



Hello,
TOMORROW!

The Transformational
POWER OF VISION

CINDY TRIMM

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF *COMMANDING YOUR MORNING*

Hello,
TOMORROW!

CINDY TRIMM



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INTRODUCTION

For last year's words belong to last year's language
And next year's words
await another voice.

—T. S. ELIOT

IT SEEMS MY entire life I've been on a mission to empower ordinary people, people like you and me, to find their voice and make it heard in extraordinary ways. In all of my travels across the globe, the one common denominator I see among people everywhere is the need to feel as though they have a voice—a self-determining voice that, if nothing else, puts them in the driver's seat of their own lives. This has also been a common thread throughout all of my books, beginning with the original *Rules of Engagement*.

I've discovered that not only is this need universal; it's as deeply felt today as it has ever been. More than ever, my audiences want to know how to bridge the gap between what is and what can be—between who they are now and who they can ultimately become. They're looking for practical strategies not only to enable them to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God” (Phil. 3:14, KJV) but also to discern what that high calling is for them. A map and compass can help you get anywhere, but you must first know where you're going.

I want to help you shift your thinking so you are able to see farther afield in the direction of what's possible for you. I want to equip you with the tools you need to launch yourself into the deep of your greatest potential. I want to show you how to tap into your own powerful voice and your imagination to steer the ship of your life—and then how to unfurl the sails of faith to speed yourself on your way to the fulfillment of God-inspired vision.

In *Commanding Your Morning*, I taught in detail about how to harness the power of your thoughts and words to reorder your day and ultimately your life. In *Hello, Tomorrow!*, I want to show you how to harness the power of a compelling vision to change not only your future but ultimately the world. I want

to give you a new voice for a new day.

The word *voice* is rooted in the Latin *vocare*, which means to call or invoke.¹ An English understanding of the word lends the meaning “invisible spirit or force that directs or suggests.” French adds the sense “report,”² while in the *Oxford English Dictionary* we find “an agency by which a particular point of view is expressed or represented,” leading to its implication of one’s “distinctive tone or style.”³

Interestingly the word *hello* was originally used as a call to attract attention. It is an alteration of *hallo*, which comes from a fifteenth-century word meaning “a shipman’s cry to incite effort.” *Hello* gained popularity as a word with the rise of the telephone, and it could be considered a word that gives voice to your voice. Incidentally *hello* won out over Alexander Graham Bell’s suggestion of using *ahoy* when answering the telephone. I also got a kick out of learning that by the late 1880s telephone operators were known as “hello-girls.”⁴

So how do we call to attract or invoke the best that tomorrow has to offer? How do we cross that bridge from where we are today to where we want to be in the tomorrows of the future? How do we navigate the ship of our life closer to the shore of our dreams, where we can call out “Hello!” to our destiny?

We do this with vision. Vision calls you out of your past to participate in your future. It points to cultural transformation, institutional restructuring, systemic change, human progress, political enfranchisement, future potentialities, spiritual realities, and economic possibilities—all of which have the power to change the trajectory of individual lives, corporations, communities, and countries.

This is the transformational power of vision—of being able to see those shores of possibility on the horizon. A vision that pulls you forward enables you to overcome your past and surmount the limitations of your present conditions. But not only do you have to be able to see what’s possible in the distance—to be farsighted, so to speak—you must also be able to map out and navigate toward what you see. You must become the Christopher Columbus of your own potential. You must learn to follow your own north star and navigate through life’s seas and storms, and like the Magi who were led to Jesus by a star (Matt. 2:1–2), you must be able to read the signs from heaven for clues that will lead you toward a new world of possibilities you have only dreamed of.

With this in mind, I endeavor to take you on a journey using the following symbols as metaphors:

- The ship: your life
- The map: your vision

- The compass: your values
- The north star: your desired direction
- The ship's wheel: your thoughts and imagination
- The sails: your faith
- The rudder: your words
- The wind: your passion
- The shore: your destiny
- The anchor: your fear
- The hull: your mind
- Barnacles on the hull: your negative emotions

As a life strategist, minister, entrepreneur, thought leader, and best-selling author, I am asked every day, and often many times a day, by people in all walks of life the same types of questions: How can I realize my dreams and accomplish my goals? How can I get from point A to point B? How can I find happiness? How can I find meaning and purpose? How can I make a difference in this world? The questions, no matter how worded, are the same.

