

UTA SCHMIDT

DREAM CHASERS APPROACH
**SEVEN KEYS TO
ABUNDANT LIVING**

LEARN FROM PROMINENT LEADERS AND ROLE-MODELS HOW THEY
APPROACH LIFE AND EXPERIENCE ABUNDANCE

DREAM CHASERS APPROACH

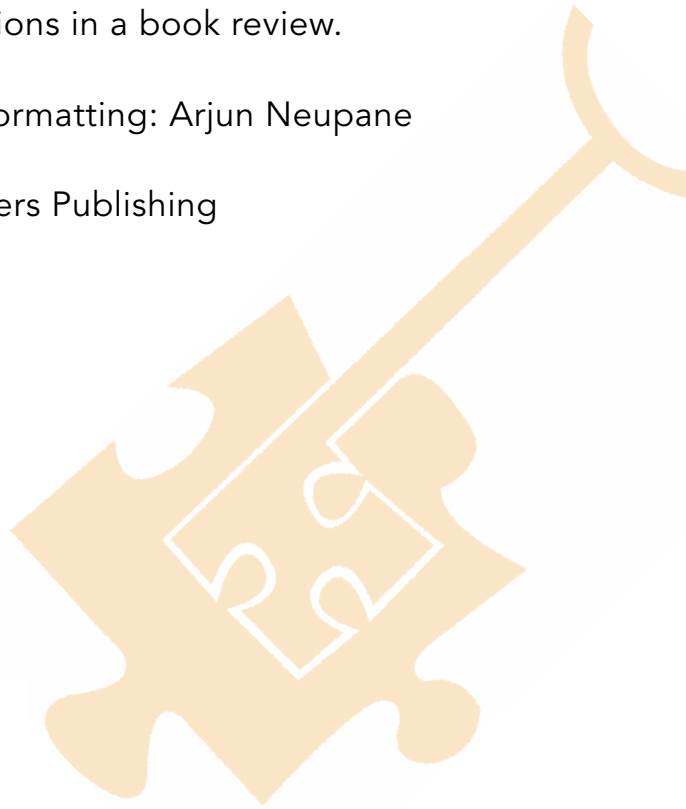
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Cover Design & Interior Formatting: Arjun Neupane

Published By Dream Chasers Publishing



Dream Chasers
Approach

www.dreamchasersapproach.com

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GET IN THE ARENA

START CHASING YOUR DREAM NOT THE CARROT

Have you ever wondered why the grass always looks greener on the other side? Why the others seem to have a smooth, perfect, ideal life? Why they seem to be successful and happy? One of the reasons why that appears to be so is that people don't post on Facebook that they've just had a nervous breakdown, that they started off their morning with a fight with their spouse or kids, that they feel on edge, discouraged, disappointed or depressed. Or do you?

We usually share highlights and success stories in public – not our moments of vulnerability, struggle or failure. But it is exactly these that need to be talked about more, because everybody has them: struggles, failures, hurts, and disappointments.

Author and speaker Les Brown puts it this way: "People either have just come out of a problem, or they are in the middle of a problem, or they are heading towards one!" We all face challenges in our lives at one point or another, but if we believe that we are the only ones encountering them we feel isolated and retreat in confusion.

In 2011 I found myself in one of those difficult seasons where I retreated in confusion, where I felt life had cheated on me, and where I was left with a lot of hard questions. For years I had tried to find the key that would unlock the door to experiencing a fulfilling life. On the outside I was functioning well. To others I even seemed to be



successful and have life under control. I had two master degrees, a decent job, I was involved in a lot of activities, wrote articles for publication and dared to break out of the ordinary by doing mission trips all over the world and following continuous training in spiritual and personal development.

Outwardly, I showed socially desirable behavior and looked like I had it all together, but inside I was falling apart until I could not keep it up anymore and ended up in a burnout. I was empty, worn out, confused and disillusioned. In that low place I did something dangerous that many people do: I compared myself to others. I saw other people – friends, role models and those I looked up to - and their lives seemed to be successful and fulfilling.

I didn't understand where I had missed it and why I had ended up with a lot of broken pieces in my life. After all, I had worked diligently and tried hard to do the "right things". I had followed numerous trainings and tried to implement the principles I was taught to the best of my abilities. I had studied the lives of successful people and invested a lot in personal development. I did the right things, but I didn't get the right results.

I felt life had betrayed me, taunting me by holding out the carrot with the promise that something like an abundant life was out there for me, but I always lagged behind. Like the rabbit, I had been chasing the carrot, until I broke down in exhaustion. Maybe you too know what it is like to feel like you are chasing the carrot. If you do, then you might have similar questions concerning life like I had: What was the missing element? What was it that I didn't do right, or what was I missing in my attempt to make my life work and count on earth? And what did the people that I considered 'successful' do to make their lives a success?



Destiny Sabotage

In my quest for answers I came across a study on destiny conducted by Fuller Theological Seminary. Fuller had collected data from individuals for over 30 years and found out that most people don't lead a fulfilling life, or rather fulfill their ultimate life call and destiny, because they get stuck in the difficult seasons of life. They don't know how to deal with contradictory circumstances.

The research concluded that one of the predominant reasons why most people do not fulfill their ultimate destiny is that they do not understand the maturing process God takes them through on their way to their destiny. Many people set out with great vision, but lose sight or even give up when they face contradictions, failure, disappointment, loss, tragedy or resistance. We have been conditioned by the idea that a perfect life is a life free of pain and struggle.

Next to that, our society and culture paints a very specific picture of success, which has led most of us to think that success is defined by results. And most of the time, people's success stories only display the results - the victories, breakthroughs and the great outcomes - but we hear little about the process prior to the outcome, which usually involves struggles and overcoming great obstacles.

This realization has led me on a journey of exploring this process prior to the outcomes and 'successes' of great leaders. I wanted to hear the real stories, not just the glamorous part. I wanted to know what kind of contradictions, struggles, difficulties, losses and disappointments great role models of our time have faced and how they have navigated through these difficult seasons. What has helped them on their journey and what did they do to get where they are today? What did they do to overcome life's obstacles?



