

THE *Dream Movement* SERIES

Finding Your Dream

By Marcia Wieder
America's Dream Coach[®]

Number Six



In selected anecdotes in this book, names and identifying characteristics have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals.

Copyright ©2005

All right reserved. No part of this e-book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from Marcia Wieder.

Dream Coach® is a registered trademark of Marcia Wieder.

Produced by On the Mark Branding
www.onthemarkbranding.com

Book design by Michele Singh

E-books by Marcia Wieder

Marcia's Dream Moments: 52 Simple Ways to Get What You Want

The Dream Movement Series

Volume 1

Becoming a Dreamer

Going Back to Basics

Overcoming Failure

Volume 2

Accessing Your Power

Believing in Your Dreams

Finding Your Dream

Volume 3

Taking Time

Living a Rich Life

The Fundamentals of Ease Series

100 Ways to Make Life Easier

100 More Ways to Make Life Easier

Visit www.dreamuniversity.com

Finding Your Dream




Introduction

Who are you on the inside? What is most important to you in life? Do you really know? Our dreams are extensions of ourselves. In order to live a dream-come-true life, you have to invest time and effort in learning about yourself. In this book, you'll share the experiences of real people, including myself, people who have struggled to recognize and define what it is that makes them unique and what brings joy and passion to their lives. As you will see, whether a specific dream comes true or not, the very process of finding your dream can be life-changing.

—Marcia Wieder

Table of Contents

Quality of Life	7
Recognizing Your Dream	8
Detachment	11
The Death of a Dream	12
Identity	14
Flow	16
Being You with You	17
From Dreamless to Destiny	18
Discovering a Deeper Place	20
Your Typical Day	21
Your Ideal Day	22
Prime Time	23
Your Ease Meter	24
Passion Pulse	26
Five Rechargers	26
Daily Practice	29
Creating Your Daily Practice	30
Personal Pause Strategies	31
Five Things in Five Minutes	32
Insights	34



“ Passion
is a great
barometer. ”

QUALITY OF LIFE

Living a dream-come-true life is more about creating a certain quality of life and less about finding a particular dream. But for many of us, this process often starts by discovering or accomplishing a special dream, such as establishing the relationship of our dreams or the career of our dreams.

When my friend Larry went off to Penn State, he was described as a “young genius,” since in high school he was an honors student and a football star. It was shocking to us all, especially him, when he nearly flunked out during his first semester. He dragged himself back into the architectural engineering program for as long as he could stand it, which wasn’t very long.

The truth was he was an artist, not an engineer. He dreamed of being the next Frank Lloyd Wright, but family and friends from the small farm town where he grew up did not prize art. So he sold out on his dream by focusing more on the technical side as opposed to the artistic aspect of architecture, which he loved. Finally, he just couldn’t take it any longer. As Larry began to find himself, he also found the strength and courage to pursue his own dream. He reclaimed the artist that he is and now is living his dream as a successful designer.

It’s useful to know what our personal and professional dreams are and to come to terms with what we want. However, keep in mind that ultimately what we are seeking is a new way of living. Although finding or making your dreams come true is wonderful, the essence of living a dream-come-true life requires going deeper. The following pages will take you on this deeper journey.

It’s helpful to know what values matter to you at this particular time in your life. My friend Wendy is a successful business coach. She empowers and inspires people to clarify their goals. What she personally is craving now more than anything else is more fun in her life. Whenever she has a choice or the opportunity to say “yes” or “no,” she asks

herself if this will be fun for her. This question has become a guiding light and assists her in looking at life a little differently. Naturally, the more fun she has, the more successful she is with her clients.

Taking the time to check in and knowing where we are now is critical. From this place, we have access to greater truth and depth about ourselves, our needs and our dreams. And from here, the ability to recognize our dreams puts us directly on our path to creating and living the kind of life we really want.

RECOGNIZING YOUR DREAM

Here are 10 ways to begin to recognize your dream and some telltale signs to show you that you're on the right path. Use them as you explore and seek out your dream. They are designed to help you feel the important qualities that will lead you to what matters to you most.

1. Energy and enthusiasm. If you are excited about a potential opportunity, perhaps can't even sleep, it's worth taking a closer look. Passion is a great barometer. When you think or speak about this dream, you feel energized and alive. These feelings can be a genuine path to your desire. Take the time to investigate.

2. Signs. You are receiving signals or omens or messages, whatever you call them, and it feels like someone or something is pointing you in this direction and making sure you are paying attention. Notice what's happening, and don't miss the obvious ones that come while you are awake or the less-obvious that may come while you are asleep.

3. Thinking. This dream is something you find yourself thinking about a great deal. It is definitely on your mind and it is sometimes all you can think about. Even when you are engaged in other business or play, your thoughts frequently come back to this. Why do you think this is happening?

4. Clarity and/or confusion. You may feel completely sure or unsure that this is for you. Both are fine. Although most of us prefer clarity, the confusion could mean you're just turning it over in your mind. Confusion and fear are often both pres-

ent when we are ready to make a big change in our life. This happens when you are actively looking, thinking and feeling something. Explore it further.

5. Ease and grace. When something just flows and seems to happen effortlessly, that often means it's the right thing for you at this time. Go with the flow. This doesn't mean you might not hit some snags, but there's a different kind of energy around something when it's right. Learn to feel and recognize this force. Learn to move with it.