No one sets out in life to feel unfulfilled. Yet modern life has a way of stressing us out until stress is all we feel. Wake up, hit the alarm, get up, get ready for work, make lunches and pack book bags, drop kids off at school, fight with traffic, make it to the office, where the phones are already ringing, attend mind-numbing meeting after meeting, pick up take-out on the way home, pay bills, and on and on until we fall into bed exhausted way after 11 p.m. Some days, for some people, the stress overshadows everything else. When stress is the only thing you focus on, you experience even more of it—because what we focus on expands.

Instead of focusing on stress, focus on a horizon of unlimited possibilities that stretches out ahead of you. Dare to leave the safe harbor of the familiar and set sail. This book has been written to make certain you have a clearly determined way to navigate the ship of your life—vision. Don't be like the masses who refuse to push away from the shores of safety because they are afraid of possible

storms brewing out at sea. Fear is an irrational emotion that cripples you and causes you to remain anchored at the harbor.

People seem to buy up so much emotional insurance against risk that they have little or no strength left to pursue their dreams and accomplish their goals. Life is risky business. I have heard of people walking down the street and breaking their ankles, or driving to work and experiencing a head-on collision, but I still walk down streets and drive. The famous motivational speaker Jim Rohn once said wittily, “Life is risky. Let me tell you how risky it is—you won’t make it out alive.”⁵ He further quips, “If you want something that pulls you through all kinds of challenges and difficulties, you have to have something out there. Beyond today. Beyond next week. Beyond next month. Beyond this year, that pulls you into the future. And the clearer it is, the stronger it pulls.”⁶ Remember, a ship left in the harbor will eventually corrode and rot because of the corrosive elements of the sea. So staying put is as risky as launching out into the deep. Even on your maiden voyage, there’s a risk of meeting a storm or two, but a ship equipped with the sails of faith will be able to make it through.

Even though you stand at the helm, God is ultimately the captain of your ship and your life. Since your captain’s resolve will determine whether the ship reaches its destination or turns back to the harbor, you have nothing to worry about. “‘For I know the plans and thoughts that I have for you,’ says the LORD, ‘plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope’” (Jer. 29:11, AMP). So cast off your fear and make preparations. And when the storms of life come, He will show you what emotional cargo should be thrown overboard to preserve your life.

While contingency plans can help you overcome obstacles, lifeboats are not recommended. Lifeboats are what you use when you believe the ship is going to sink. The same captain who showed you your destination via your vision will help you weather the storm when the rough waters rise and the winds blow. You might be tempted to go for the lifeboat, but God’s will is certain, and there is no need to abandon ship.

Benjamin Disraeli said, “I have brought myself, by long meditation, to the conviction that a human being with a settled purpose must accomplish it, and that nothing can resist a will that will stake even existence upon its fulfillment.”⁷ Simply put, don’t quit. Make course corrections as needed so that your ship arrives at its destination at the appointed time.

Here is something else to consider: As the ship gets close to shore, the fog might roll in. Don’t panic. Instead, look for the lighthouse. It will be the very thing that will help you avoid sharp rocks and ominous reefs that would cause

you to run aground. Your lighthouse is your beacon of hope. Hope is faith's companion. Keep believing because these obstacles will be the last test before you reach your new harbor.

As Dr. Seuss so famously said, "You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose."⁸

You have places to go and things to do, and I pray the tools and strategies offered in this book will help you get there and accomplish everything you set out to accomplish. Life is not a dress rehearsal, so I pray you live all the days of your life to their fullest, regretting nothing in the process.

Some of you set sail in big ships; you put to sea to do business in faraway ports. Out at sea you saw God in action, saw his breathtaking ways with the ocean: With a word he called up the wind—an ocean storm, towering waves! You shot high in the sky, then the bottom dropped out; your hearts were stuck in your throats. You were spun like a top, you reeled like a drunk, you didn't know which end was up. Then you called out to God in your desperate condition; he got you out in the nick of time. He quieted the wind down to a whisper, put a muzzle on all the big waves. And you were so glad when the storm died down, and he led you safely back to harbor. So thank God for his marvelous love, for his miracle mercy to the children he loves.