I have interviewed prominent leaders from different walks of life on their maturing process and have gained insight into the hearts and minds of amazing people such as **Les Brown (author, speaker), Bill Johnson (Bethel), Rolland and Heidi Baker (Iris Global), Loren Cunningham (YWAM), Dr. Sandra Kennedy (Whole Life), Canon Andrew White (The Vicar of Baghdad), William Paul Young (author of The Shack), Michael W Smith (artist, singer), Desmond Tutu (Nobel Peace Prize laureate, former Archbishop of Cape Town) and many more.**

With the insights I have gained, I have developed a unique Training Program (The “Dream Chasers TREASURE Program” to be launched summer 2016) and written down their breath taking stories in my upcoming book “Dream Chasers: Overcoming Life’s Obstacles on your way to your Destiny” (estimated release: fall 2016).

What’s Their Secret?

When starting this venture, I wanted to know the secret to their success. But here is what I found out: they don’t have “secrets”. There is no formula or program they follow. They are people like you and me. They are ordinary people who have become extraordinary, and in becoming who they are today, the results – which we primarily define as “success” – have followed. The results though are rather irrelevant in light of who they have become as a human being. Yes, there are also certain principles they follow and choices they have made. But what I have found is that their ‘secret’ to living a fulfilled life is not primarily tied to what they do, but to who they have become.

I have come to this conclusion as I’ve processed all the interviews and have written down the stories of struggle, loss, betrayal and victories of those who were willing to participate in this project. This realization has led to a change of focus in my life. Instead of focusing



on what I need to do, what I need to accomplish and achieve – or what all these great role models have accomplished and achieved – the focus has shifted to who they have become. Their key to success and a life of abundance is not based on results and outcomes, but on living from the inside out.

“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals “

Zig Ziglar

In this book I have dissected the most common denominators for abundant living, which I have observed in all of the great leaders I have interviewed. This book will show you how you can chase your dream and tap into your destiny. The principles laid out in this book will direct you on the path to true and long lasting fulfillment. They will set and activate your internal compass for abundant living and point out where you have navigated off course. Get ready for a paradigm shift and an adjustment of the course of your life.

¹ *Dr. Robert Clinton, professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, came to this conclusion after doing empirical research on destiny. For over thirty years Clinton collected data, and the results of his research showed that only 20% of the leaders (all of them full time ministers!) who were part of his study confirmed they fulfilled their ultimate life assignment. 80% felt they had not reached their full destiny toward the end of their lives. Other research under Yale Graduates confirms this 20% - 80% relation, however, the 20% is still very optimistic and on the high end of those who actually fulfill their destiny and live life to the fullest.*



THE DOOR THAT WILL OPEN NEW HORIZONS FOR YOU

On a recent trip to the States I had lunch with a group of young adults in their mid twenties who wanted to know more about my book and my mentorship program (Dream Chasers TREASURE Program). They were excited about my interviews and the book, but when I mentioned that I have developed a mentorship program based on my findings they frowned.

Mentorship made them feel uneasy. I asked them why. They told me that the concept of mentorship was not appealing to them, because they felt they had to conform to a certain mold, check out their brains and turn into a person somebody else wanted them to become. Then I frowned in return and said, "Well, I wouldn't want that either!" I explained that the whole purpose of mentorship was to help become the person who they truly are and made to be!

In our society and churches we are told that if we become a certain person, behave a certain way and fit into a certain mold we will be successful. But what I have found in my personal encounters with successful leaders is the exact opposite. It's not about becoming like them, or becoming like a certain image of a person. A major key to success is becoming you, the true you! It's about becoming a true authentic person. As I explained this to my small "audience" of young adults in the States, it opened a new horizon to them. A sparkle lit up in their eyes and they declared in unison: "Yeah, that's exactly what we want!"



The more I reflect on the interviews the more convinced I am that an authentic person is the essence of all lasting success. In fact, authenticity is success, as best-selling author Paul Young (The Shack) told me: "To me true success is becoming an authentic human being. All the things that happen as a result of it is rather irrelevant to me. Success is the spilling over of authenticity, or else it's not success. Otherwise it's just another façade. Success is being a whole person - when the truth of your being and the way of your being match!" In a

"True success is becoming an authentic human being. Success is just the spilling over of authenticity, or else it's not success. Else it's just another façade. "

Wm Paul Young

world of uniformity, façade and sameness, becoming authentic is the master key to living a fulfilled life.

Authenticity is the key that opens the door to new horizons and to the realms

of abundant living. A key opens a door, but you still have to walk through the door in order to step into the realm that was hidden to you before. What's behind that door is inexhaustible and will take a lifetime to explore.

So far, so good - but the big question is this: how do I become truly authentic? How can I get hold of that so-called 'key' and unlock the door that will open up new realms of experience for me? For almost all people, becoming authentic is a journey, because we were bent by expectations from parents, peers and society. We were bent by rejection, by performance pressure, religion and legalistic tradition.

Sometimes, our true identity has been dismantled by past hurt and traumatic experiences. No matter where we've come from, we all have to deal with gravel and grit that hide our true identity. Nobody is immune to the temptation to define who we are by what we do, by what we have, or by taking on a façade.



Have you ever noticed that even the Jesus, the Son of God, was tempted by the devil in this same area? When the devil tempted him, he challenged his identity: **"If you** are the son of God, then ... - prove it." You know the end of the story. Jesus did not give in. He was secure in his identity and remained true to his very being. But more often than not, we don't, because we have lost our true sense of identity and succumbed to the unwholesome messages we have received about who we are or ought to be.

Why then is it so important to be authentic? Authenticity is also the key to true connection with yourself, with God, and with others. Researcher and sociologist Dr. Brené Brown from Houston University states that true connection can only happen when we are authentic. **"True belonging only happens when we present our authentic, imperfect selves to the world. Our sense of belonging can never be greater than our level of self acceptance."**

Coming to that sense of belonging and identity of who they are has been a process for everyone of the leaders I have interviewed. For some it was a longer journey than for others, and for most of them it involved inner healing and truly understanding that their value does not depend on their performance or achievements. All of them have deliberately engaged in that process of coming to this true sense of identity, and they guard this understanding with all their heart. They pay careful attention to their thought life and rigorously deal with self-accusation and feelings of guilt and shame, for they are all prone to it if they do not stay focused on the truth and stand strong in their identity.