6. Knowing and trusting. Sometimes we know it's right in our "bones." We know because we know. Confidence is the ability to confide in yourself. Develop this place inside of you by acting on your intuition. Even if you can't explain it to others, if this feels right to you, go for it. Even in some small way, follow your intuition. Take the first step.

7. Shortcuts. When you are being "fast-tracked" to something or by someone and a quicker, easier way is being presented to you, pay attention. This may mean it is the right time and place for you. You may not fully understand why a particular door has opened. Peek inside and see.

8. Connections. When all the right people show up and synchronicity starts to be evident, take a leap forward and get a closer look. Notice what relationships are presenting themselves. Everything happens for a reason. If certain people are available to venture with you and it feels right, why not?

9. Just for you. When all your life experiences make you the perfect person to do this project or endeavor, when it feels

“ Confusion and fear
are often both
present when we are
ready to make a big
change in our life. ”

10 Questions to Help You Recognize Your Dream

1. How is your energy and enthusiasm around this dream?
2. What specific signs are showing up and telling you to explore this further?
3. How much time do you spend thinking about this dream or idea?
4. How clear do you feel about acting on it?
5. Are you at ease about it?
6. How are you in touch with what you know and what you believe about it?
7. What shortcuts are showing up and available to help you?
8. What resources and connections are available to you?
9. Why does this “feel” like it’s right for you?
10. How do you feel about the possibility of having this dream come true?

like this is a dream come true, take a good look and seriously consider this opportunity now. Everything you have done in your life has prepared you to be uniquely you. See how you can use all of you. Stephen had been a chef and award-winning food stylist for many years. He also has a real passion for computers. He was recently offered a new job as a wine and food editor on the Internet, for a new computer magazine. He is the perfect man for the job, since he gets to use all his skills while combining his passions.

10. Joy and abundance. When what you are considering makes your heart sing, when the thought of this brings a smile to your face and feeds your soul, it is probably your dream.

Caterina is a professional coach and speaker who used this checklist when one of her big dreams suddenly surfaced. She had long dreamed of writing a book. When the opportunity was handed to her, her energy and enthusiasm were massive. She was dreaming about it, thinking about it and talking about it every chance she got. She was beautifully poised with ease, grace and confidence when she met with the publisher.

Caterina knew and trusted that she was the right woman for the job, so she pulled together her resources and showed everyone involved that she could do it. The process may not always be this magical, but it is important to realize that, indeed, sometimes it can be.

The exercise of recognizing what we truly want and what will serve us in life is important. Equally—and often more—important is the ability to recognize what no longer serves us and knowing how and when to detach from our dreams. Let's look at that, too.

DETACHMENT

To be able to want something but not have to have it provides a certain type of freedom, a very rich freedom that even money can't buy. Detachment means we are not being limited or controlled by our goals, or even our desires. It's wonderful to dream or to want. And it's equally wonderful not to. I'm sure this concept will come as a shock to many, especially to those who make life about achieving and accomplishing. I know. I was definitely one of those people.

How often have we attained exactly what we thought we wanted, only to come up empty, to feel like “what was that all about?” How often does this still happen to you? If you have become tired of striving, attaining and coming up unfulfilled, you may be playing the “never enough” game. No matter how much we do, have or achieve, it never feels like enough inside our heart.

Strange as it may sound, detaching or letting go may be one answer. Detachment allows us to go for our dreams but in a very different way. Detachment has space around it. There are

“It's wonderful to dream or to want. And it's equally wonderful not to.”

not necessarily hard-and-fast boundaries. There is room allowing for surprises and new opportunities and ideas. Breathing space is required for life to show up and move through and around us.

Having something or everything all figured out and planned, including a picture of what it all looks like, doesn't allow for surprises, much less miracles. Scheduling every hour or every evening doesn't allow for spontaneity, it doesn't allow for life. And for most of us, this is exactly what our heart needs most.

To live the life of a dreamer requires letting go of some structure and allowing for the unknown. It requires us to be vulnerable, to let down our walls and to be open. It requires spaciousness and generosity in order to allow life "to do" us. It requires us to detach from THE outcome. It is this ability to surrender and say "yes" to life, including the unknown, that will ultimately fill most of us with glee and awe, although initially giving up "control" may feel uncomfortable, or even scary.

If we are holding on, forcing and making everything happen, how can we ever truly know the exquisiteness of what life really wants for us? Letting go and allowing life to happen will enliven and awaken us. And as we release thoughts and ideas that limit and constrain us, we can change and grow.

THE DEATH OF A DREAM

Detachment also allows a dream to die when it's time for it to die a natural death. Often we hold onto deceased dreams because we want something to happen so badly. We can be so attached to a specific outcome that we hardly take the necessary time to breathe or rest and to allow for new perspectives or solutions to surface.

When we are detached from our dream, it can be flexible and change, and so can we. It can take us in different directions. Sometimes the death of the dream is exactly what is needed to allow the birth of a new dream. How often have you tried to hold onto something or hold something together that absolutely needed to

fall apart in order to create a whole new form or entity?

In every form of life, from plants to people, there are cycles. They are birth, life or growth, death, decay and rebirth. Our dreams go through this same process. Sometimes we get stuck or attached to one cycle. You can feel this when you are still trying to pour life into something that clearly has died and may even have begun to decay. Gandhi said, "Birth and death are not two different states, but they are different aspects of the same state." Death is necessary for new growth to occur. This is absolutely true about dreams, too. Learn to recognize

“ As one dream
dies, a new dream
is born. ”

and honor these cycles and you will be much more in touch with life and your deepest aspirations.

