

**Champions are Born
Losers are Made**

*Plus Bonus Section:
The Inner Secrets of Leadership*

By John Di Lemme

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Dedication

To all of the champions that overcame their adversities and refused to give up on the ultimate achievement of their “Why” in life.

Introduction: You are a Champion!

Have you ever thought about the fact that you started life as a Champion? It's true. Everyone's life begins as a sperm. Of the millions of sperm launched, only ONE gets through to fertilize the egg and begin the creation of a human being. Therefore, every person who has ever lived began as that one in a million. They surmounted every obstacle, were stronger than millions of others, and achieved the goal of uniting with the egg to begin the beautiful and mysterious creation of a "born champion."

That is one of the most amazing stories in all of human history. I am stunned that we don't celebrate that story in literature, art, music, and poetry. Think about it. Out of millions that begin, only one wins the prize! YOU are that one! How can anyone think that Champions are somehow mass-produced by education, arts, religion, culture, psychology, etc.? Yet, many do believe that and now you know why I wrote this book.

The idea for this book began when a reporter was interviewing me. In the midst of the interview, she made the statement that "champions are made." After talking to her for two hours, I decided I had to write this book. If she, an intelligent and educated journalist, believes this LIE then so do many other people. As a society, we have too little regard or honor for this towering mystery of life. We do not have an appreciation for the creative wisdom of God.

The Bible says that each one of us is *fearfully and wonderfully made*. Doesn't that say it all? God's creative process delivers each one of us into life as a Champion.

Following birth, many factors take over. Negative people and stupid ideas are the main culprits. God delivers a Champion into this world and then "man's best and brightest" start messing with the Champion. After a few years of negative thoughts, negative people, ignorance, and neglect, we have losers all around. We made them! Rejoice in your place as a Champion. Don't let anyone steal it from you.

Read this book. It is designed to strengthen your Championship! Let it show you how to build on the good foundation which started when you were just a sperm, struggling against great odds. Always remember: inside YOU are the seeds of greatness. You were born a Champion, and this book is written to speak to your inner Champion. I despise the choir of doubt that sings in the background of most people's lives. I want you to despise it too. That choir sings lies all day long. Don't let them decide how you live your life!

The structure of this book identifies specific principles that are essential to Champions. Trust me. You won't get it by reading it once. You need to read it multiple times. It's small. It's compact. It's designed to fit easily into your purse, your inside suit pocket, or your briefcase. Take it with you everywhere you go. Read it on the airplane, at the doctor's office (it will speak to your inner Champion much more than the magazines laying around his

office), as you stand in line at the bank, and during hundreds of other opportunities. Think of this book like a miracle drug. Keep taking it until your personal Championship is healthy, humming, and heroic!

Principle 1: Self-Belief and Acceptance

YOU – every one of YOU reading this book – are a Champion. Even if you don't look, feel, or think like a Champion right at this moment, trust me. Inside of you is a Champion that is fighting to get out!

All the things you don't like in yourself such as fear, procrastination, guilt, negative thinking are loser habits that have been developed and imposed on you by others. I recently encountered a young woman with an in-your-face negative attitude. She enjoyed flaunting her negativity to me. I just laughed. She reacted, "What's so funny?" I said, "I'm just grateful that I'm a Champion." The next day I saw her holding a baby and baby-talking that sweet little infant. Something in me just rose up and I wanted to shout (almost in anger) to the baby and the Mom: "YOU ARE A CHAMPION . . . act like it!"

That young woman was born a Champion and yet a loser was developed, a loser was made where a Champion was supposed to live. If she doesn't get a grip on that, she will turn her beautiful baby into a loser too. What a waste and a tragedy!

I am so fired up because I feel the need to get to people like that. That cycle of losing is being perpetuated in so many families and social groups. God delivers a Champion into the world and then bad habits, negative thoughts, and destructive lifestyles MAKE a loser to replace the Champion.

Believe! Folks, this is not complicated. This is not rocket science. All you have to do is just BELIEVE you are a Champion. Accept that. Believe in that great Champion that lives inside you. Let him or her OUT! Refuse to be shaped, molded, developed, and made into a loser.

Part of my personal calling is to be your encourager, your mastermind, your inspiration, your achievement partner, and the voice that keeps reminding you that YOU are a Champion! I don't care what other voices are telling you. I, John Di Lemme, am telling you that you are a Champion. Get that down deep in your soul. It is the truth that will conquer every other voice. I don't care where you are right now, say out loud, "I am a Champion." Shout it: "I AM A CHAMPION!"

Develop faith for your future. Believe in it. The Bible says that *faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen*. Faith is tasting the apple while it is a mere seed. Faith is so strong that it can take hold of future realities and bring them to you today! Yes, you still have to wait for the apple to become a tree and a harvest of apples, but faith allows you to see it so strongly that you don't have to wait for the physical reality in order to believe it.