²*Dream Chasers: Overcoming Life's Obstacles on you Way to your Destiny*



Authenticity Check

Take a notebook and write down the answer to the following statements:

1. It is easy for people to get to know me
2. I have no secrets and nothing to hide or to feel ashamed of
3. I know my intuitive heart voice and trust it to guide me
4. I clearly hear and accurately interpret my voice of intuition
5. I regularly listen to my intuitive heart voice
6. I am aware of the values that are important to me and I act accordingly
7. I anticipate the needs of others and work hard to satisfy them.
8. I often feel inadequate or not good enough
9. I often act polite and calm on the outside when inside I feel frustrated, angry or hurt.
10. I am highly critical of myself
11. People describe me as a perfectionist
12. My true feelings are a secret and I rarely share them with others

Is the answer no to any of the questions 1-6? Is the answer yes to any of the questions 7-12? Then you can identify your areas of potential for growth in moving more toward authenticity.

GET THE KEY TO UNLOCK ABUNDANCE

The second key I found among people who lead a life of abundance is generosity. It is the most compelling feature in a person, and I have found it in all of the great leaders I have interviewed. I have discovered though that their generosity has nothing to do with their 'wealth' or 'status' in life. Their **generosity** flows out of their true sense of identity and authenticity. They are inseparably connected. Why is that so? People who are authentic don't feel threatened by others and therefore they are free to give of themselves.

The following example of Chris Gardner's life, author of *The Pursuit of Happyness* is a perfect illustration of the connection between authenticity and generosity. When Chris was about 8 years old, he had a very impacting conversation with his mother, which changed the later course of his life and opened the door to generosity in a powerful way.

As a boy, Chris loved to play the trumpet. One day, when he had finished practicing his instrument, he burst into the kitchen and announced to his mother, "Mom, when I'm big, I want to be like Miles Davis!"

But instead of supporting her son's aspirations, she sat him down at the kitchen table, took his hands into hers and with a serious frown looked him straight in the eyes. "Chris, you can't be like Miles



Davis!" she said with a stern voice.

"Why not??" he asked confused and disappointed.

"His position is already taken!" she explained. "There is only one person you can be – and that is you! Do you understand that?"

"Yes, mam...", Chris replied.

But deep inside he did not. He still wanted to be like Miles Davis and continued practicing day after day. His mom's words kept resounding in his mind though. Finally his understanding caught up and he agreed to pursue no longer becoming like Miles Davis, but rather becoming who he was made to be. He finally got the message!

Chris Gardner shares that when he quit trying to be like someone else, a burden of pressure and the need to perform fell off of him. He no longer felt threatened by others who he had previously viewed as competitors. Instead, he learned to discover who he was made to be, what his strengths and unique gifts were and followed the route of authenticity.

This in turn unlocked another door in his heart and enabled him to be generous even in the face of hardships and extreme financial struggle. Why? Because he did not feel threatened by others, but was secure in who he was. He stayed true to himself and that's why he was free to be all he could be. In consequence, he became known as one of the most generous person's of heart and inspired millions with his life story portrayed in the multiple award winning movie "*The Pursuit of Happyness*".

How about you? Do you 'get the message'? So often we try to be like someone else, to imitate a successful person, to conform to a certain image. When we do that though, we feel threatened more easily, because others will try to aspire to that position, too. Only



when you are authentic and fill the position of your true self, you won't need to feel threatened, because you know that no one else can take that place. Then you are free to give of yourself. Only when you walk through the door of authenticity you can unlock the door to true generosity of heart.

Truly successful people give freely of themselves. They are incredibly generous. They don't feel threatened that someone else is going to take from them, because they know nobody can take their place. They are generous in all aspects of life – not only in finances, but even more so in giving time, in investing in others, in showing affection, gratitude and in encouraging others. They can be generous because they know who they are.

Abundance vs. Scarcity Mentality

Another important factor for their generosity is that they live out of an abundance mentality. Most people live out of a scarcity mentality. A scarcity mentality fears that there is *not enough* and views the world through a lens of lack in every area of life. Life's resources are limited and therefore there is 'not enough' for everybody. Hence they have to strive for everything they have and fight to keep it. This scarcity mentality is usually paired with a sense of not being enough: not being good enough, smart enough, beautiful enough, wealthy enough – you name it. Consequently, there is always the pressure to perform and to achieve.

People who live a life of abundance live out of an abundance mentality. They do not live under a burden of strife, performance and achievements, which only offers limited places. They live out of the freedom of abundance, which knows no competition or lack of resources. The abundance mentality views the world through the lens



of abundance. God offers unlimited resources and there is enough for everybody. The abundance mentality is inseparably connected to sense of value and identity.

This sense of value flows out of their relationship with God and a revelation of who they are in God's sight. They no longer live as

The reason I am secure in who I am has nothing to do with my career or success. My security comes from God. Once you come to that realization you won't try to find fulfillment in your gifts, but you will just love who you are."

Michael W. Smith

slaves but as sons and *daughters of the King*.³ The abundance mentality flows out of a deep sense of acceptance and the spirit of adoption.⁴ A scarcity mentality flows

out of a fear of guilt and failure, a fear of not being enough and not having enough. At its root is rejection and it is managed by performance. It is fueled by a spirit of poverty, also known as spirit of slavery.⁵

Successful people have become secure in their identity and are free to be generous with encouragement, with investing in others, with time and with appreciation. They know how rich they are as sons and daughters of God, and their demeanor has a royal edge. They can be generous, knowing that they have free access to unlimited resources. They don't feel threatened by someone else's strengths or gifts, but they are able to celebrate the success of another person

and have an eager desire to see the potential in someone else fulfilled. They are free to be generous because they know who they are and feel secure in their identity.

³ Galatians 4:5-7 & Ephesians 3:14-20.

⁴ Romans 8:15.

⁵ *Ibid.*



They are not concerned about themselves, their achievements, their *territory* or their performance. They don't think in these terms. They are free to think of each person as a success, and they are more concerned about building up others and the next generation than building for themselves. Singer and artist Michael W. Smith shares that his main goal in life is investing in other people. "My greatest vision is to father people. There're so many broken people and I want to father them, raise them up so that they can be all that God has called them to be."