My friend Anna cycled through this process. She had big dreams of being a famous actress or singer in Los Angeles when her husband Marc became very sick and died at the young age of 33. While grieving at home with her family in New Jersey, she met a kind and loving man, whom she later married. Through her loss, Anna developed profound levels of compassion, independence and inner strength. Now her dream is to spend quality time with her husband as they take care of each other. She is often found singing while cooking dinner at home.

Depending on where you are around your own dreams and your ability to trust and allow life to unfold, you could have many different reactions to Anna's choice. You may see it as though she abandoned her dream, or perhaps that she was a victim of circumstances. I tend to look at the energy around it. She is happy, loving and fully present in her life. Need I say more?

With all the love and support Anna receives from her new partner, she's been able to heal and strengthen who she is as an artist. She recently landed a big break as a lead singer and just

recorded what we hope will be a hit song. What might have originally looked like a huge compromise was the very thing she needed to make all her dreams come true.

My friend Tom was approaching 50 and fast-tracking up the corporate ladder at IBM when he was “pink-slipped.” Devastated, it took him weeks to get out of bed, and several more weeks before he started to shave and get dressed. Slowly, he began to reconnect with himself and to connect for the first time with a depth that he never knew he had.

He began to do some volunteer work, assisting people like himself who had been suddenly laid off. Before he knew it, he had a small but thriving business where people were paying him for his support. He told me this was the most satisfying work he had ever done. He was being of service, truly lending a helping hand and able to support himself. Even though he was making far less money than in his corporate-executive days, he felt so much richer. In retrospect, Tom says losing his job, and for a while his self-esteem, was a small price to pay for the life he now has.

As one dream died, a new dream was born, and with that a new identity emerged.

IDENTITY

A few years ago I met Tatiana during her short visit from the Ukraine. She told me that her dream was to someday be a woman business owner. This was confusing, because I thought she already was. She explained that although she did represent many Russian artists to art galleries in the United States, she could not classify herself as a businesswoman since she had never been paid for her services.

I was considering doing some business in her country so I asked her many questions and she gave me much useful information, as well as some personal contacts. For this service I paid her \$1.00. She would not accept more. But the value of that dollar was priceless, for now she could begin to imagine herself as a businesswoman.

A year later I saw Tatiana again. She was wearing that dollar

bill in a small gold necklace that one of her artists made for her and was running a successful and, yes, profitable art business. Recognizing herself as a businesswoman gave her the incentive to actually become one. Sometimes a small shift can have a significant impact.

Then there's the other end of the spectrum. For a long time, I was foremost a woman business owner. That was my prime identity and who I perceived myself to be. But I saw that that was limiting, and over a period of time I switched to being a Dreams Come True consultant. Guess what? This is another

“ Tremendous freedom comes from discovering our true selves. ”

label, a new package, and still limiting. As I continue this process of peeling myself like an onion, what I am coming to see is that who I am is me.

So often we identify ourselves by or are identified solely with our dream. If we dream of being successful, we think when we make that dream come true, that's who we'll be. The danger of this is that we are always “becoming” our dreams. And that is not who we really are. This may be a challenging concept to grasp, especially coming from me—after all, I am America's Dream Coach®. But the truth is, that's what I do, not who I am. And it's crucial to distinguish between the two.

As in peeling the onion, you keep peeling and peeling and what you are left with is your essence. There's no seed in there, nothing to get to. This is a great metaphor for un-layering ourselves. Eventually we can only get to the essence of who we really are. There is nothing else.

Do not oversimplify this point. It's taken me a lifetime to realize that the beginning of true freedom is to know yourself. I am not talking about knowing yourself by what you do, what you look like, or your family, friends or accomplishments.

Under all that armor, veneer and labeling, you are simply you.

There is a tremendous amount of freedom in discovering our true selves. Living or dreaming from this place offers us anything we want. But there's often fear associated with this, too. If we're not identified by our dreams or our possessions or our accomplishments, then who are we? It's a very good question. I recommend you spend some quality time in this inquiry. "If I'm not this or that, who am I?"

That's what my friend Janice did. She promised herself that she would be more physically fit at 40 than she was at 30. So she bought Rollerblades. She never learned to skate as a kid, and her heart is craving playing and being outside, so why not? As she puts more play time into her life, the attachment to having to work on her dreams all the time goes away. Her focus is on having fun and recharging her internal batteries. In this mode, she's not all wrapped up in her identity. Let's face it, it's hard to worry about looking good with a helmet and knee pads on, and darn near impossible when you're down on your butt. But it's a blast.

Playing and relaxing allows for surprises. Thinking and figuring things out and always having to have the answers and make things happen can only take us so far. We also need to lighten up.

Sometimes what is required is sleeping. I have participated in workshops where the conductors know and say that sleeping during session is fine. They know that the unconscious mind is given a chance to work and play. So you heard it here: playing and sleeping are required in order to honor your heart and soul. Take the time and space you need.

FLOW

Sometimes when we have no dreams we can move more easily through life for a while. It's more like life is moving us, like we are being danced. It's glorious. We are in the flow of life.

