INTRODUCTION

his is a book about regaining your freedom by controlling the basic forces which dominate your life. It is a guide to revitalizing potentials within yourself which, through no fault of your own, may have been closed down earlier in your life.

If your attempts to improve your life have up to now met with only slight success, this book will help you understand and resolve whatever seems to be standing in your way. Taking total control of one's life takes determination and information. The information presented here is meant to encourage you to continue to develop your own path.

Taking control of your life means perceiving the relationships between your early history, your current mind-set, and your self-imposed limitations. This book will help you gain that necessary understanding. No one system owns the truth. But, as a companion to almost all of them, this book can serve as a foundation for more specialized techniques which you may learn or may currently be practicing.

Freedom and a life that works are not to be thought of as reserved for the fortunate few. They are your birthright. I've included many examples of transformations, drawn from people I have known and worked with in seminars, counseling sessions, and classes in universities, industry, government, and growth centers. People everywhere can and do change their lives.

Do not lose heart.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REVISED EDITION

The most important question I had about this book while I was writing it and after its publication was, "Is it useful?" The answer seems to be an encouraging "Yes." But many respondents went on to say, "It would have been even more useful if you had included. "This edition is intended to fulfill readers' most frequent requests that the book be more interactive. The material added to this edition will help you apply the book's ideas immediately and directly to your life.

There are two major additions. A new chapter, "Relationships," offers concrete suggestions for understanding, improving, and strengthening important relationships. Also, at the end of every chapter, you'll find **Action Steps** which can almost immediately make your life more satisfying and successful.

In addition, personal coaching, audio tapes, and seminars are available from the staff of Pacific Excellence. You can now get additional support wherever you are. For a full description, see page 176.

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ESTABLISHING GOALS



Anything you may hold firmly
in your imagination,
can be yours.

-WILLIAM JAMES

Without goals, you become what you were. With goals, you become what you wish.

ith seasonal regularity, each year a crop of self-help books and tapes are produced that teach that setting goals, visualizing them and saying affirmations about them are the keys to the kingdom.

And they are.

Yet most people who read the books or listen to or watch the tapes fail to achieve their goals. Most of these works, however skillfully presented, treat only one symptom or another without probing into the underlying causes or adequately describing the underlying cure. All too often, the authors assume that the hard basic work to achieve sufficient insight has already been accomplished. Ironically, it takes no more effort to have one's life work well than it does to have it flounder, yet most of us put as much effort into maintaining problems as is required to solve them. It does not take additional energy to improve one's life, just a redirection of effort into more profitable channels.

The aim of this book is to ensure that you will set goals correctly for yourself and to help you to understand, on your own terms, what rests between you and your goals, as well as how to overcome these individual obstacles.

Let's start at the beginning. To set goals means to set a course for your life. Like the captain of a sailing boat who sets a course—toward any desired port—using the wind, regardless of its strength or direction. With your course set, you experience daily progress—sometimes direct, sometimes indirect, but always moving in the direction of your ultimate destination.

Most of us don't decide what direction we are going nor how we will get there. We live from day to day, doing what needs to be done, enjoying what we can, regretting what we've missed. Most people cope . . . get by . . . adjust. Passive, accepting, and reactive to their world instead of choosing and creating it. They live in a rowboat with no oars—and no rudder. They move from place to place, but it is the winds and the currents that set the direction.

There are philosophies which indeed support this choice of lifestyle (for it is, most certainly, a choice). In spiritual circles people say "go with the flow." In business settings, people say "don't rock the boat." In the animal kingdom, there are whole species with few goals beyond survival, and they survive. Jelly-fish are a group without goals; wholly passive, they literally drift with the currents. When food passes close to them, they eat; otherwise, they don't. Their life cycle is an example of coping, of living with minimal goals, and yet they have lasted millions of years and are one of the oldest unchanged species on the planet.

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Certain goal: These includ We are, however, beings-in-process; we are changing, whether we realize it or not. We are capable of leading active rather than passive lives. Jellyfish cannot decide their goals, and cannot make choices. It is healthier to have conscious goals—for our lives offer opportunities beyond drifting. To set goals is to benefit from our advantages.

We tend to see ourselves as having a constant identity, yet we are actually continuously changing. Even at the cellular level, we are in a continuous, gradual process of transformation, losing and replacing millions of cells each day. The surface of our skin is new every week, the tissue of our throat every few days. Over a period of years, every single cell except for some brain tissue is replaced.

If you reflect on your interests and ideas, you will notice that they too undergo gradual replacement through internal changes, shifts, and new orientations. Like trees which drop their leaves each winter to emerge with new ones in the spring, we are forever in the process of changing our attitudes and our understanding.

To establish goals is to direct the changes. We have no choice but to age, but we can choose the ways in which we will grow older. We can choose to have better health or worse; more freedom or less; greater income or less; more relationships or fewer.

Maurice Maeterlinck, the Nobel prize winning author, summed it up: "Those men who are more developed are aware of their destiny. They are familiar with their future because they are already part of their future." Those who set goals create their own futures.

BASIC GOALS

Certain goals appear to be necessary and basic for each of us. These include:

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