He can now father others because he knows his identity as a son and has a deep relationship with God the Father. "Having a revelation of the fatherheart of God and His love for me has been one of the most significant experiences in my spiritual life," Michael explains. "That revelation just totally changed my heart. The reason I am secure in who I am has nothing to do with my career or success. My security comes from God. And once you come to that realization you won't try to find fulfillment in your gifts, but you will just love who you are!"

That's why he can freely give of himself. He is grounded in God's love for him and that has become his anchor. Michael W. Smith is not only loved for his great music, but more than that he is known for his great character and love for people. The importance of the revelation of the heart of God and personal encounter with His love applies to all the other great men and women I have met and talked to. They all have a deep relationship with God the Father and the security of their identity comes from the revelation of how much they are loved by Him. This revelation is not a one-time realization of the past. Everyone I talked to cultivates that revelation and pursues continual growth in that area of their life.



Everyone's journey into the love of God has been different. For some it has been a long journey with many obstacles into the fatherheart of God. Author of the world best seller *The Shack* William Paul Young says, **"I could not experience the love of God the Father until I had finally wiped off the face of my own father off of God's face."** That was a process that took him more than a decade.

For others that journey has been easier. They have had great earthly fathers and did not have to deal with a distorted view of God. But all leaders I have encountered have intentionally pursued a deeper level of the revelation of God's love and their identity in Him, because they know this is the key to experiencing a more meaningful spiritual life and having greater vision. That revelation⁷ sets them free to freely be and to freely give – and in being themselves and giving of themselves they are enriched and fulfilled.

The same counts for you. Once you become more secure in your identity and your true worth, you will be free to be generous of heart. You will be able to give out of an overflow of your internal treasures and riches. You won't fear a lack of resources – that there's not enough for everybody and that you need to guard what you have. Once you realize that you have unlimited resources at your disposal, you will be able to be generous in every aspect of life.

⁶ *Ephesians 3:14-20.*

⁷ *After all, Jesus primary mission on earth was to show the true nature of the Father. This just underlines the importance of knowing the fatherheart of God and having a revelation of his true nature.*





Your Generosity compass

Take a notebook and identify any areas of your life where you feel competitive or threatened by others.

- Are you mainly driven by an abundance mentality where you believe that inexhaustible resources are available for you and that God is willing to send your way whatever you need? Or are you mainly steered by a poverty mentality that is driven by worry that there is not enough and that you are not good enough?
- Is it easy for you to give and see others succeed or do you feel rather protective about your time, finances and resources?

FIND YOUR PASSION PULSE

Have you ever taken the time to notice what makes your heart feel alive? Which activities give you energy, invigorate you and give you a sense of fulfillment? The key to truly *staying alive* from the inside out is living from passion. People who live from passion enter a realm of abundance that remains hidden to those who live the majority of their lives from obligation.

You have probably heard people say, “Find your passion, do it – and you will never work for another day in your life!” This sounds trite, but there is a truth in it. When you find your passion and do what you love, work won’t be drudgery, but an expression from the inside out. This does not mean that you never have to do anything you don’t like or would rather not do. It actually is part of a maturing and growth process – but it should not mark your whole life, and it shouldn’t go against your true nature.

None of the great leaders I have encountered do what they do out of strife or obligation, but they live from the core and are in touch with their passions and desires. They know how they are wired and have discovered their divine design. **They do what they are wired to do, not what they are required to do.**



You can only live from passion if you are in touch with your true identity and have a sense of your true value and a revelation of God's love for you. Otherwise you will fall back into trying to *find* your identity in what you do. This will lead to striving and trying to become *like* someone. When you try to be (like) someone, when you conform to a certain image and meet a particular standard, you have to work hard for it, because it does not flow from your heart and out of who you were really made to be.

If you ignore or even reject your passions and just do what you are told or expected to do even though your heart is not really in it, you will end up frustrated, dissatisfied and empty inside. Author and speaker Les Brown puts it this way: **"Most people die when they are 25, but they don't get buried until they are 60!"** Why is that so? Many people are afraid to follow their passions, because it is not always the 'safe' way to do life. Others live the script of their parents and conform to external expectations. They end up fulfilling their parents' dreams for their lives instead of their own dreams.

The majority, however, is not even in touch with their own desires and passions, because of the pressures of life, other people's expectations, and because of the distractions life offers. In order to get in touch with your desires and passions you need to listen to yourself and quiet down. You need to pay attention to your inner life. That requires time. It also requires discipline to shut down the noises of life and listen to your inner voice if you have not cultivated that yet. Successful people cultivate listening to their hearts and they do what they do wholeheartedly.



Religion kills Passion

In addition to the pressures, expectations and distractions of life some wrong religious teaching has taught many to deny themselves by denying their passions and desires. Some legalistic teaching even suggests that what is contrary to your own will and desire is God's will for you. This has led to a disconnection between head and heart and has created a dangerous susceptibility to manipulation and deception.

Truly successful people, who experience abundance and live a fulfilled life, live wholeheartedly. They trust God's ability to speak to their hearts and pay careful attention to the desires and stirrings of their hearts. God has given each person an internal compass. Our desires and passions are that natural catalyst for direction. **"Your passion is God's will for you!"** says Les Brown. Unfortunately many churches have literally destroyed the self-esteem of its people and their ability to follow their internal compass through unwholesome teaching which views all natural desires as carnal and sinful.

Clarity is Power

Connecting with your passions and desires enables you to live in the here and now. Life coach Dr. Lance Wallnau says that *your future is not in front of you, it is inside of you*. You have to get in touch with your desires and passions instead of just waiting for something grand to happen in the future. Too often people have neglected and denied their desires and consequently have lived someone else's agenda instead of their own true identity and calling. Others have waited all their life for something "great" to happen. But if you are in relationship with God, your desires are an important indicator of your future and destiny.



Successful people pay close attention to the desires of their hearts. From there, they work hard and overcome obstacles, discouragement and frustration. Because they do what they do from the heart, their work is fulfilling and energizing instead of draining. If you deny your natural desires and inclinations, you lose touch with yourself and will increasingly seek guidance for life outside of yourself. Of course, it is wise to seek input from people you trust, but successful people do that *while* being in touch with their core.