And when we are flowing, life is easier. We have time for family and friends. We have time for ourselves. We light candles on the dinner table even when we're dining alone. We can even cook and enjoy nurturing ourselves and others, which I

“Playing and relaxing allows for surprises.”

personally didn't do for seven years when I was lost in building a dream based on my identity.

When you're flowing, you have rhythm and it's natural. All kinds of fun things happen. You can eat and often not gain weight because your body is working efficiently. You may catch yourself humming or even singing. You'll be breathing and actually smelling the air and hearing the birds.

When you're not strictly focused on accomplishing or making something happen, you're just being you. Sometimes it's plain ol' you and sometimes it's glorious, Divine You. One of the biggest benefits about not working on a specific dream is that often you're not thinking or doing anything. You are literally just being you, and it is a blessing. It will probably make you smile, although if you're not used to "not doing," it may make you a little crazy for a while. See how long you can actually go just being you.

If you've maintained a non-stop pace in your life and it has always been about what's next, this may feel uncomfortable at first. But trust me. You will come to love this ease and flow and eventually embrace it wholeheartedly as a glorious way to live life. This is not copping out on your dreams or compromising on life. It is the process of preparing and allowing for more.

And as you come to know yourself as who you are, rather than what you do or the results you produce, you will come to remember and love the real you. This is where happiness and deep inner peace occur. Meister Eckhart, the 13th-century theologian, said, "All God wants of man is a peaceful heart." Should you expect anything less?

BEING YOU WITH YOU

One of the beautiful benefits of coming home to yourself is that you have access to all of you. You learn to trust your judg-

ment more. You stop looking for validation or approval from others. You stop judging yourself based on what you do and start to know and love yourself just as you are.

You have more of you now available to yourself. This becomes a great time to start the process of looking at what you really want. Keep in mind that you don't have to. You can continue to hang out in this empty or dreamless place as long as you want, as long as it serves you.

If and when you decide you want to create something or pursue a dream, this peaceful place of knowing who you are and being at home with yourself is the highest place to dream from.

From this place you are standing in your truth. From this place you have more clarity, and from this place you are in a pure state. Now you can ask yourself, "What matters to me? Where do I want to put my time, my talents and my resources?"

Here you can use your passion as the power to influence, to contribute, to make a difference where it matters to you most. This becomes a place of service. When we dream from this place we are serving our highest self and our deepest desires. Life becomes about living on purpose.

FROM DREAMLESS TO DESTINY

For a while when I lived in Washington, D.C., I did not know what I wanted or what really mattered to me. I knew it was time for a major shift in my life, but I had no idea to what. It made me a little crazy and a lot agitated. Every single day, I made the demand to know what my life was supposed to be about. I told myself I would not switch careers or take any job that was not directly on purpose. I didn't know my purpose, but I kept looking anyway.

Also, I made a huge promise to myself. Once I knew what my destiny was, I would go anywhere and do whatever it took to fulfill it. I remember saying that I would give up my car, my possessions, even my home. I felt so ready to move forward on something that was right for me, if only I knew what it was. I was detached from the things that once felt important to me.

They no longer mattered. All that did matter was finding my own inner truth, my dharma, my destiny, my purpose.

For some people this may feel like too big a jump, and I certainly can understand that. For me, it removed any obstacles, fears and doubts. The promise to act on the truth deepened my commitment to knowing the truth. Consider whether something like this will support you or terrify you, and honor your own process and needs.

One day I heard about the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that grants wishes to dying children. I felt

“ Being at home with yourself is the highest place to dream from. ”

strongly that I wanted to know more about them and acted on this. I met with the executive director and gave him a simple but very creative idea for fundraising for his organization, and I volunteered to manage it for him. When I returned to my car, I started to sob. I sat there for a half-hour, crying.

It was in that moment I realized my life was about making wishes and dreams come true. That was my passion, my purpose and the service that I wanted to provide, whether I would be paid for it or not. Everything about it was right. I knew in my heart and in my gut this was who I was, this was my entelechy, and, for right now, my destiny.

Because I had taken so much quality time to recharge and to be still, my mind was clear. There was no clutter, no chatter, no nonsense. And by the time I arrived home, within one hour, I had declared myself to be a Dream Coach.

Then I had to ask myself, “How would a Dream Coach live?” This was a very confronting question. What would she do? How about everything she had ever dreamed of doing? Soon I moved to San Francisco, wrote my first book and began

spending every day of my life engaged in the process of making dreams come true for myself and others. I raised the stakes and quality of my life. I could see it coming. You can't declare that you help make dreams come true and not pursue all of your own. And yet, knowing that I too can be dreamless allows for bigger dreams, more delight and the kind of freedom that my ultimate dream is really about.

The process of finding your dream begins by stopping. In the quiet and the stillness you will begin to remember who you are. The path may then emerge for a new life and lifestyle, if that is what is required.

“ The process of finding your dream begins by stopping. ”

DISCOVERING A DEEPER PLACE

If you are seeking your purpose or destiny, I recommend you find or buy a beautiful journal and label your book “My Divine Design.” Ask yourself what matters to you. Be committed to knowing. Daily, make a demand of yourself that goes like this: “I demand to know the divine design of my life.” Every day, look for what moves you. What makes you laugh or cry? What angers or pleases you? And ask yourself, “What contribution can I make in this area?”

And write, write, write or draw and color. Get your thoughts, and, most important, your feelings down on paper. Get to the emotions. Feel what you feel. Consider painting or concretizing in clay the feelings associated with these emotions. Use poetry, music, dance. Use everything to go deeper.