—PSALM 107:23–32, THE MESSAGE

“Listen to this message from the LORD! This is what the LORD says: By
this time tomorrow . . . ”
—2 KINGS 7:1, NLT

STEP ONE

Build a Bridge to Your Future

Men go forth to marvel at the heights of mountains and the huge waves of the sea, the broad flow of the rivers, the vastness of the ocean, the orbits of the stars, and yet they neglect to marvel at themselves.

—ST. AUGUSTINE

You may not be able to see a path right now, but that doesn't mean it's not there.

—NICK VUJICIC

CHAPTER ONE

It's Your Future—Own It!

There is no greater discovery than seeing God as the author of your destiny.
—RAVI ZACHARIAS

There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.
—PROVERBS 23:18

THE BIBLE GIVES a two-verse glimpse into the life of a man by the name of Jabez, who saw himself differently than those around him. He recognized that cultural and social limitations were restricting his thinking and asked God to enlarge his coast.

And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

—1 CHRONICLES 4:10, KJV

I considered the word *coast* and thought of it as a metaphor for psychological boundaries and self-imposed limitations that restrict us from thinking big and expecting more than what we perceive is possible based on our worldview and the realities of our personal lives. Further, in seeking practical application for this verse, I considered the fact that many people are restricted from progressing in life because of small thinking or feel they are stuck in a particular station in life because of circumstances beyond their control. People struggling to get a break in life or facing discouraging or desperate moments need God to divinely enlarge their intellectual capacity to think beyond their limitations. I believe Jabez's prayer was a request for God to help him think differently—outside of the proverbial box—so that he could live a blessed life. And that's exactly what

God did.

This begs the question “How does God enlarge one’s intellectual capacity?” The answer is through the transformational power of vision.

God doesn’t give people powerful visions based on their education, pedigree, leadership style, or personality type. Visions are given to people who capture them and believe that what they perceive is possible. Ultimately it is God who puts a vision in your heart, just as He does His desires (Num. 12:6; Ps. 37:4).

God is always speaking, but are you capturing His thoughts? Are you disciplined enough to hear what He is conveying to you? Just as prayer, fasting, Bible study, and worship keep us attuned to God’s voice, procuring a vision for your life is a spiritual discipline that keeps you in sync with God’s will for your life.

Have you ever considered that your thoughts and ideas are spiritual entities—and that the spiritual realm is actually the causal realm? Let me clarify what I mean: When I speak of things that are spiritual, I am referring to that which is nonmaterial, incorporeal, intangible, conceptual, and transcendent. For example, virtues such as love, peace, respect, honor, and forgiveness are not visible to the natural eye but nevertheless exist and can be as healing as medicine or as freeing as a breath of fresh air. Likewise, a vision that you can see with your spiritual eyes can be as powerful as what you see with your natural eyes.

A vision is a divine mental preview of coming attractions. It’s what you are able to see today as a potentiality for your tomorrow. Personally, I love going to the cinema. Believe it or not, what makes going to the movies exciting for me is not just the anticipation of the featured film but the coming attractions—the previews might even excite me more than the actual movie. I plan my moviegoing itinerary based on these trailers because they are not just exciting images of what *could* be but *will* be. They are not figments of someone’s imagination but announcements of what I can expect to see at a future date. This allows me to anticipate and prepare for what I plan to see.

Just as movie previews pique your interest and stir up your zeal, a vision is God’s appeal to you to stir up latent gifts, abilities, and talents so you can anticipate and prepare for the vision’s actualization. Even as marketing experts craft scintillating images and catchphrases to grab your attention, God will rouse your senses and stimulate your spirit through illustrative details that vividly describe how He sees your future unfolding. Through the use of imagery and words that generate excitement and passion, your vision should be so dynamic that everyone who hears about it will be inspired to either get involved or pursue his or her own vision.