Living from your passion though does not mean you live in a dream world where everything is ideal. All great leaders work hard and are very practical about fulfilling their dreams. They encounter obstacles, frustration and at times do get worked up and tired – but it does

“Imagining what you want as if it already exists opens the door to letting it happen.” not mark their whole life and the work they do is not drudgery to them.

Shakti Gawain Someone put it this way: “When passion and duty

meet in a person, grace has found a home.” Passion and work go hand in hand and lead to a life where you can experience abundance.

People who are not in touch with themselves are more prone to confusion about their calling and destiny. They are often disoriented and have no clear purpose. Those who live an abundant life are in touch with their passions and therefore have developed clarity, and clarity is power. Clarity about who you are, what you want and what your calling is empowers you to make the right choices and actually achieve your goals in life. People who are not in touch with themselves usually have very few or no goals at all (or they don’t have the right ones). They want something to change, but feel powerless and have no direction.



Clarity about your desires, future and destiny gives you vision - and vision empowers you to make it a reality. God said to Abraham "I give you all your eye can see." Shakti Gawain puts it this way: "Imagining what you want as if it already exists opens the door to letting it happen." Great leaders have great vision. They are in touch with themselves and in tune with their God given desires and passions. They have great vision for the future and are energized and fueled by what they see.





Your Passion Pulse

Take your notebook and make a list of the things you enjoy doing. Write them down in one column. Think of activities that make you feel like you can forget the world around you, where time flies, where you feel fully present and engaged in the here and now. Think of activities that recharge your batteries, give you energy and make you feel alive.

When finished with the list, write in the left column things that you are good at. If you can't think of any, ask others to tell you what they see you are good at in your life.

Then circle the areas in the left and right column that are identical. These are the areas you should spend more time on and develop further in skill and mastery.



HOW TO ACTIVATE PURPOSE FOR EACH DAY

Another important key to abundant living flows out of living from passion: **intentionality**. People who live from passion and have vision give their life direction. They are clear about their values, priorities and dreams. They live their lives with intentionality. The majority of people don't live intentionally. They live by the day. Les Brown nails it when he says that, "Most people fail in life not because they aim too high and miss, but because they aim too low and hit. And the majority of people don't aim at all." (Les Brown)

Living intentionally means that you are aware of your goals and values and that the choices you make each day are in alignment with your goals and values. This gives your life direction and purpose. Most people though feel lost and look to others for direction. They feel like Alice in Wonderland, who just wants to get out of where she is as quickly as possible without knowing where she really wants to go: "Cheshire Puss," Alice began, "...Would you please tell me which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where..." said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

When you know where you want to go, you won't just take any path. Vision gives you focus and empowers you to live intentionally. Intentionality steers your life in the right direction. Lance Wallnau



says, **“Clarity is power. The clearer you are about your vision, the more power you have to manifest it.”** Living intentionally means that you set goals and steer each day so that it contributes toward fulfilling your vision.

Having the right focus and living intentionally helps you get rid of the daily grind and activate purpose to your day. Mundane chores turn into meaningful chores when you do not only focus on what

Most people fail in life not because they aim too high and miss, but because they aim too low and hit. And the majority of people don't aim at all.”

Les Brown

you want to achieve, but even more so in who you want to become. Tony Robbins shares this priority from his own life and says, “I don't just ask myself what I want, but who do I want to become...” Once

you focus on the person you want to become, you can see all aspects of life as an opportunity contributing to that end. It's the everyday life, not just the results of one day in life, which shapes a person.

Intentionality is as much an attitude as an action. It is a proactive approach to life. This is what all great leaders have in common – and this is where most people have a misconception. For my interviews I have approached many great spiritual leaders and I was particularly interested in how they 'do' life with God.

People like Heidi Baker and Bill Johnson are known for signs, wonders and miracles. God shows up and supernaturally intervenes through their work. But they don't just sit there and twiddle their thumbs until something spectacular happens. They also don't just pray. What I have observed is that all of them are extremely practical and proactive in their approach to life. Many people want *something* to happen, but they are not very specific and therefore they are passive.



Dr. Sandra Kennedy puts it this way: “Many people think they have a vision, but they don’t understand that vision has hands and feet to it. They have the idea that having a vision means to agree with it in their mind, but they don’t understand that you have to make it happen. You can almost compare it with the difference between hope and faith - between just agreeing with something and actually doing something. That’s a missing element for a lot of people.”

Bill Johnson is known for his healing ministry. Since an early age he has been consumed by the passion to see people healed from

Many people think they have a vision, but they don’t understand that vision has hands and feet to it.

Dr. Sandra Kennedy

sickness and diseases like they did when Jesus walked this earth. His passion was to see the reality of heaven invade earth. He didn’t wait for it to happen though. He

started praying for the sick and pursuing the gift of healing for many years before he saw any “results” – before any healings were actually taking place.

The same counts for Heidi Baker. She was intentionally looking for opportunities to pray for the sick **until** she finally saw miracles of healings manifest! Both were intentional in their pursuit: they would not give up **until** they would see their desire fulfilled.

Intentionality sets the stage for God to break through. Bill Johnson, Heidi Baker and others who have seen supernatural healings take place would say that God did it. Yes he did, but not independent of their involvement. They have already co-operated with God and set the stage for God to show up. It’s true that God healed the sick – but had they not been intentional in praying for them and setting the stage, it would not have happened.



Les Brown was very intentional about changing his way of thinking and training his public speaking skills. He would be intentional about reading at least 40 pages of something that would give positive input in his life. Each day he would listen 30 minutes to uplifting, motivational messages. He would deliberately shut out negative voices and only surround himself with quality people that would build him up in his pursuit of greatness. He would seek out every opportunity to hone his public speaking skills. He would study all great speakers and practice his skills in front of children, in personal conversations and even with his dogs way before he became one of the world's top speakers.

Living with intentionality will give you a sense of direction and accomplishment. It will bring meaning and purpose to each day as you focus on your values and vision and see even the small and mundane tasks as contributing to achieving the greater goal. Successful people aim high and hit – and even when they “miss” they count it as learning experience on their way toward reaching their goal.





Be intentional

Do you set goals for each day or do you live day by day? Take your notebook and set one specific goal for each day, such as taking a specific action toward improving a relationship, or accomplishing one small task in order to fulfill the greater task in front of you.