If nothing emerges, or only bits and pieces, be patient and gentle with yourself. Trust that this is a process and your deepest desires and feelings may need some time to surface.

Be committed to first dumping or emptying out and then

filling yourself up. Feel the range as you move from dreamless and empty to filled with purpose and dreams. And know you have a choice. You can turn your dreams into projects and act on them, or take a deep breath and empty out again. Continue your practice of coming home to yourself.

Feel the freedom of choice. Feel the abundance of being rich with passion and dreams or the comfort of simply being empty and being the essential you. As you come to truly know yourself, you will also more deeply trust and recognize the signs and insights along the way, giving you daily guidance to follow.

YOUR TYPICAL DAY

In *Super Joy: Learning to Celebrate Everyday Life*, Paul Pearsall writes about the “joy crisis” in our society, which he says is caused by the belief that more is better. “We think doing everything is the same as enjoying everything. We mistake external stimulation for spiritual intensity. When we pressure ourselves to do all that we should be able to do, we fail to fully experience and enjoy what we are doing.”

What will give you the greatest ease of all is to know yourself—your personal needs and timing, your hopes and desires, your doubts and concerns—and to honor these. It is imperative that you learn and understand what works for you. This book is designed to assist you in developing your own personal and simple practices that you can access anywhere and anytime.

Begin by assessing how a typical day in your life looks and feels. I’ll describe a scenario I often hear.

The alarm clock jolts you out of bed. You race around getting breakfast prepared for your family or house mates. You yourself skip eating because you just don’t have the time. As you get the kids off to school, you have a very tight time frame to shower, dress and pull your look together.

You get to work only a little late and spend much of the morning reacting and responding to others’ needs, putting out fires and handling problems. You are very good at this, so everyone comes to you for help.

Today you don't have a business lunch, but you take time to wolf down a sandwich at your desk. You are thirsty, but opt not to bother getting any water. You just keep working.

The afternoon may be more of the same. Every so often a really big zinger of a problem arises, just to keep you on your toes. Although you handle each situation well, little on your "important things to do" list seems to get done.

You creep home in rush-hour traffic, arriving home just in time to prepare dinner. You miraculously get a good meal on the table, do the dishes, and pass out, exhausted. In the morning, you do it all again. Sound like anyone you know?

Or how about this twist. A friend said to me, "Hey, tomorrow's Tuesday, which means I'll have sex instead of going to my health club. I can sleep half an hour later because sex takes less time."

I've seen many variations on this theme. Some of us do prioritize our needs: we eat well, drink enough water, go to the gym or for a walk, have learned to schedule in fun or play time, and are less reactive and more proactive about how we spend our time and live our lives. Where do you fit in?

Comedian Lily Tomlin said, "The problem with the rat race is, even if you win, you're still a rat." Do you schedule time for your own needs? Granted, many things feel out of our hands. Your boss needs a bid or proposal, your clients need your help, your employees need guidance. We do many things that are expected and required. But what about the things that aren't? Besides looking at what can wait, what can be handed off to someone else? And how do you handle the things that you must?

Let's begin with the dream-versus-reality approach. The scenario you just read is an example of one person's reality. What's yours? Write down or at least picture what your typical day is like. (Include as much detail as you can stand!)

YOUR IDEAL DAY

Now imagine the day of your dreams. What does it look like? Since most of us work, it's useful to include both the office and home in our dream day. Have some fun as you imagine and cre-

“Do you schedule time for your own needs?”

ate your ideal day. Start with work. Imagine doing what you love, with creative and fun people. Picture a simple commute, listening to your favorite music, inspirational or educational tapes or favorite radio show. Have you created flexible hours, so you rarely travel during rush hour? Keep dreaming and imagining.

Do you telecommute? Accenture Consulting eliminated 1,500 cubicles by setting up a telecommuting system, and staff at all levels work from laptop computers. Is working from home part of your ideal day? Does a 20-yard commute appeal to you? Perhaps sometimes you want the personal contact of co-workers. In your dream, include what you want and leave out what you don't.

Picture your office and desk or work space. Imagine the interactions you are having, on the phone and in person. See yourself easily accomplishing important things. Notice how, throughout the day, you take time out for water, air, small talk or to do nothing.

See yourself sitting comfortably, moving easily and standing tall. Do you want to design a midday break, where you exercise or even go home to be with your kids or dog?

How do you feel at the end of the day? How do you wind down? Is someone else cooking the meals and cleaning the house? What are the things you look forward to in the evening? How do you feel when you lie down to sleep and upon awakening in the morning? In your ideal day, I hope you wake up refreshed and rested, eager to start a new day.

PRIME TIME

Discovering your personal prime time is a simple awareness tool that can be really helpful in reclaiming your life and having more ease. Are you a morning person or evening person?

First answer this question, then delve deeper.

What do you love to do in the morning? If I haven't worked out by 11 a.m., I won't work out that day. However, I have learned that I love yoga stretches in the late afternoon. And on days when I feel really energized, going dancing at night is fabulous. I now know that different forms of exercise are available to me at different times of the day.

When is the best time for you to eat? I tried that "nothing but fruit before noon" approach. It made me ravenous. And if I'm not putting something in my mouth every four hours or so, my energy level crashes. What do you know about your creature comforts, and how do you take care of you?

