

How to Live Your Best Life

The background of the top half of the cover features a vintage-style airplane flying over a world map. The map is rendered in a golden-brown color, and the airplane is also in a similar color, appearing to fly across the sky. The overall aesthetic is that of an old, weathered document or map.

*The Essential Guide For Creating
And Achieving Your Life List*

by Marelisa Fábrega

A faint, circular compass rose is visible in the background of the bottom half of the cover, centered behind the author's name. It has a star-like design in the center and is surrounded by concentric circles and lines.

CHAPTER ONE: BE THE HERO OF YOUR LIFE

“Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.”

~ David Copperfield

“Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.”

~ William J. Bryan

“Success is a tale of obstacles overcome, and for every obstacle overcome, an excuse not used.”

~ Robert Brault

“People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them.”

~ George Bernard Shaw

In his best-selling book “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”, Stephen R. Covey explains that the first habit of people who accomplish what they set out to do is that they’re proactive. That is, they take responsibility for the results that they get and they see themselves as being the creators of their lives. They don’t identify themselves as victims of external conditions, and they don’t allow others to dictate their fate.

The second habit of people who achieve their intended results is that they begin with the end in mind, which means that they decide what they want to create.

In this chapter we’ll cover the following:

- Take the Role of Creator of Your Life
- The Importance of Deciding What You Want

TAKE THE ROLE OF CREATOR OF YOUR LIFE

If you’re going to make a serious commitment to creating and achieving your life list, you need to identify yourself as the Creator of your life. That is, you need to fully embrace the fact that your life is being created by you. A lot of people take on the role of Victim in their life by deciding that they can’t have what they want for a variety of reasons:

- Their boss is a jerk who takes credit for their work and doesn’t want to see them succeed.
- Their parents always struggled financially and they’re doomed to repeat the same pattern.
- They’re not smart enough.
- They’re too old.
- They just don’t have the time or energy to do what they want.
- The last relationship they were in completely destroyed their self-confidence.

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- They've failed so many times and made so many mistakes, that there's just no way to repair the damage.
- They were bullied and made fun of when they were in grade school.

The complaints and excuses that people come up with of why they'll never be able to achieve their dreams could fill an entire book, which we can entitle: "Why I'll Never Be Able to Have What I Want". When a person focuses on all of the reasons why they can't do something they're immediately filled with a sense of paralysis, hopelessness, and helplessness. People who are serious about living their dreams need to make a shift from being a Victim to being a Creator. As a Creator, they begin to develop the capacity to envision outcomes and take steps—baby-steps, if necessary--toward manifesting these outcomes.

David Emerald refers to this same principle of moving from a Victim Orientation to a Creator Orientation in his book "[The Power of Ted](#)". As David explains, a Creator knows that he/she always has a choice, regardless of circumstances.

If you've been playing the role of the Victim—coming up with excuses that explain why you can't get what you want, blaming others for the things that are wrong in your life, constantly complaining but doing nothing to remedy the situations you complain about, and so on—you have to become a Creator.

A Creator does the following:

- They decide what they want.
- They keep focused on their vision, regardless of outside events and circumstances.
- They take consistent action toward achieving their goals.
- They know that sometimes they have to change course because the winds have changed; when this happens, they simply adjust their sails and look for a different route to reach their intended destination.
- They keep going despite temporary setbacks.
- They see mistakes as feedback. They assess what they did wrong, they modify their approach accordingly, and they try again.
- Each time that they fall they get back up again.
- If someone else gets in the way of the achievement of their goals, they see that person as a challenge that needs to be overcome.
- They don't listen to anyone who tries to tell them that they're out of the game.

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- They don't give their power away.
- They know that it's not about getting others to change.
- They give themselves permission to go after their dreams, instead of waiting to get permission from others.
- They make their own decisions, instead of allowing others to make decisions for them.
- They know that sometimes the going may be slow, but they'll get to their intended destination nonetheless.
- They constantly ask: "What do I want?", and move toward it by choosing, instead of reacting.

In addition, if a Creator is negatively impacted by an external event, they focus on those things which are within their Circle of Influence. That is, they place their attention on those things over which they have control, instead of worrying about things they can do nothing about. By acting within their Circle of Influence, they gradually expand the circle until there are more and more things they can have an impact on.

The mindset of a Creator is "I am responsible for me, and I can choose." The language used by a Creator is the following:

- Let's look for alternatives.
- What do I want to happen?
- What baby steps can I take to begin moving toward what I want?
- How can I get the money so that I can do this?
- I choose to . . .
- I will find a way.

Brian Tracy writes in his book "Goals! How to Get Everything You Want--Faster Than You Ever Thought Possible" that when he was twenty-one years old he was broke, he had a job working construction, and he lived in a small one-room apartment. One night he was sitting at the small kitchen table and he had a sudden flash of awareness that changed his life: "No one was coming to the rescue." He realized that everything that happened to him from that moment on was completely up to him. He was responsible for his life.

Seeing yourself as being the Creator of your life and making a commitment to creating the best possible life that you can for yourself is the first step toward creating and achieving your life list. If you don't believe that ultimately you're the master of your destiny, it's going to be very difficult, if not impossible, for you to achieve what you want in life. Make the decision right now to see yourself as a Creator, regardless of what may be going on in your life at the moment.

EXERCISE 1: SHIFTING FROM VICTIM TO CREATOR

Right now, identify a situation in which you've been acting out the role of Victim, whether of circumstances or other people. Is there something you want but haven't been able to get, and you're blaming someone else or some particular circumstance? Is there something that you're always complaining about but aren't doing anything to try and fix? Write it down in your "Life List Journal".