Choose an area of daily life you do not feel overly excited about, such as a daily chore or mundane task. How can you make this task or chore contribute to reaching your greater goal? Write down if there is a skill you can sharpen while doing these tasks or if you can work on adjusting your attitude in order to become the person you want to become.

THE KEY TO TRUE CONNECTION WITH YOURSELF, GOD AND OTHERS

Have you ever wondered what the key to true connection and fulfilling relationships is? What it takes to experience love and belonging, joy and freedom? It might surprise you when you read it, as it is usually thought of as something we should avoid in order to be successful. It is **vulnerability**.

Vulnerability is not a popular word, as it is often associated and equated with weakness, but nothing is further from the truth than that. It takes incredible courage to live with vulnerability, and I have observed the willingness to be vulnerable in all great leaders who embrace authenticity and live wholeheartedly. In fact, vulnerability is the basis for being able to walk in the realm of faith.

In her popular TED Talk "*The Power of Vulnerability*" researcher Dr. Brené Brown connects wholeheartedness to vulnerability. She defines wholeheartedness as *having the courage to say who you are with your whole heart*. This means daring to live without a façade and without building a defense of pretense around your heart. If you do that, you live with vulnerability, because you present your *authentic, imperfect* self to the world.

Webster's dictionary defines vulnerability as being "capable of being physically or emotionally wounded." To be honest, that does not sound very appealing, but it is necessary for experiencing real



connection and fulfilling relationships. Our automatic response to emotional wounds (or to the fear of getting wounded) is to armor up and build a fortress of protection around our heart.

Our natural human drive is to avoid pain at all cost, but our self-made protective defense mechanisms do not always serve us well. While numbing and shutting out pain, they also inhibit our ability to experience the depth of powerful positive emotions such as love, joy, happiness and compassion. In our attempt to protect our hearts and numb the pain, we also numb positive emotions that are essential to experiencing fulfillment and abundant life. The willingness to vulnerability is the key that opens the door to love, acceptance, freedom and fulfillment.

Successful people are wholehearted, not half-hearted. They don't build a fortress to compensate for their imperfections; they build bridges to connect with others. They even do that when their trust has been betrayed. That is a challenge, but also essential to fulfilling their ultimate call and destiny.

Without the willingness to vulnerability, Desmond Tutu would not have brought about reconciliation between former oppressor and oppressed. He would not have become the person he is today, nor would he have been able to stand for social justice and forgiveness.

Rolland and Heidi Baker would never have stayed in Mozambique after having been persecuted by the government, mistreated by locals and betrayed by some of the children they had rescued from the streets and adopted as their own.



Bill Johnson would have stopped praying for the sick a long time ago when he did not see the desired result right away and even faced great losses and disappointments.

Andrew White, the Vicar of Baghdad, would have fled the war zone long ago after witnessing some of his Iraqi children getting slaughtered and receiving death threats by Isis.

Andrew White often hears people say to him, “take care.” He then usually answers in his nonchalant way, “take risks!”

If he would “take care” he would have never stepped into his destiny in working tirelessly in peace negotiations in the Middle East. Taking risks means being vulnerable. There is no assurance against attack, setback, failure, betrayal of trust, or getting wounded. There is not safe guard against pain. Vulnerability is risky, but it is necessary

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, faith, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path.”

Brené Brown

for stepping into our destiny and it is necessary for experiencing true connection.

All leaders affirm that the most challenging part of vulnerability

is to forgive and build bridges after your trust has been betrayed. “I have been close to death many times,” Heidi Baker shared in our interview, “but the hardest part for me is when one of the children that I have poured love into steals an outrageous amount of money, turns against our ministry and follows a criminal life style. It’s the relational heartbreaks that hit far deeper than physical ones.” The hardest part comes when these children return (which



they usually do) and say, “Mama Heidi, we love you so much...” “That’s where love is a huge test for me,” Heidi says. “Am I going to forgive this son that is screwed up in so many ways? Am I going to accept and embrace him?” That’s the hard part and it makes her vulnerable to getting wounded again. But without the willingness to stay vulnerable and go through the pain, Heidi Baker would not have become who she is today. She would not be the example of love she is all over the world.

Brené Brown nails it when she summarizes the necessity for vulnerability for a fulfilling life: “Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, faith, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path.”





Risk assessment:

Take your notebook and identify areas where you need to take a risk in order to grow and move forward. Think of relationships or specific actions or skills you have to develop that stretch you and pull you out of your comfort zone. Write down what it costs you not to take the risk. Then write down what the BENEFIT would be if you take the risk and win.



SEEING THE POSSIBILITIES

Vulnerability is the birthplace of faith. Faith sees what is possible instead of what is impossible. Seeing the world through the lens of possibility is another common denominator I have observed in all great leaders I have encountered. The willingness to focus on what's possible arises from the willingness to fail, and consequently to be vulnerable. If you want to experience abundant life, you can't calculate risks, nor can you create a safeguard against possible hardships or adversity.

Experiencing abundant life requires moving out of the comfort zone into the unknown zone, which provides room for miracles and new ground to explore. It requires a moving away from a fear based scarcity mentality into a faith based abundance mentality. This again flows out of a true sense of identity and who we are in God.

Experiencing abundance implies an expansion of territory in life as opposed to a hedging in for safety and protection. Abundance knows no limits and is characterized by continual growth. Seeing that it's possible where others say it's impossible means venturing into territory hardly any others have gone before. There's nothing more vulnerable than heading for the unknown, with no guaranteed outcome. Walking in faith requires the willingness to be vulnerable and step into the unknown. It takes risks.



Many motivational speakers and faith preachers have it backward though. They rather promote positive thinking and taking risks by creating an emotionally charged atmosphere. But that is not faith. It is emotionally charged fervor, which resembles foolhardy zeal and a macho mentality instead of courage and faith. True faith is rooted in vulnerability, which again is connected to authenticity and identity.

Bill Johnson comments that we often have a wrong and limited view of faith and vision: “When prophets tell us *your vision is too small*, many

“I have learned to look for a crack in the wall instead of focusing on the shut door.”