RISE TO MEET THE FUTURE

American inventor Charles Kettering was a man ahead of his time. He held more than 140 patents, and he invented or was instrumental in the development of refrigerator coolant, the electric self-starting ignition, quick-drying paint, an incubator for premature babies, the diesel locomotive engine, high-octane gasoline, and an aerial torpedo. In 1927 he founded the Kettering Foundation, which still publishes its widely read leadership journal, the *Kettering Review*. He graced the cover of *Time* magazine in 1933.

Kettering took an active interest in the future. He is commonly quoted as saying, “My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there.”¹ He didn’t wait for tomorrow to come to him; he reached out and grabbed it through vision.

Charles Kettering understood the value of ideas. He wasn’t afraid of thinking beyond “the box,” nor did he second-guess his capabilities. Whatever he needed to know he used his intellectual resources to procure. He was confident that with enough information and experience, he could solve any problem that presented itself—and at the turn of the twentieth century there were plenty of them to solve.

As we continue our march deeper into the twenty-first century, problems that need solving still abound. We can choose to wait for someone else to solve them, or approach them like Kettering did as rich opportunities to maximize our potential. He looked beyond the problem and saw what was possible. Do you just see the problem, or do you see what’s possible? For many this question creates anxiety because they lack confidence in their ability to contribute to problem-solving efforts. But as Henry Ford, a contemporary of Kettering, is often quoted as saying, “Whether you believe you can do a thing or not, you are right.”²

The world needs people who think they can, those who have a with-God-all-things-are-possible mind-set. Ask God to give you a possibility mind-set, an insatiable curiosity to discover what lies beyond the way things are or have always been, and the divine empowerment to find solutions, meet needs, and address issues. I want to encourage you today to step out in faith and become the kind of person who grabs hold of the future.

In examining Scripture, I have discovered you can actually prophesy greatness, success, and progress into your future. You can provoke your future and cause it to conform to God’s original plan and purpose with vision and wisdom that comes from God (James 1:5). Look at what happened to an entire city when Elisha prophesied into its future.

Then Elisha said, “Hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the LORD: ‘Tomorrow about this time a seah of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.’”

So an officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God and said, “Look, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, could this thing be?”

And he said, “In fact, you shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it.” . . .

Then the people went out and plundered the tents of the Syrians. So a seah of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. Now the king had appointed the officer on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate. But the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, just as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him. So it happened just as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, “Two seahs of barley for a shekel, and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, shall be sold tomorrow about this time in the gate of Samaria.”

Then that officer had answered the man of God, and said, “Now look, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, could such a thing be?”

And he had said, “In fact, you shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it.” And so it happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

—2 KINGS 7:1–2, 16–20

I want to help you see with new eyes the unexplored opportunities on the horizon—the yet-to-be-charted seas and new social, cultural, spiritual, geopolitical, and industry-specific frontiers and breakthroughs that are waiting to be discovered. I want to challenge you to become a visionary for this generation—to see opportunities lying dormant in every problem and bring innovative ideas and solutions to the table with the potential to positively impact communities while changing the trajectory of humanity in the process.

HOW YOU SEE YOUR FUTURE BEGINS WITH HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF

The possibilities you are able to see depend on how you see yourself in the future. Let God help you see your life from His perspective (Jer. 29:11). How far you are able to see into your future depends on your willingness to discipline your mind and spirit through prayer and meditation on the Word of God. God will reveal how your potential will unfold according to His divine plans and purpose for your life. You will see your gifts and abilities finding expression on the grand stage of life and becoming synchronized with God’s plan for humanity. Imagine the possibilities!

You will often hear me quote, “Your feet will never take you where your mind has never been.” Those words have stuck with me for a long time now. They are why I want you to see yourself doing extraordinary things—creating, coaching, leading, writing, preaching, teaching, discovering, or building—as if they were reality. Let God paint His plans on the canvas of your mind. Spend time alone

with Him and ask Him to show you the great things He has prepared for you to do and accomplish (1 Cor. 2:9–10). Let your faith, not your fears, motivate you. Trust God to empower you with wisdom to make your vision a reality. This principle is so essential to living a successful, victorious life that it has been the backbone of much of what I teach. It is the foundational principle of this book, along with the Scripture verse much akin to it: “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Prov. 29:18, KJV).