Gravity is a good example of faith. You believe in the law of gravity don't you? Why? You can't see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, or touch it. Yet, you don't have a hard time believing the evidence of things (gravity) unseen. Accepting and believing that you are a Champion is the very same thing. You either believe and accept it

or you don't. The knowledge that you started life literally as one in a million should cause you to stop and say "Whoa! Wait a minute. I'm not a loser. I started this journey as an incredible Champion. Maybe God knew what He was doing after all."

Just because you can't see your future, just because you can't see your dreams fulfilled right now and just because you can't see the artifacts of success (like a fine home, beautiful family, high-quality car) doesn't mean you are a loser. Your Championship is as real as gravity! I get fired up when I think about empowering people to dream of these kinds of things. Champions walk by faith. Accept it and believe it in the depths of your heart and mind.

Principle 2: Separated To Be Elevated

If you are a Champion (and you are), then you will be promoted to greater and higher realms of leadership. Life has a way of elevating true Champions. Just as cream rises to the top of milk, true Champions rise to the top of companies, projects, and great events. When that happens, old relationships fall away. It can be emotional and difficult, but it's part of the price of leadership. Champions must be separated from the crowd before they can be elevated into prominence.

I only hang out with Champions, with other masterminds that are wonderful, fired up, success maniacs. They support and encourage my "Why" in life and my Champion heart, and I support them the same way.

But, you know what? Not one of them is someone I knew from my past. Except for my parents and some family, not one of my friends from my old days is around me today. Think about that; I was separated away from the lower levels. That's not prideful talk. I'm humbled and grateful for the blessings of God which have elevated me. But, I'm telling you – yes, YOU, you CHAMPION sitting there reading this book – that one of the prices that Champions have to pay is being separated from the old gang.

Goodbye! Sometimes, you have to exercise the gift of goodbye. I readily admit that I am always ready to embrace

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goodbye. I only spend time with Champions. Of course, I'll help someone that is struggling to find success. I am a mentor, and I'm pretty good at spotting the Champions fighting to get out of people. You've seen them too; they're not addicted to negative attitudes and words. They are always searching the horizon in order to spot their future. When they see it, they go for it. I will always have time to help those people. I love them...Champions struggling to be born.

It is not hateful to tell someone goodbye. Rather, it's faithful. It's faithful to your own dream and to live the life of a Champion. It's not a personal thing. You shouldn't be cruel or dismissive of others, but you have to respond to the call of success. That call will always separate you before it elevates you.

I have seen people elevated while trying to hang on to someone from the old days. If they continue, the old buddy will often trip them up. Not because he's a bad guy, but because he's addicted to negativity. It's like eagles trying to hang out with pigeons. There's nothing wrong with pigeons, but they will NEVER be eagles. You are an eagle! Fly higher than the pigeons and don't look down.

If you're making \$50,000 a year, start hanging out with people who make \$200,000 a year. Learn their secrets. Ask them to teach you. That's what "separated to be elevated" means. You make a choice about the kind of influences, the kind of people, the kind of books, the kind of movies and the kind of material that you will allow into your mind.

This is serious stuff. Listen to me. If you were determined to become physically fit and healthy, you wouldn't continue to hang out with Twinkies, donuts, beer, and Doritos. You would find the gift of goodbye; you would move out of the old nutritional neighborhood. You would allow yourself to be separated from McDonalds and Pizza Hut in order to be elevated to healthy power foods.

What if you tried to be healthy, but said, "I can't leave my old friends – the fries, the cakes, the milk shakes – I can't forsake them?" How long would your dream of health and physical fitness last? It's the same thing with success and living as a Champion.

You have a decision to make. Are you going to be a Champion? Are you willing to pay the price? The struggle is vitally important. It does something in you and for you. I've never known a Champion who didn't have to struggle with shaking off the old in order to embrace the new. The number of obstacles that you face in life will lay the foundation for massive growth.

Let me tell you, sometimes between the separated and the elevated, there is a very lonely period. You've been separated from your old friends and not yet integrated with lots of Champions. That is a real testing time. But, you know what? You can always be a friend of mine! Whether you're a coaching client, a member of the Motivational Club or someone new to my teachings, you truly are a friend of mine. So, let me be your first new friend in the company of eagles.

Grab the Steering Wheel and Go! Have you ever tried to steer a parked car? Not much excitement there. It's far better to steer a car that's moving. The power steering is flowing, big tires are moving on the highway, and you can gently and effortlessly glide that vehicle right up onto the road. Success is like that. When you try to steer from a parked, no power, cold-engine spot on the driveway, nothing happens.

You're a Champion! Your car is already moving (the fact that you're reading THIS BOOK and not a comic book or other time-waster means that your car is moving pretty well). Just keep rolling . . . right on past the slower cars, the older cars and the beat-up pick-ups that have not been maintained. You were destined for higher elevations. It's time to go for it.