Dr. Sandra Kennedy

of us think the antidote is to increase whatever numbers we’re expecting. Increasing numbers is not necessarily a sign of a larger vision from God’s perspective. Vision

starts with identity and purpose. Through a revolution in our identity, we can think with divine purpose. Such a change begins with a revelation of Him.”⁸

I have observed in all great leaders that they focus on possibilities instead of the impossibilities. But that vision does not flow out of emotional zeal, hype, mental assent or arrogance. Seeing the possibilities flows out of trust – trust in who God is and in who He says we are. It is something they have learned to see, a skill they have trained over time.

Les Brown was the most unlikely candidate for becoming one of the best public speakers of the world (and for becoming rich!). He had been born into poverty and been labeled *educable mentally retarded* (EMR). He failed third grade twice and when he was in the eighth grade he had to go back to grade seven. But when he helped his mother, a domestic worker, clean the great mansions of wealthy people in Miami Beach,



Les would eavesdrop on the messages one of the wealthy owners used to listen to. He heard Earl Nightingale speak about the greatness and destiny God has put in each person, and these messages started to impact his way of thinking. Les continued training his thoughts to focus on what's possible in and through his life. The change of thinking was the result of a revolution in his identity, as Bill Johnson described in the quote mentioned above.

It's not that circumstances are more favorable for all those great leaders. It's the way they choose to see things. Dr. Sandra Kennedy says that she has trained her mind to see the possibilities. "Through all the difficulties and rejection in the beginning stages of my ministry I've learned to look for the crack in the wall instead of focusing on the shut door," Sandra explains. "Sometimes God actually shuts every door and then opens a small crack—and I've learned to look for that crack. When God has spoken to me, no matter how impossible circumstances seem to be, I know there is always a crack somewhere, and that crack is going to work for me!"⁹

Seeing the possibility is a venture of trust that involves the willingness to be vulnerable and yet step into faith. Bill Johnson shares that he chooses to look at what God is doing instead of what he isn't doing, in particular when he is facing contradictions. "When unexpected things happen, there's always that sense of setback or disappointment, but I don't have to feed myself with that," Bill shares. "There is always a choice to make. It's like having two plates of food. I don't have to eat rotten food. I can make a decision to feed myself with what God is *doing* instead of what he isn't doing. That has been a saving grace for us over the years when we had to deal with major disappointments," Bill explains.¹⁰

⁸ Bill Johnson: *When Heaven invades Earth. Chapter 2.*

⁹ *Dream Chasers - Overcoming Life's Obstacles on your Way to your Destiny. Chapter 6.*

¹⁰ *ibid, Chapter 5.*





See the possibilities

Write down in your notebook areas where you have seen the impossibilities of a situation, of reaching a goal, of taking an action or of building a relationship, instead of the possibilities.

When you have identified one or more areas, write down what it would take to get the desired result. List what you need, what you can get, and what you can do. Then do what you can do. Leave what you cannot do up to God and focus on the can do steps.

GET IN THE ARENA

When Bill Johnson had looked into the realm of faith and seen the possibility of a place where cancer cannot exist, he made a public statement that Bethel church in Redding would contend for a cancer free zone – a place where cancer cannot exist. He prayed and declared the truth of God’s Word over sickness, and many people visiting Bethel were supernaturally healed of cancer.

A few months later, while speaking at a healing conference in Brazil, he received a phone call from home. His dad had undergone a routine surgery and during the procedure the doctors had found pancreatic cancer. The prognosis was dire: he only had a few months to live.

Bill packed his bags and flew back home to be with his family and encourage them. “This is not God’s work,” he said. “We are going to contend for healing, no matter what the doctors say and what circumstances look like.” He applied every principle and prayer he knew about healing. Bill had seen God move in supernatural ways; he had witnessed numerous healings; he had seen how tumors had disappeared from people’s bodies. And yet, in contending for the life of his father, he saw no change. The battle became fierce and cancer kept the upper hand.

After five months, Earl Johnson passed away. It was the most painful experience and most difficult loss in Bill Johnson’s life. Several



people who had warned Bill earlier on to be realistic and not expect a miracle for his father then responded, “See, we told you so...” It looked like he had lost the battle. But that’s not the end of the story. Since Earl Johnson died, Bethel church has seen an intense increase in healings, and numerous people have been healed of *pancreatic cancer*.

When Rolland and Heidi Baker first came to Mozambique, the whole country was marked by the aftermath of civil war. People were blowing up relief vehicles, vandalizing, looting and fighting for survival. Floods, famine and diseases were rampaging the country. In certain communities, AIDS had nearly wiped out a whole generation, leaving behind children as orphans and once populated villages as ghost towns. The atmosphere was depressing, hopeless and dire. It felt like the most God forsaken place on earth. But Rolland and Heidi Baker thought this was the perfect place to see the gospel proven, to see the reality of the Beatitudes invade the most desperate circumstances.

They took in the poorest of the poor orphans – those that nobody wanted and even Christians warned them not to waste their time on - and raised them as their own. With no resources and hardly any support, they experienced supernatural provision and were able to give 300 abandoned children a home.

But the Marxist government suspected they were collaborating with the rebels, and after several years of hard work, the government took everything from them. Rolland, Heidi and their two blond children had to escape in the middle of the night for their lives. The children in the orphanage were beaten, had stones thrown at them and they had to leave the center. They lost overnight what they had built up over years. But that is not the end of the story. They rose out of the ashes and a new door to the realm of the supernatural opened up for



them. In that hopeless situation they saw for the first time how God supernaturally multiplied food for them and their 300 children.

When Youth With A Mission (YWAM) took a step in faith to acquire its first ship (the Maori) for missionary outreaches with a medical clinic on board and goods to distribute in the poorest countries of the earth, they sought God in prayer and received confirmation that indeed this was the ship they should buy for reaching the nations and helping the poorest of the poor. It would be the first so-called "Mercy-Ship" that would sail to remote parts of the earth that were not easily accessible by plane or other transportation.

News spread that YWAM was getting ready to buy the Maori and start the Mercy Ship ministry. The Maori lay in the port of Wellington and people began to arrive in New Zealand from overseas to join the new ministry. Some local folks sold their homes and several others left jobs or other ministries to join in this project.

"Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got up again."

Nelson Mandela

They asked for permission to go aboard the ship prior to the final payment, and the owners did allow them aboard, but with the stipulation that they were only to clean up, and that no changes were to be made structurally. The allotted time for the final payment came and went, but without provision of the funds. Loren Cunningham, founder of YWAM, requested an extension for the last installment.