Vision is simply a matter of how you see yourself in the future. It is acquiring a fresh perspective for your life from God’s vantage point. Just like when you go to the movies, a vision is a divine announcement of “coming attractions.”

Your feet will never take you where your mind has never been.

How you see the future is contingent upon what you believe is possible for you and your family, community, and nation; it is contingent upon what you believe about your potential for making something happen. What do you believe about your potential to live the life you’ve imagined? I want to encourage you that God does not play games with our minds. He will never give you a desire to do something and not empower you to do it. “Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass” (Ps. 37:4–5). He will never give you a vision and not provide the resources to make it a reality. “If you can believe, all things are possible” (Mark 9:23).

Vision is not something you conjure up in your own imagination, but through prayerful consideration you discern the will of God for your life (Job 32:8). Your vision should line up with the Word of God and be a way you can fulfill your part of the Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19–20, MEV). Once you have your vision, you can then discipline yourself to write the vision down and put feet to what you have written.

YOUR FOCUS DETERMINES YOUR FUTURE

What is the lens through which you look at challenges and possibilities? Do you see them as something other people are more innately wired to overcome or take advantage of? Are you more focused on potential limitations or potential successes, the possible risks or promising rewards?

Your focus is subject to your mind-set and paradigm of success—how you set your mind frames your mental model. What you believe to be true about a situation, your country, and this world is what you’ll likely experience. And what you believe about your circumstances is largely determined by what you believe to be true about yourself. Your belief system colors your expectations with the brilliance of its hue and informs you of what you are worthy of receiving, achieving, earning, learning, and being. “Your chances of success in any undertaking,” writes author Robert Collier, “can always be measured by your belief in yourself.”³

Vision gives you the ability to see with new and untainted eyes. Perhaps the greatest—or at least most renowned—artist, architect, and engineer to have ever lived, Leonardo da Vinci, attributed his success to knowing how to see. *Sapere vedere*, Latin for “knowing how to see,” was his personal motto. He developed well the art of seeing before he painted masterpieces such as *The Last Supper* or the *Mona Lisa*—or conceiving innovations such as the helicopter, parachute, and scuba gear.

Da Vinci was a man of vision. He was the quintessential visionary, and he was a key figure during the Renaissance, along with others including Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni. What set them apart was their ability to see differently: to see David or the Madonna hidden in a block of stone, to look at the sky and design ways to reach it, or to view a blank ceiling and envision the Sistine Chapel. Their ability to see beyond the confines of stone or even gravity transcended natural reason—it could almost be considered a supernatural sight.

The word *vision* is from the Old French *vision*, meaning “presence, sight; view, look, appearance; dream, supernatural sight.” The French word is from the Latin *visionem*, meaning “act of seeing, sight, thing seen.” In the time of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo it was a word used to describe “something seen in the imagination or in the supernatural.”⁴ I think of it as someone shining a light into a dark room, exposing everything that the room contains.

Sometimes that darkness can be what blinds us to our own personal potential. Sometimes we must simply speak into that darkness and declare, “Let there be light!” We need to tap into Christ within us. He is the light of our souls (John 1:4), we are created in His image (Gen. 1:27), and through Him we are becoming more and more like Him: the light of the world (2 Cor. 3:18; John 8:12).

It started when God said, “Light up the darkness!” and our lives filled up with light.

—2 CORINTHIANS 4:6, THE MESSAGE

Those of us who believe Jesus Christ is indeed the life and light of men should

be taking the lead in illuminating the yet unseen solutions needed in an increasingly dark world. In this age you and I are called to be the light that shines through the darkness (Isa. 60:2; Matt. 5:14). Knowing who you are and who you're called to become in Christ is the first step in learning how to see yourself and what you're truly capable of. Jesus promised, "If you follow me, you won't be stumbling through the darkness, for living light will flood your path" (John 8:12, TLB).

