



FANNING THE EMBER

*Creating a life of joy,
purpose & abundance*

RON SCHAFFER

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Fanning the Ember

Creating a life of joy, purpose and abundance

By Ron Schaffer

<http://www.5steps2abundance.com>

This book is dedicated to my parents, Ron and Aggie Schaffer. The one thing that has been an unwavering constant in my life has been the unconditional love and support of my parents. No matter what I was experiencing in my life they have guided and supported me every step of the way. Their love and commitment to their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren is nothing less the amazing. I love and appreciate them more than they can imagine.

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Chapter 1

Henry David Thoreau was right.

(The purpose of this book)

Henry David Thoreau once wrote, “Most people lead lives of quiet desperation and go to their graves with their music still in them.” And unfortunately, he is right. Most people are working at jobs that do not challenge or fulfill them. Such jobs often suck the life and energy out of them. People feel trapped because no matter how much they hate their jobs they have bills to pay and a family to support. Which means they just can’t walk away from their jobs. Even those with high paying salaries often are extremely dissatisfied with what they do. Many people struggle financially causing further anxiety, frustration and stress. Try as they might, they don’t know how to escape this “trap”. And all the while, they have this vague feeling deep within them that they were meant for something greater. They just don’t know what it is or what to do about it. Life has “beaten them up” and, running out of energy, they succumb to a life of “quiet desperation and go to their grave with their music still in them.” Very few people live up to their potential.

If this describes you please believe me when I tell you there is a way out of this. There is a way of discovering how to utilize your full potential and to find that greatness that is calling to you no matter how faintly it may be at the moment. This is your birthright and I promise you I will show you how to make the “mental shift” that is necessary to transform your life, no matter how “stuck” you seem to be right now. I have been where you are. I went from job to job, even business to business, desperately searching for the path that would lead me to success. My biggest fear was not realizing my potential and having lived a meaningless life. This fear lead me to read every self-help book I could get my hands on. I had an insatiable appetite. I was constantly searching for answers: *Why are some people successful but most are struggling? What creates true happiness? Does my life have a*

purpose? If so, what is it? Should I try and become rich or should I just try and be of service to others? Why don't I feel that passionate about anything? And on and on it went. I was tormented because I couldn't figure out the answers to these questions. I am sure many of you have the same questions and probably one of the reasons you picked up this book.

I have literally read hundreds of books and read thousands of articles searching for answers. Not to mention lots of trial and error in real life. It's not that the books I was reading were not great books because they were, but there were still a few key ingredients missing that I couldn't piece together and as a result I continued to feel like I was constantly swimming against the current. I was, and it was wearing me out.

It wasn't until I learned to stop chasing success and understood that there was a shift in thinking that was needed along with an inner journey. Once I understood that, my life started to change for the better. I finally learned what my passion was, which developed into a burning desire which was inwardly directed but produced outward results. What a powerful understanding this was. I cannot describe to you the incredible feeling of freedom and lightness and joy this produced. For the first time in my life I was 100% sure of where I was headed. **And as I headed in that direction the journey became joyful.** (I am going to say that again because it is the most important sentence in the entire book) **The journey became joyful.**

So take heart, I promise in the chapters that follow I will teach you how to identify that tiny "ember" that burns faintly within; that inner voice that is calling you to find your greatness. That is the source of your passion and purpose. I will teach you how to identify your "ember" and how to "fan" it to make it glow within you and how to turn it into a burning desire that propels you to success and makes you unstoppable. The feeling of struggle will fall away and your path will become crystal clear and you will finally be going with the current to create a life of joy, purpose and abundance. **The life you were meant to live.**

Chapter 2

I read “Think and Grow Rich” so why wasn’t I rich?

(What the greatest self-help book of all time didn’t teach me)

Before I explain what I didn’t learn from “Think and Grow Rich: by Napoleon Hill; I would like to make some comments about this book, which was first published in 1937. A book does not make the best seller list, sell over 10,000,000 copies, and stay in bookstores continuously for over 70 years without having a powerful message and being an incredible value to people. I am quite confident that this book has helped countless people over the years. Napoleon Hill’s work is extraordinary. It is a true classic and deserves every accolade it has received. So what is the problem? How come myself, and many others who have read and studied this book did not get rich? Maybe you have read this book also. Are you rich? I am sure you know people who have read it also. Are they successful? There is a very important missing ingredient that is assumed through-out this book. Those people who had “that missing ingredient” already, probably benefitted immensely from the advice given. But without this very important foundation it becomes very difficult to follow the advice in this book and create success. And so it was with just about every other “success” book I read. I just wasn’t able to put all the pieces together.