You're going to take inventory of all the resources that you have at your disposal-including money, contacts, skills, knowledge, and so on. Then, you're going to identify how you can use these resources to begin moving from being a Victim to being a Creator in the situation you've identified. Take inventory of your resources:

Inventory - Contacts: Make a list of all the people you know and have a good relationship with. It can include your parents, your siblings, your boss, your co-workers, your banker, your customers, your friends, people from your alumni association, and so on.

Once you've identified all of your contacts, you're going to go through your list to determine who can put in a good word for you, give you advice, connect you with somebody else who could be in a position to help you, or be of assistance in some other way.

Inventory - Skills and Knowledge: Make a list of all your degrees and all of the seminars you've taken. List every job you've ever had--including internships and volunteer work--and everything you learned in those jobs. What are your hobbies? List everything you know how to do, and all the problems you know how to solve.

Don't discard any of your skills because you think that it's something that anyone can do; just because something comes easily to you does not mean that it comes easily to everyone else. And just because you've devoted time and effort to learning how to do something, does not mean that everyone else has done so as well.

Now you're going to identify how the knowledge that you possess and the skills that you have can be leveraged to help you get what you want.

Inventory - Finances: Make a list of all of your financial assets, including any cash you have on hand, any money in your savings account, any real estate you own, and your investment portfolio. Also, list any assets you own which could quickly be converted into cash. Having good credit is also a financial asset. Money can always come in handy, whether it's to hire a consultant, to get additional education, or even to hire an attorney if you have to.

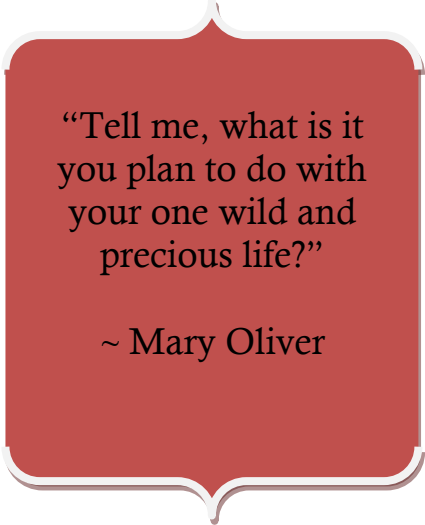
Inventory - Character Traits: Sometimes your best resources will be your ability to persevere, your ability to stay positive, and your ability to choose your attitude,

regardless of what else might be going on around you. Also, having the ability to look at a situation from several different perspectives is also a great asset.

Now that you've listed all of the resources at your disposal, write down in your Life List Journal five things you can do with these resources, no matter how small, so that you can start shifting from being a Victim to being a Creator in the situation you've identified. Then make sure you take those steps.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DECIDING WHAT YOU WANT

There's a short pamphlet which was written in 1926 called "It Works", which is often cited by self-development experts. The very first page of the pamphlet says the following: "If you know what you want, you can have it." The problem is, as incredible as it may sound, that most people don't really know what they want. The great American writer and humorist Mark Twain summed it up neatly when he said: "I can teach anybody how to get what they want out of life. The problem is that I can't find anybody who can tell me what they want."



"Tell me, what is it
you plan to do with
your one wild and
precious life?"

~ Mary Oliver

In "The Magic Lamp" Keith Ellis explains that it was rumored that a philosopher in Europe once recorded the following message on his voicemail: "This device is programmed to ask two simple questions: Who are you and what do you want? Most people live their entire lives without answering either one." In order to create your best life, you need to be able to answer both of these questions.

In the previous section we discussed the importance of shifting from being a Victim—of circumstances, of events, of other people—and becoming a Creator. Once you've identified yourself as a Creator the question then becomes: what are you going to create? You decide what to create by deciding what it is that you want.

Stephen Covey suggests in "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" that you decide what you want by beginning with the end in mind. He recommends that you try the following exercise: See yourself walking into a funeral parlor and noticing that it's filled with people that you know. As you walk to the front of the room and look inside the casket, you realize that the funeral is for you. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Who's there?
- What does each of the speakers say about you as they walk up to the podium?
- What words are they using to describe you?



[Helm](#) image is courtesy of [macieklew](#).

- What contributions and achievements would you like for them to mention?
- What do you want to be remembered for?
- What legacy are you leaving behind?
- Have you made a positive difference in these people's lives?

Here are some more questions you should ask yourself to help you determine whether you begin with the end in mind:

- Have I decided what I want?
- Have I identified what's most important to me?
- Do I know what success means to me? Is my ladder leaning against the right building?
- Do I have long-term goals covering different areas of my life?
- Do I have mid-term and short-term goals that will move me closer to achieving my long-term goals?
- Where do I want to be a year from now? Five years from now? Ten years from now? Twenty years from now?
- Do I devote my time to what matters most to me?
- Who are the most important people in the world to me? Do I spend enough time with them?
- Am I doing what I enjoy? Am I having fun?
- Do I know where I'm headed?
- Am I on the right path?
- Am I being authentic? Do I allow myself to be me? Am I trying to be somebody I'm not?

Everything that you're experiencing in this moment is a result of all the decisions you've made up to this point in your life. You're living the consequences of your past actions and inactions. Use this eBook to decide exactly what it is that you want, and to begin acting toward creating those results.

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Before an architect builds a house, they create a blueprint. Before someone starts a business, they create a business plan; the business plan includes an exit strategy, as well as where they plan to be a year after the business is started, in two years, in three years, and so on. In much the same way, by creating a life list you'll be creating a blueprint so that you can live your best life.

The greater clarity you have about what you want, the more you'll be able to achieve, and the faster you'll be able to achieve it. Chapter Three of this eBook contains seven exercises which will help you decide exactly what it is that you want.