What are the best things for you to do at night? Soon, you'll be able to use your Ease Meter (which you are about to design) so you know when to get up and go. You can directly impact the way you live.

Finally, don't forget sleep. Are you getting enough? Do you wake up feeling well rested, before your alarm clock goes off? If not, pay extra attention to what you are doing before you go to sleep. Bad news, heavy food, intense work—all these things stress your adrenal glands and can get you so wound up that sleep is disturbed or impossible.

Spend the next week noticing who you are: when you're hot and when you're not. I'm not suggesting that every day and the rest of your life turn into one big, boring routine. When I have creative ideas, I write. When I can't sleep, I may turn on my computer and e-mail friends. This week, I found myself painting in the middle of the day. Yesterday I took a nap after lunch.

Ultimate ease is finding what works for you and wherever you can, designing it into your daily life. Do more of what you love, when you love to do it. Do less of what you don't like, or do it when you can get it done quickly.

YOUR EASE METER

Now study the differences between your dream day and your reality. Doing this may result in some startling news. You may

Criteria to Consider for Your Ease Meter

easy	risky	includes others	funny
fulfilling	adventurous	intimate	beautiful
creative	nurturing	spiritual	luxurious
profitable	simple	heartfelt	educational
expressive	visible	new	unique
inspiring	rewarding	fast	
worthwhile	playful	healthy	

wonder whose life you are living and how it got this way. Most important, you'll want to know how you can regain some balance and control. We must learn how to say "no." The simplest solution I can offer is the Ease Meter.

Create a short list—I recommend three elements—that are most important to you. You may have one set of criteria for work-related projects and another for your personal life.

What follows is a list of the most common criteria that people mention to me. Select the three most important criteria for you to say "yes" to a request. Sometimes you have no choice, but often we do have a vote. The Ease Meter is designed to help you make quick decisions, freeing up time and energy.

My personal rule is this: the issue, opportunity or request must meet at least two of my three criteria. If it does, I say "yes." If it doesn't, I say "no." At different times in my life, my criteria have changed. For example, years ago when I was building a big business and success mattered most, my criteria were that a project had to be profitable, highly visible or fun. If it was fun and profitable or highly visible and fun, I'd participate. If it was just fun, or just profitable, I would decline.

Now my needs and priorities have changed. My business criteria are: the situation has to be fulfilling, easy and profitable. For personal decisions, I have a different set of criteria: it has to be inspiring, nurturing and easy. Two out of three will get me going. This handy tool can help you do instant prioritizing. Decide what your criteria are for saying "yes." This is now your Ease Meter.

PASSION PULSE

Sometimes using my Ease Meter comes down to one very clear question: “Will this make my life easier?” My response is often linked to my Passion Pulse. If there is something that I love or am excited about, I may be willing to give up some amount of ease. Passion and ease are two important criteria to consider in most circumstances. When I want one final comprehensive check on how I feel about something or my level of interest, I take my Passion Pulse. First, I picture, feel or sense the situation at hand. I imagine myself doing what I am being asked to do, or what I am considering embarking on.

I then take my Passion Pulse. I rate my level of excitement, joy or enthusiasm. I know that passion and commitment go hand in hand, so I don’t treat this response lightly. By testing my level of passion, I am really checking out my level of intent and willingness for serious participation.

Life is just too short to keep saying “yes” when what’s in your heart is “no.” But do you ask your heart what it wants? And more important, do you follow its advice and guidance?

Design your own passion scale for use in taking your Passion Pulse. Rate your passion level from 1 to 5. Or use expressive adjectives. Let 1 be “turned off,” 2 is “no interest,” 3 can be “interested,” 4 is “turned on,” and 5 is “red hot.” At different points along the way on any project, use your passion scale to take your Passion Pulse.

If your passion begins to wane, don’t despair. It does not have to mean the end of your involvement or participation. Read on to learn how to recharge and re-ignite your passion. This can often be done easily and quickly.

FIVE RECHARGERS

This is not new, it’s been said a thousand times, and yet it’s still true. In order to have ease in your life, you need to take care of yourself. Pay attention to the essential basics. Here are the five basic requirements for survival. When you feel

exhausted or depleted, or life seems hard, check these areas first. See what's incomplete or missing and make it a priority right now to do whatever it takes to recharge your battery.

Incorporating these five basics into your day will help you be strong and resilient, confident and curious. When we are healthy, wealthy and wise often follow.

I recommend you use the following fundamentals to develop your own Internal Tracking System (ITS). Learn to recognize what you need, at the moment you need it, for more immediate

“Recharging will re-ignite
your passion.”

ease in your life. When your ITS says it's hungry, eat; when it's thirsty, drink; when it's tired, sleep or rest, and so on. Look for clues in your body, mind and soul that will instantly connect you to what will make you feel good. Make taking care of yourself a priority and it soon will become second nature.

1. Sleep. Deep, restful sleep and as much of it as you need is the first essential component for having ease and energy. How many hours of sleep do you average a night, and how soundly do you sleep? How do you feel in the morning? Are you up before your alarm clock rings?

Our bodies need sleep to replenish and to heal. The more non-stop your life, the more important your rest is. Don't rob yourself of sleep. Fatigue is dangerous to your well-being, and to the people around you. Sleep deprivation is a tactic of war. You are not a prisoner or victim of circumstances unless you choose to deprive yourself. My wish for you is “pleasant dreams, regularly.”