I had a voracious appetite for “success” books and read everything I could get my hands on. I was determined to make a success of my life and since I didn’t know how to do that I figured these books had the answer. With every book I read I felt like I was getting closer and closer to figuring it all out. As I read I put into practice everything I had learned. I was writing out my goals in detail; I was doing affirmations on a regular basis; I was doing my best to keep a positive mental attitude; I was trying to think big and believe that anything was possible if I put my mind to it. Even though success continued to elude me I felt it was just a matter of persistence and perhaps uncovering a few more secrets.

In every book I read the successful people were all self-employed. So I figured that the only way I was going to be successful was to start my own business. So after months of searching and planning I started a carpet cleaning

business. I bought a van, the latest steam cleaning equipment, expensive brochures, the works. And of course I borrowed heavily to pay for everything. But it didn't matter; you have to spend money to make money; right? Besides, the bigger the risk the bigger the reward. That's the way it works; right? You have to take that leap of faith. After all, that's what the books were telling me. In "Think and Grow Rich" Napoleon Hill gives the example of an ancient Roman General. This General sailed his army to the enemies' shores and when they landed he ordered all the boats burned. Talk about motivation. His men now either had to defeat the enemy or die. They could no longer retreat. What an inspiring story. That was now me. There was no turning back, no retreat. I had to use all my resources, will power and energy to succeed. I dreamed of having a whole fleet of vans and growing my business nation-wide. And, of course, getting rich in the process. Soon, they would be writing books about me and my incredible success story. At least that was my plan.

After a few months my enthusiasm was replaced by frustration and eventually despair. I struggled with it for almost 2 years. I didn't want to give up. After all, wasn't it normal to struggle and be persistent in order to reach the top? After 2 agonizing years I was forced to close up shop. I was broke; had no job; my wife was furious with me and I was seriously confused and depressed. Where did I go wrong? What about all the advice I was studying: "Boldness has magic in it", "What the mind of man can conceive and believe it can achieve", "You can't get the fruit if you don't go out on a limb." What happened?

You could argue that I simply did not have any business experience; was not properly prepared or did not put together an adequate plan. And that was certainly true. In fact, I told myself that was the only reason I failed and vowed to not let that happen again. But there was more to it than that. And the reason I know that is because many years later I started another business. But this time I did prepare properly. I spent a year of research and putting together a professional business plan. The idea was good enough and the plan was sound enough to attract an investor.

So off I went again. I quit my job and jumped in with both feet. This time I knew I could not fail. After all; not only did I read and study all the right books but this time I planned properly. What could go wrong? (Can you feel it coming?) This one only lasted a year. My investor pulled out because he was losing too much money and I certainly didn't have the resources or the resolve to continue on. Once again I felt defeated and depressed. And once again, I had no job and no

income. I was seriously confused. What was I missing? Maybe I just wasn't supposed to be a rich business owner or even self-employed. Answers eluded me.

After a few months of licking my wounds and fighting off depression I decided to re-read "Think and Grow Rich." I was trying to figure out where I went wrong. The book made so much sense and was very inspirational so why wasn't it working for me?

I must have been reading it with a "different set of eyes" this time because there it was, right in the very first paragraph of the book. I read it over and over several times and as I did so, an uneasiness came over me. It stated emphatically, **"You need a definiteness of purpose combined with a burning desire."** That was it! I thought my purpose was to get rich. After all that is why I was reading a book called, "Think and Grow Rich." But I honestly did not have a burning desire to do so. And I certainly did not have a burning desire to clean carpets. Sure, like everyone I would love to be rich but there was no burning desire behind it. That was the key! That was the missing ingredient! I didn't have a burning desire. Without that, the rest of the advice in the book wouldn't work. I thought about this for a long time. But no matter what I thought about I realized I just didn't have a burning desire for anything. Now, I was even more confused and depressed than ever.

Chapter 3

The Turning Point

(A new definition of success)

After feeling utterly defeated and exhausted from the years of struggle; I just gave up. I had nothing left. I didn't care about being wealthy; I didn't care about being successful. I just wanted to have peace of mind; something I haven't had for a very long time. Little did I know at the time but "giving up and letting go" was exactly what I needed to do.