The light you've been given by God is supernatural insight into future possibilities. When I think of the word *insight*, I think of the night-vision goggles and binoculars issued to soldiers that allow them to see in the dark. Likewise, you have been equipped as a soldier of heaven (2 Tim. 2:3–4) with supernatural night vision! It was God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness" and thereby "made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge" (2 Cor. 4:6, NIV). We should be able to see where others cannot. We should be seeing the beautiful form hidden in what seems like impenetrable rock, or gravity-defying structures that have yet to take flight. We should be speaking life and light into what seem to be dead and dark places.

THE FAR AND DISTANT SHORE

As you begin to set sail toward the tomorrows of your future, you must know what type of vessel you are (Rom. 9:21). For it is with this revelation that you can pierce into the darkness of your potential to see the amazing treasure that lies beneath (2 Cor. 4:7). The Bible tells us that "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10). But there is also wisdom in knowing and understanding yourself. The ancient Greek aphorism "Know thyself" was the basis for Socrates' statement that "the unexamined life is not worth living." Socrates' student Plato taught that the essence of knowledge is self-knowledge.

Knowing who you are, why you are here, what you value, what you believe, and what you stand for is not only powerfully informative but also empowering. Becoming grounded in the knowledge of who you are as a unique individual is how you mature spiritually. You must be intimately acquainted with your gifts and callings to become an effective and fully functioning member of the body of Christ (Rom. 12:3–8). Being true to yourself—living and speaking your truth based on God's truth—is an act of integrity. As Polonius said in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "This above all: to thine own self be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."⁵

Become the Christopher Columbus of your own destiny. If you are to reach that far and distant shore of your dream-inspired destiny, you must first and foremost become a *seaworthy vessel*. And in order to become seaworthy, you must know what kind of vessel God created you to be—whether a clipper, a frigate, a galleon, a schooner, or a yacht. Knowing what kind of vessel God crafted you to be will enable you to better navigate the seas ahead. There are a number of tools you can use to gain greater self-understanding. Behavioral profiles such as DiSC can be extraordinarily helpful in broadening your self-knowledge, as can the Barrett Personal Values Assessment.

Although you most likely have a general sense of your greatest strengths and weaknesses, and perhaps even some potential opportunities and threats, I encourage you to take a closer look at what you may not have been aware of before. Take a look under the hull—your mind! Have you ever seen a boat on the shore lifted up off the ground on large cinder blocks? There are times when it is beneficial to put yourself in dry dock, so to speak. Take time to prayerfully examine the amazing things God is attempting to reveal to you about your future. Examine your faith. Like Abraham, are you “fully convinced that what [God] had promised He [is] also able to perform” (Rom. 4:21)? Do you really believe that God is able to provide the resources to achieve every vision He has given you? Only by taking a candid look at what’s going on beneath the surface of your spiritual life can you clear away the barnacles of unbelief, doubt, and other negative emotions that attach themselves to the underside of your soul. Then you’ll go farther and faster, free of what may have been unseen negative entanglements.⁶

When we talk about the transformational power of vision, we are largely talking about a state of mind: “the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination.”⁷ In the chapters ahead we will explore how to effectively harness the power of imagination. Your imagination and thoughts are vital to effectively steering you toward the fulfillment of your dreams. If you’ve ever heard me speak, you’ve heard me say, “You are always one decision away from living the life of your dreams.” Your life today is the sum total of every decision you’ve made. You must choose to go after the vision God has given you. You must choose to do what He has called you to do in order to be who He has called you to be. You must choose to focus on the future He promised you. Every thought you choose to entertain affects the course of your destiny. “You create your future by envisioning it,” said Jack Canfield.⁸ Can you imagine how great your future will be once your life is in sync with God’s plan?

You have a race to run and a bright future ahead of you (Heb. 12:1; Rev. 21).

You've been given everything you need to accomplish whatever God has called you to do (2 Pet. 1:3). You have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16); the favor of God (Prov. 8:35); spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities (1 Cor. 12:4–11); and the wisdom of heaven just for the asking (James 1:5). What will you do with what you've been given?