2. Food and water. For the first time, there are more Americans who are overweight than average size, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Proper nutrition based on your body size, needs and temperament will give you maximum efficiency. You can eat quickly without eating fast food.

Water is the sustenance of life. When you feel thirsty, you are already in the dehydration danger zone. I could never drink eight glasses of water a day, but by keeping a filled Big Gulp cup nearby, or a glass with a straw in it, I sip water all day. Everything works better when it's well watered. Without enough water you will perish, slowly.

3. **Exercise.** Your body is your temple. Exercising is a chance to honor your temple and take care of your machine. The bot-

“Exercise helps you accomplish more with less effort.”

tom line is, if you take care of it, it's available and ready to take care of you. Being fit will help decrease your stress level. Exercise will add years to your life, and life to your years.

Once again, find what works best for you. If you hate the routine of going to the gym, take up a sport. Whether you like slow, gentle movement, or something rigorous and challenging, there is probably some sport that is right for you. Explore your options, as well as the range and movement of your body. Exercise expands your capability and capacity. Your lungs can breathe more air; you increase your strength and your flexibility. Flex your muscles and keep your body supple. Exercise is a stress-buster, mentally and physically.

This is the one area where more is better. The more you exercise, the better you'll feel. You can accomplish more, with less effort. The better you feel, the easier it is to move through life.

4. **Rest.** The pause that refreshes, from my point of view, is a nap, but you can also rest without going to sleep. Closing your eyes for a few minutes can give you a burst of energy, or can help shift you out of a negative mindset. Resting can put a little emotional space between you and an upsetting or confusing situation. Meditation can have the same effect, in a short period of time. Especially when you can't lie down, clos-

ing your eyes and “watching” your breath go in and out can be transformational. You’ll feel clarity of mind, relaxed and available for whatever is next.

For many of us, rest is a skill that needs a bit of improving. Start where you can. Reading a good book, even watching television, can be restful. Just notice what you’re putting into your system and how you respond to it. Do what works.

5. Fun. Too often omitted from our daily existence, and yet essential to our well-being, fun is priceless. What do you do for fun, and how do you design it into your day, both at work and at home?

Do you laugh and make others laugh? Have you developed the fine art of laughing at yourself? Being with others, just having a good time, is rich and rewarding. Share good times with friends and family.

Explore being of service and contributing to others, which builds self-esteem and a very full life. If risk-taking is fun for you, schedule an adventure or two.

DAILY PRACTICE

How you begin each day, and the practices you follow throughout the day, can help or hinder you. There’s tremendous power in developing daily rituals and practices. Learn what works for you and incorporate this into your day.

Each morning I take some quality time to be with myself. I begin with 20 minutes for myself either in silence or with music. If my day starts without this simple practice, my energy and thinking are much more scattered. I know this works for me, so I do it. On days when I have quiet time first, I am on top of things and much more at ease. On days when I realize I got on the computer or phone first, I have forgotten to pay attention to my own needs.

I take a few minutes to pray. I ask for what I want and need. Sometimes I visualize my goals, or use this focused time to write them down. I also use my prayer period to give thanks for all the wonderful people and gifts in my life.

Then I open my journal. I write down what I'm feeling or thinking. This morning ritual is often the most exquisite time of my day. It restores my equilibrium. It also sends an important message to my psyche. The message is: my needs matter and I make time for myself.

Other things I do every day include taking time outside in nature, eating healthy meals, drinking water every time I think of it, and making time to be with my husband, face to face or at least by phone.

Whenever possible I take a bubble bath and linger in the tub. We light candles on the dinner table, put on soft music and turn off the ringers on the phones after 9 p.m. I exercise at least every other day, and take a walk, even a short one, every day.

Look for ways to combine your favorite things, like having a candlelit dinner with someone you love, taking an easy walk to meet a friend for lunch, or playing golf with your kids or clients. You get extra points for doubling up, as you experience doing less and having more.

CREATING YOUR DAILY PRACTICE

What is the one thing, or perhaps a few things, that you could do for yourself each day? Having a simple daily practice, usually in the morning, before your day becomes too chaotic, can offer you so much. Consider it as a significant gift, and imagine what would make your life easier and more joyful. The key here is to keep it simple. Just adding one thing to your life, that you will commit to doing daily for one week, will begin to build an awareness.

The best place to find guidance on this is inside of you. Ask, "What do I need most now? What simple thing can I begin to do today that will give me ease?" Close your eyes, take a few breaths and see what comes up. You have great wisdom inside of you. Use this to guide you. Then act on what you feel, think or know.

If nothing comes up as the obvious "thing," I recommend

taking five minutes each day, for one week, to do an inventory. The inventory is as simple as asking these questions.

“How do I feel?”

“What do I need today?”

“What can I do today to have ease?”

“Is there anything that feels incomplete?”

“What shall I do about this?”

PERSONAL PAUSE STRATEGIES

When life becomes overwhelming, or if a crisis is throwing you for a loop, take a Personal Pause. In a hot situation, give yourself a chance to cool down. Rather than doing or saying something you may regret, take a little time to check in, reflect and consider your options.

The very act of pausing can be life-changing. Think about it as interjecting some space, a little breather, into your life. A pause can mean the difference between war and peace or ease and dis-ease. Here are some actions to access when you're in the heat of the fire. If you can use these in truly trying times, you'll be masterful at using them in daily life.

- **Assess your state of mind.** What are you thinking and feeling? Go beyond the surface reactions.