When you learn to stop "chasing" things; when you give up being "outwardly" driven, you eliminate mental blocks and become more receptive to what the "universe" is trying to tell you. This was a turning point for me. My main focus now was to find peace of mind and to be happy. As a result, the books and teachers I attracted were all now taking me in a different direction mentally. I was slowly learning how to "let go" and stop chasing after things that I thought I needed to be happy. I was learning how to be "inwardly" directed. And although it would take me another year or two and a few more wrong turns; I finally began to realize the mistakes that I was making.

The first thing that I realized was that the people that were happiest were doing something that they were passionate about. That was their driving force. Not money or fame but the pure joy they felt when they were engaged in something they were passionate about. The second thing I realized was that these same people were not only passionate about something but they also felt a deep sense of purpose in their lives which their passion was a part of. My problem was that I really didn't feel that passionate about any one thing and I certainly had no idea what my purpose was or if I even had one. A lot of things made me happy or were enjoyable but I didn't feel that burning desire that many books talk about and that I began to see in truly successful people. On an intellectual level I understood what they were saying, "Follow your bliss"; "Do what you love and the money will follow." But try as I might it just wasn't there for me.

I realized that most truly successful people felt a deep sense of purpose in what they did. My problem was that I didn't know what my purpose was or even

if I had a purpose. As a result I never knew which direction to head in and was constantly torn between making money or being of service to others. Not knowing at the time that you can do both very successfully. And because I went back and forth in my mind I was never fully committed to either one and as a result was never effective heading in either direction. I was still “outwardly” driven. I was constantly chasing something that I was hoping would make me happy. As a result I was fighting an uphill battle which was not only ineffective but incredibly exhausting.

I found that I wasn’t alone in this. It appears that most people “chase” after something that they believe will make them happy. I didn’t realize it at the time but I needed to change my entire definition of success. If you ask most people to define success it would probably include one or more of the following terms:

Wealth, Fame, Power, Status, Achievement, Title, Awards. Don’t misunderstand me, there is absolutely nothing wrong with any of those things. The problem is that most people are “outwardly” driven and chase after these things believing that is what they need to be happy or to solve their problems. But we pay a heavy price when we do this. How many people have self-destructed chasing after success? Because you are going “against the current” when you chase after success it drains your energy and often affects your physical health, your mental health, your relationships and sometimes even your freedom. (Some people will lie, cheat or steal to get these things and end up in jail or worse).

So how does one become successful without running into these problems? It all starts with a different definition of success. Since people are chasing success because they believe it is what they need to make them happy; let’s start there. True happiness comes from doing something that you are passionate about and gives you a deep sense of satisfaction and purpose. There is joy in that and that is what it is all about. Chasing things drains your energy. Doing something that you are passionate about gives you energy and puts you into the “flow” of life and leads you to “inspired” action. This is what I mean when I say “inwardly” directed. Nothing has to be forced. And the nice thing about living a life of joy and purpose is that the things we once chased (Fame, Wealth, Awards, etc.) often show up as a result. Not because we went after those things, but as a by-product of achieving true success. Finally identifying the problem was one thing; figuring out what to do about it was another.

CHAPTER 4

The Transformation

(Learning to let go)

Most of you probably know who David Copperfield is. Certainly people of my generation; those who grew up in the 60's and 70's do. He is one of the most successful entertainers and magicians of the past 3 decades, and arguably one of the greatest illusionists of all time. I'll talk more about him in a few moments. As a young boy I became interested in the art of magic. I was fascinated by it. It became a lifelong hobby as well as a source of income for me. I still enjoy it and utilize it in my lectures and workshops.

Many years after my business fiasco, I had given up on the idea of trying to get rich just for the sake of being wealthy. I was now desperately searching for my purpose in life...a purpose that would also give me peace of mind; something that I hadn't had in a very long time.

I had gone to college to become a teacher. But back when I graduated there was a glut of teachers and I couldn't land a permanent teaching position. I didn't realize it at the time but that desire I had to teach and to make a difference in people's lives was my "ember". But because I didn't know what to do with it, it faded into the background when faced with an obstacle; in this case, a tough job market.

I eventually chose work outside the teaching profession just so I could earn a full time income. I went from job to job pretty much unfulfilled with whatever I was doing. I started doing magic shows on the side to try and earn extra money. The more shows I did the better I got and the more I enjoyed it. In the beginning I mostly did children's and family shows. I did birthday parties, scout banquets, holiday shows; things like that. Nothing was more enjoyable then hearing the laughter and screams of delight from my audience. I got better and better and as my skills grew so did the demand for my shows as well as the money I charged for them. Then it hit me! This must be what the books were talking about: "Do what

you love and the money will follow”. This must be the missing ingredient that I have been searching for. Yes, I would head in this direction.

