification and shift your focus from your rights to your responsibilities.
- 6. You're at the top when...you know that failure to stand for what is right morally is the prelude to being the victim of what is criminally wrong.
- 7. You're at the top when...you're secure in who you are so you're at peace with God and in fellowship with man.
- 8. You're at the top when...you've made friends of your adversaries and have gained the love and respect of those who know you best.
- 9. You're at the top when...you understand that others can give you pleasure but that genuine pleasure comes when you do things for others.
- 10. You're at the top when... you're pleasant to the crowd, courteous to the rude, and generous to the needy.
- 11. You're at the top when...you love the unlovable, give hope to the hopeless, friendship to the friendless, and encouragement to the discouraged.
- 12. You're at the top when...you look back in forgiveness, forward in hope, down in compassion, and up with gratitude.
- 13. You're at the top when...you know that he who would be the greatest among you must become the servant of all.
- 14. *You're at the top when...*you recognize, confess, develop and use your God-given physical, mental, and spiritual abilities to the glory of God and for the benefit of mankind.
- 15. You're at the top when...you stand in front of the Creator of the universe and He says to you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

QUOTES AND NOTES

"In times of change, the learners shall inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists." — *Eric Hoffer*

"If man can take moldy bread and make penicillin, just consider what a loving God can make out of you." — *Muhammad Ali*

"Each of us will one day be judged by our standard of life, not by our standard of living. By our measure of giving, not our measure of wealth. By our simple goodness, not our seeming greatness." — William Arthur Ward

"America is great because America is good. And as long as America is good, it will continue to be great. But, if it ever leaves that goodness, it will cease to be great." — *Alexis de Tocqueville*

"Your relationships have more to do with your physical health than the food you eat, the exercise program you're on—even the genes you inherited." — *Dr. Dean Ornish*

"You cannot consistently perform in a manner inconsistent with the way you see yourself." — Dr. Joyce Brothers

"If the outlook isn't good, try to up-look. It's always good." — Helen Keller

"It's much better not to have sight than it is not to have a vision." — Helen Keller

"My sight grows dim, but my vision is clearer than ever." — Dr. Albert Schweitzer

"I have a right not to have a degree. I don't have a right not to have an education." — Fred Smith

"Never give up on a dream just because of the length of time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyhow." — *Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



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