- **Use delaying tactics.** Try taking a single deep breath rather than giving in to a knee-jerk reaction. Resist the need to instantly respond. Patience is much more than a virtue. It is a skill and a sign of mastery to wait until you are ready to move forward.

- **Arm yourself with an arsenal of appropriate responses.** “I’ll get back to you on that.” “I can’t talk now.” “Let me think about this.” These are useful, socially acceptable lines that can buy you some time to consider your options.

- **Vent safely.** Sometimes the safest time to really let go is when we are by ourselves. It’s usually not necessary to spew all over others, or in public. When you are ready, use friends and people you can confide in to yell, rant and cry

with. Don't forget to also turn to professionals, mentors and coaches.

- **Write down your feelings or yell into a tape recorder.** A punching bag or pillow is a great place to hammer out your frustration. Dancing or exercising are useful ways to get this gunk out of your system and body.

- **Physically change locations.** Change your environment and you'll change your mood. Go to one of your energizing places (beach, mountains, park, lake) as soon as possible. Use this power spot as a well to drink from.

- **Identify exactly what is needed to resolve this situation.** What words can be spoken or what actions taken so this problem no longer continues and you feel empowered again?

- **Check in with your Ease Meter and use your criteria to decide if you want to deal with this issue.** Walk away when you can. Whether you move ahead or away, complete your Personal Pause by taking three deep breaths and slowly drinking a glass of water.

- **Recognize what you have learned here.** What did you do to cause this situation, and how will you do things differently in the future? Ideally, write down what you learned. Enlightenment comes one lesson at a time. It's self-affirming to identify what you learned. Have compassion for others and for yourself while you are learning, a process that will continue for your entire life.

- **Acknowledge that you didn't get sucked into the drama,** that you honored yourself and that you completed the situation.

- **Be grateful it's over.**

FIVE THINGS IN FIVE MINUTES

Even when you're extremely pressed for time, you can access ease. Whether you are stressed out over a decision, running late to an event or in "overwhelm mode," help is instantly available.

Here are five things you can do in five minutes to regain your center and your composure.

1. Use your Ease Meter to see if this situation is something you choose to participate in. If not, see who might love to take project or effort on, or be willing to help you. Guiltless delegating often comes from finding the perfect person for the job.

2. Take your Passion Pulse. Use what you know about passion to re-ignite your excitement or interest.

3. Breathe deeply to change your heart rate. Or use tools to help you access and shift energy. Some include: feeling, expressing, deciding or dreaming.

4. Drink lots and lots of water. It will rejuvenate you on the spot. Sorry, tea and coffee don't count.

5. Take action. Do something. Take a walk or a nap, write a letter, make a call, schedule a date. Acting gets blocked energy moving and makes things happen.

The purpose of all these exercises is to help you learn what works for you. With this knowledge, in any situation, and with any person, you can tap into ease. By understanding your needs, you can develop good and simple habits for taking care of yourself. You need to know what your ideal day looks like, and strive to live it. Small changes can have great impact, especially when they are based on what truly matters to you.

I encourage you to develop your own daily practice, to create an Ease Meter based on your individual criteria, and to take your Passion Pulse often. These simple practices will help you do less and have much, much more. Make them a part of your life. 🍷

Insights

- Sometimes a dream has to die for a new dream to emerge.
- Discover who you were born to be, and you will begin to understand why you are here and how to be happy and fulfilled. Your purpose in life can be discovered by knowing yourself, knowing your unique talents, and using them both to be of service to others.
- You can come to understand your purpose in life by slowing down, feeling your heart's desires and demanding to know.
- If you are going to ask the questions, be sure to listen for the answers.
- What will give you the greatest ease of all is to know yourself—your personal needs and timing, your hopes and desires, your doubts and concerns—and to honor these.
- Discovering your personal prime time is a simple awareness tool that can be really helpful in reclaiming your life and having more ease.
- Do less and have more by designing your life and directly impact the way you live.
- Bad news, heavy food, intense work—all these things stress your adrenal glands and can get you so wound up that sleep is disturbed or impossible.
- Ultimate ease is finding what works for you and wherever you can bringing it into your daily life. Do more of what you love, when you love to do it. Do less of what you don't like, or do it when you can get it done quickly.

- Sometimes simplifying comes down to one very clear question: “Will this make my life easier?”
- Life is just too short to keep saying “yes” when what’s in your heart is “no.”
- Develop your own Internal Tracking System (ITS). Learn to recognize what you need, at the moment you need it, for more immediate ease in your life. When your ITS says it’s hungry, eat; when it’s thirsty, drink; when it’s tired, sleep or rest.
- Explore being of service and contributing to others, which builds self-esteem and a very full life. If risk-taking is fun for you, schedule an adventure or two.
- How you begin each day, and the practices you follow throughout the day, can help or hinder you. Learn what works for you and incorporate this into your day.
- Imagine what would make your life easier and more joyful. The key here is to keep it simple.
- When life becomes overwhelming, or if a crisis is throwing you for a loop, take a Personal Pause. The very act of pausing can be life changing.

Make a Daily Dream Visit

For immediate support on
Making Your Dreams Come True,
I invite you to...

- Join AmazingDreamers.com
- Attend a Dream Workshop
- Check Out My Dream Store
- Hire a Certified Dream Coach®

Marcia Wieder
America's Dream Coach®



www.dreamuniversity.com