I started re-reading all my books on goal setting and success. I set a goal of being able to perform magic full time. I studied books on marketing and sales, and after about a year of preparation I was ready. I took that leap, quit my job (the one I hated anyway), and started performing magic as my only source of income. It may seem as if I had found my passion but as I eventually discovered, there is a big difference between doing something that is enjoyable and fun and doing something that you are passionate about.

At first it was great. I had a feeling of accomplishment. I could tell everyone with pride that I made my living as a professional magician. I followed the suggestions of all those success books, had summoned all my will power and persistence and was now on my way. I felt that I was finally on the right path and would soon skyrocket to success and wealth. (You can probably see where this is heading, can't you?)

It was incredibly exciting....for about the first 6 months. And then the reality of trying to pay all my bills, insurance and other expenses set in. But when things got difficult I thought; “This is the test. This is the struggle that everyone said was needed to be successful. This is where I need to demonstrate persistence and never, ever give up”. Isn't that what all those books were telling me? So I simply worked harder. Translation – struggled more.

I frantically tried to think of ways that I could be more successful. I thought maybe if I added large stage illusions into my show I could charge more and be more marketable. I tried developing a show for the corporate market because I heard there was big money in that. I even combine my teaching skills with my magic and started to teach magic and run workshops. I even developed “The Learn-At-Home-Magic” video series that at one time was distributed nationally for me by Parade Video. I barely made enough money on that to pay for production costs. And on and on it went. Thinking success was just around the corner; just one idea away. Give up when adversity strikes? Not me! Take my eye off the prize? Not me! I would continue to fight the good fight. (Can you hear the theme song from the movie, “Rocky” in the background?)

I didn't realize it at the time but I had fallen into the same trap of “chasing success” as before. My frustration continued to mount until it became unbearable. Once again I had to give up and look for the first job I could find.

All the while I struggled I continued to follow the career of my favorite magician, David Copperfield. The success he achieved was amazing. While still a teen he landed the lead in the Chicago musical, “The Magic Man”. At 19 he hosted an ABC Television magic special. It was so popular that he ended up doing a yearly special for the next decade. He now performs over 500 shows per year and has won 21 Emmy awards. In 2005, according to Forbes Magazine, he earned \$57 million. Wow! Talk about being successful!

This is the type of success I desperately wanted. While everything I did seemed like an incredible struggle that got me nowhere; he seemed to skyrocket to success almost effortlessly. I couldn’t figure this out. What did he have that I didn’t have? I mean besides good looks, charisma, talent and a supermodel for a girlfriend. 😊

What he had that I didn’t is the heart and soul of what this book is all about. He created for himself a life of joy, purpose and abundance. At an early age his passion (that “ember”) was already glowing so brightly that it captured his imagination so strongly that it is all that he thought about. At a young age he was inwardly driven by this passion and you can see the results it produced. He wasn’t “chasing” success like I was. He was following his passion which developed into a burning desire that propelled him to success. He was in the flow of life. Where I was trying to swim against the current and it was wearing me out.

Some people are fortunate and identify their passion clearly and at an early age. But what about the rest of us? Most of us don’t feel that passionate about anything or if we do, we are not sure what to do about it or lack the belief that we can do anything successful with it. Do we just go on and “lead lives of quiet desperation”? Not at all. So, what do we do? How do we get into the flow of life? How do we develop a burning desire that propels us to success? This book was written to answer those questions.

My personal journey and struggle combined with an insatiable appetite for discovering the answers to all these questions eventually lead me to a personal transformation. I will not only describe how that transformation came about but take you step by step through a process that will allow you to do the same.