Loren and all other YWAM staff were sure the provision was on its way. After all, God had shown them this particular ship. However, the time extension for the last payment ran out, and YWAM lost the ship. The leaders were puzzled and many who had given up their job and just joined the ministry departed broken-hearted. The news



spread all over New Zealand and the rest of the world that YWAM had lost the ship. It was a great loss and a huge humiliation. Loren Cunningham was accused of being a false prophet, of having led people astray, of being irresponsible and even being the leader of a sect. After all, God had not come through, and many concluded that Cunningham must be a fraud...

But that's not the end of the story. Loren prayed for God to speak to him why the provision of the funds had not come through. He had taken a huge leap of faith, trusting God for provision every step of the way. The answer came, but it was an uncomfortable one. They had lost sight of the bigger why. They had put all their hope in the ship and in doing so they had shifted their focus from the Giver to the gift.¹¹ "We repented of our pride and turned back to our primary call, our first love, but we lost the ship," Loren explains. They had to navigate through this difficult season, but a year later, God led them to purchase the *Anastasia*, which became YWAM's first "Mercy Ship".

What do these three stories have in common? All of the ones involved set out in great faith, but they all experienced setback, loss and failure – which later on is turned into victory. They are all men and women in the arena, fighting for what they believe. They all took a fall, but they all got up again - and in getting up they turned their setback into a comeback, their failure into a victory.

How about you? If you had the choice between being a gladiator or a spectator, what would you choose? In the theatre, we all cheer for *The Gladiator*. We celebrate his bravery and love the thrill of seeing his resilience – how he takes a blow, rises again and continues to fight. We admire the gladiator's strength, his courage, and his persistence to fight for what he believes.

¹¹ Loren Cunningham and Janice Rogers: *Is That Really You, God?* p.107



We identify with his heroism from the safety of our seats. But there is no safety zone in the arena of life. So where are you? In the arena, daring to fight, or in the spectator's seat where you will never be able to know what it feels like to win any battles. But with the willingness to fight comes the willingness to lose. The possibility to win includes the possibility to fail.

Failing Forward

Great people dare to fail – and when they do, they fail forward. They don't see failure as failure, but as feedback. They learn from their mistakes and recover from a setback to venture into a new comeback. It takes more faith to get up and continue to pursue the dream and vision after experiencing a setback than when everything just goes smooth. Failure or taking a fall is part of the growth process – it is part of learning to walk in faith, just as a child learns to walk by taking many falls. If it would never dare to try walking again after falling, the child would stay incapacitated for the rest of life.

Nelson Mandela said, "Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got up again." Great people are willing to fail and make mistakes. They are not obsessed with perfectionism or the fear of failure. They are obsessed with their vision and the pursuit of the dream. They bear the brunt, learn from their mistakes and get up again. "One of the most important things I've taught my kids is that it's ok to make mistakes," says artist and singer Michael W Smith. He emphasizes that it is important to dare to make mistakes. Otherwise you will never be creative, step out and fulfill your life call.



All leaders I have talked to admit that they have experienced setbacks and have made great mistakes – but they have all learned from the mistakes and they have learned to accept their imperfect selves. Theodore Roosevelt emphasized the importance of daring to fail in his famous speech “Citizenship in a Republic” where he likens the one who dares greatly to the man in the arena who fights and sweats, who takes the blows, fails and gets up again. That man deserves praise, but the one who never steps out and instead just criticizes as a spectator from afar is repudiated:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. **The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena**, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while **daring greatly**, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

What does it take to experience the abundant life Christ invites us to? It takes the willingness to dare greatly, and with that the willingness to fail forward and to be vulnerable. It requires seeing the world through a new lens of possibility instead of impossibility. It takes being grounded in yourself and being secure in your identity. It takes presenting your authentic, imperfect self to God and to the world. The seven keys to unlock the doors to the fullness of our destiny are authenticity, generosity, passion & clarity, intentionality, vulnerability, possibility, and failing forward. So far, so good – but some of these insights may



not be entirely new to you. In fact, if you have lived long enough chances are great that you have already become aware of these - at least in part - either consciously or by intuition. But what's far more interesting is this question: how can you activate these keys in your life?

We all know that knowledge alone does not bring us the desired results. If it did, we would all be rich, slim and healthy. We have to implement the knowledge in order to really understand and personally experience the benefits promised. The door is open for you to become all you were meant to be – the keys described in this book are not just available to only a chosen few. They are available to you, too. Now it's time to walk through the open door.

It's possible for you!

I invite you to venture on this journey of becoming all you can be! The Swiss philosopher Hans Urs von Balthasar once said, **“What you are is God's gift to you. What you become is your gift to God.”** It's up to you what you become. You have been given the power to participate in your destiny, and it's time to take the next step today! I invite you to become intentional and take action in making a giant stride into your greater calling. What areas of your life do you want to work on and see tangible results of change? What areas do you want to grow in the next three months?

I invite you to make the next 90 days a time of exponential growth in your life – a time where you take a quantum leap in your journey toward your destiny. Don't settle where you are. Don't be a spectator cheering from afar. Step into the arena and dare to take the journey of the great. The good news is: you don't have to do it alone! Click now on the link: www.dreamchasersapproach.com/next-step and I will share with you how you can activate the keys I have shared with you in this book in YOUR LIFE.



In my video teaching “Greatness in the Making” I will present to you the key all great leaders have employed in order to become what they are today and get where they are today! It is a common denominator among all great people with lasting success all over the world. I will share with you the key to actually moving toward every aspect and key feature I have shared with you in this book!

Bill Johnson says, “We have seen great things, but we haven’t seen all we want to see. There is so much more and I want my life to manifest what God has made possible for me...” We only have a limited number of days on earth and I invite you to be all that God has intended and made possible for you to be! **You have a treasure inside of you and it is waiting to be discovered and to be released!** Be intentional in pursuing your destiny. Take action and make use of my special offer, which will show you how the great leaders did it and how you can walk out what’s in you! Go now to the link: www.dreamchasersapproach.com/next-step Watch my video “Unleash Your Hidden Potential” and learn more about how you can become a Dream Chaser and become all you were meant to be!



N E X T S T E P