PIONEER A NEW FRONTIER

A new world awaits those willing to discover it. I have always been inspired by the words of University of Kansas Chancellor E. H. Lindley, who in the early twentieth century encouraged students to “develop the spirit of the old pioneers who were not afraid of new problems,”⁹ and James E. Faust, who admonished his listeners to “become pioneers of the future with all its exciting opportunities.”¹⁰

This takes faith, and faith can be risky business. The world was built by people who were not afraid to take risks. They were the pioneers who were not afraid of the wilderness, the scientists who were not afraid of being ridiculed, the thought leaders who were not afraid of progress, the politicians who were not afraid to challenge the status quo, the theologians who were not afraid of being called a heretic, the slaves who were not afraid of dying, the youth who were not afraid of asking “Why?” or “Why not?” and the dreamers who were not afraid to take action.

If you are going to leave the shores of the familiar in order to navigate great oceans of success (Ps. 107:23–24), it will take some degree of risk. If you are going to realize your dreams and do something great, pursue a degree, become a best-selling author, build a children's home in a third-world country, start a church, open a crisis pregnancy center, or establish a foundation dedicated to educating underprivileged children, you must accept the fact that a degree of risk is involved. “What if I fail?” you might ask. “What if you succeed?” is my response!

This is the difference between those who take risks and those who play it safe: those who play it safe operate from sight, and those who take risks operate from vision. In his celebrated speech “The Strenuous Life,” Theodore Roosevelt famously stated,

Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.¹¹

Many people have an “I want to” in their spirit, but they allow fear to

immobilize them until it dissolves into “I can’t” or “I’m afraid.” Dare to change the “I want to” into “I must,” and “I can’t” into “with the help of God, I will.” (See 2 Timothy 1:7.) This kind of attitude takes courage. It means that you have to move beyond the self-imposed limitations and excuses. General Matthew B. Ridgway said:

There are two kinds of courage, physical and moral, and he who would be a true leader must have both. Both are the products of the character-forming process, of the development of self-control, self-discipline, physical endurance, of knowledge of one’s job and, therefore, of confidence. These qualities minimize fear and maximize sound judgment under pressure and—with some of that indispensable stuff called luck—often bring success from seemingly hopeless situations.¹²

If you were to critically analyze everything you do on a daily basis, from driving your car, to flying on an airplane, to walking your dog, each involves some degree of risk. By changing your thoughts about doing what you really want regardless of the perceived risk, you set a powerful intention in motion. You rise to the challenge of breaking free from limiting beliefs and habit patterns that keep you stuck. By choosing to change your belief about your right to progress and prosper, you give yourself permission to succeed. By getting rid of self-destructive habits that undermine your potential, you are able to acquire new habits that foster new behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. By creating a no-excuse zone in your mind, you will arouse the courage to pursue the life of your dreams.

Robert Schuller, one of America’s twenty-first-century luminary pastors, asked, “What goals would you be setting for yourself if you knew you could not fail?”¹³ Most people waste their time focusing on the potential for failure. However, even though failure is possible, keep in mind that failure is simply the tuition you pay for future success. A similar question you might ask yourself is “What would I do if I only had a few months left to live?”

These questions should stimulate your faith and inspire you to leap into your future. Taking those leaps is the starting point of personal greatness. John Mason said:

If you never take risks, you’ll never accomplish great things. Everybody dies, but not everyone has lived.¹⁴

Potential is all you can be but have not yet become, all you can do but have not yet done, how far you can reach but have not yet tried. Vision is the catalyst that ignites your potential.

Dare to look within to see your true potential, and then shift your focus from what lies within to the possibilities that are directly in front of you, then to what lies months and years down the road. May every lid and limitation be blown off

your life. Don't limit yourself to what you think is possible. Push past your current limitations and reach higher. People commonly overestimate what they can do in one year but underestimate what they can do in five. Don't sell yourself short. Take the long view. Head for the far and distant shore by pioneering your own new frontier.

Man is the master of thought, the moulder of character, and the maker and shaper of condition, environment, and destiny. As a being of Power, Intelligence, and Love . . . man holds the key to every situation, and contains within himself that transforming and regenerative agency by which he may make himself what he wills.

—JAMES ALLEN

You control your future, your destiny. What you think about comes about. By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you most want to be. Put your future in good hands—your own.

—MARK VICTOR HANSEN

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