The first thing I did was I gave up trying to chase anything. I knew I had to learn to “let go”. It wasn’t easy because for my entire life I was goal oriented and was constantly trying to achieve something. I didn’t pick up one book that mentioned goals, or success or wealth. I started reading books about passion, peace, happiness and letting go. Most of these books talked about the spiritual

side of life and taking an inward journey. I started reading about the power of your subconscious mind and how thoughts attract like thoughts. The more I studied and the more I continued on this inner journey the clearer things became. I started to see clearly all the mistakes I was making. I could see that I was living life in a “fog”. And it was a fog that I had created for myself. And it was this fog that was keeping me from seeing my true self and my true path. I learned to listen to my intuition; that small “voice” inside that has all the answers. And soon this fog started to lift and eventually I started to get a glimpse of “daylight”. And the more daylight I saw the more excited I got because I knew I was finally on the right track. It started to get clearer and clearer and then one day, BAM! There I was. The fog was gone. Everything, and I mean everything was clearer. It was an incredible feeling and more importantly, a tremendous relief. For the first time in my life my purpose had become clear. I went to college to be a teacher because I wanted to make a difference in people’s lives. As I took this inner journey those feelings came to the surface stronger than ever before. It became clear that helping others discover their potential was what I was passionate about. And as my vision for my future became clearer my life started to change outwardly. Not because I was chasing anything but because I was now following my passion and any action I took was inspired action. The kind that requires no struggle.

It took about 3 months before I noticed any significant outward change. But during those three months there was no waiting impatiently for things to change. The relief I was seeking had already occurred, the clarity was already there, and I knew without any doubts that things would eventually change outwardly and that I was headed in the right direction. For one thing a new job opportunity presented itself that was perfect for me. It allowed me to go into high school classrooms and present a program that I created called “The Magic of Goal Setting”. It was designed to help motivate students to continue their education or training after high school so they could get into a good career. Of course, I used magic to grab their attention and make the message memorable. I loved it and so did the students and teachers. This job also allowed me to work out of my house and gave me the flexibility and freedom to develop the new ideas I had that just flowed from within. I also volunteered my time to work with at-risk high school students to graduate high school and find a path to success. This is something that is very important to me and I continue to do. I also developed a lecture and workshops to present to college students to help them understand how to achieve true success after college regardless of their major. And of course I

utilized my skills as a magician and mentalist to grab their attention, illustrate key points and make the message memorable. Nothing brings me more absolute joy than delivering those messages and feeling the connection I get with the audience. I started to develop workshops to teach others who were frustrated and stuck like I was how to find joy, purpose and abundance in their life. And of course, I eventually put my ideas down on paper that became this book.

The ideas for all of these projects just flowed out of me. I didn't have to try and force anything. It poured out because I was aligned with my passion and on the right track. After about a year and a half the life that I once had was almost unrecognizable. And as of this writing things are still changing for me and my future is looking brighter and brighter.

So take heart; now that I can see clearly all the mistakes that I have made and what to do about them I am anxious to share this information with others. This "inner" journey can sometimes seem like a confusing and mysterious one. My goal is to take the mystery out of it and give you a clear step by step process that you can understand and follow.

Your greatness is calling you. No matter how faintly it is right now, it's there. In the chapters that follow I will show you how to identify your passion and your purpose and just as important; I will show you what to do once you have identified it. Eventually that fog will begin to lift and one day in the not so distant future everything will become crystal clear to you. And you will know the absolute joy of living the life you were meant to live.

Chapter 5

Identifying the Ember

(Finding your passion)

Many people understand that passion is the key to being truly successful. Most of us have heard the saying, “Follow your bliss” or “Do what you love and the money will follow”. Well, if most people understand this then why aren’t more people successful? The problem is two-fold. First, most people do not feel that passionate about anything, or if they do; they don’t know what to do about it or lack the belief that they can accomplish great things by following their passion. Before you can develop a burning desire for something you first have to identify that desire.

It is my absolute belief that everyone has within them the potential for greatness. Inside everyone is a hint of that passion that can lead to their greatness. I refer to this seed within as a tiny, faintly glowing ember. The purpose of this chapter is to help you identify your ember; i.e. your passion. I honestly believe you cannot reach your full potential without this important first step. Besides, when you clearly identify your passion you are also identifying your purpose.

Know this; your passion is calling to you and searching for a way to express itself. If we knew how to fully trust our intuition we would know this. But our minds are so cluttered with wrong thinking and what we believe are limitations that we forgot how to “listen”.

Even though it may be very faint, most people already have a sense of what their passion is. But unfortunately they have either dismissed, ignored it, smothered it, or long forgot about it, often with help from others. So don’t be surprised as I describe this discovery process if you find that you had a sense of your passion all along.

Several years ago, in my search to identify my own passion I was drawn to a book called, “Listen to Your Life” by Valorie Burton. (Published by Waterbrook Press) In it were some questions she had her readers ask themselves to help them identify their passion. I found this extremely helpful and have since amended and

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