Principle 3: Be an Icebreaker!

Close your eyes and picture a frozen body of water. Perhaps it is part of the Arctic. It is vast and it is covered with a wintry blanket of snow. A novice would look at this frozen landscape and conclude there is no way for a ship to cross it.

But, that is not true. Large vessels are designed for cutting through ice. They do it all the time (*those vessels know their "Why" in life*). They just have to be built with structural integrity and strength and have the equipment to grind and cut away at ice.

Some people look at obstacles and quickly conclude that it just cannot be done. Those people use the word impossible far too often. "It's impossible" becomes permission to stay in bed, avoid making sales calls, and just letting life roll over them.

YOU – a born Champion – were designed for better things than that! After all, you started your life competing against millions of others, and you won that contest. So, what is a little ice in to you? What am I saying? I'm saying for you to be an icebreaker. Set the bow of your ship toward the challenges and bear into it. Little by little. Inch by inch. Make your way across whatever obstacles are blocking your path. You have to stay on track by forging up and over the speed bumps of life.

Large battles are almost never won in a sudden and dramatic way. Most are won incrementally. It's almost like life is constructed to reward the diligent, the focused, and the determined. Football games are a great reflection of life. Yes, you

have your high and dazzling “Hail Mary” passes. But, those are usually lucky moments. You can’t build a whole game on them. Rather, the ground game is essential. Taking the 100 yard field inch by inch. Grinding it out. Blood, mud, sweat, and severe pain.

Set your face to be like that. I don’t care what you have to go through – bankruptcy, divorce, illness, losing a job, whatever. As Winston Churchill told the British people during the darkest hours of World War II, “Never, never, never, never give up!”

The struggle is so much a part of attaining success. While others are sleeping, goofing off, or horsing around, you be the one who keeps slogging and chipping away right on through the ice. Always remember that mountains are built one pebble at a time and climbed one step at a time. Frozen lakes are crossed the same way. Chip. Chip. Chip.

Principle 4: Build Champion Habits

Champions are born not made. On the other hand, habits are made not born. Our habits, good or bad, are developed over our lifetime. They reflect the things we believe, the things we read and listen to, and our choices in friends.

Every habit you possess has been developed. You don't have any habits that came to you at birth. I often say that a birth certificate gives people the right to achieve their dreams. But, a birth certificate does not give you your set of habits. Those are built and developed.

You weren't born brushing your teeth. You had to develop that habit. Do you ever miss a day of brushing your teeth? Of course not. That's the power of a habit. So, let's look at different habits.

What are loser habits? Before we consider the habits of Champions, let's look at what *not* to do. Here are a couple of characteristic habits of losers:

- **Focus on Money**

One of the things I've observed is that losers are almost always focused on money. They don't have it, they want it, and they will do anything to get it. When people chase money, they end up broke. Contrary to what you have heard, money is not the root of all evil; the *love* of money is. Loving money will lead to petty (or larger)

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theft, cheating, gambling, and all kinds of corruptions. Champions are focused on serving; losers are focused on money. If you serve from a pure heart, money will follow.

Here's another problem with love of money: the law of sowing and reaping. People that are focused on money are sowing the seed of greed everywhere they go. Trust me; that little crop will come up. They will reap their own greed in many situations from their own employees, their clients, their vendors, their business partners, etc.

- **Education Obsession**

First, let me say that education is good. I have a degree, and I believe education can serve a clear and fine purpose in our development. But, to see education as a synonym for success is one of the signs of losers. Getting a diploma is only one step of preparation. It doesn't matter whether you're educated or not; you still have to "Find Your Why and Fly." You still need to separate from bad and negative influences; you still need to be an icebreaker, and all the other things that mark Champions. Always remember that talent outweighs education (or a resumé) any day.

What are Championship habits? Just as you can spot eagles high in the air because of the way they fly, you can spot Champions according to their habits. Here are a few:

- **Write Your Why Card and Make a Habit of Reading It**

This is one of the biggest secrets to success I know. Just go to the Appendix and read about the power of a Why Card for the details. A Why Card is a simple way to capture *Why* you are on this earth. Your Why is your compelling reason for living. Make a habit of daily reading your Why Card. With every challenge or obstacle in life that you face, simply face it head on and **READ YOUR WHY CARD**. Start internalizing your Why in your mind, your heart and your spirit. It will change your life forever, and you will never go back to that point you were at before you found your “Why.”

- **Speak Positive Words**

I’ve found that Americans don’t understand the power of words like some cultures do. When we speak words, those words take on a life of their own. Just as negative words spoken by our parents have deep power in our lives, so do positive words. You can literally change the

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environment of your life by speaking a blessing to your family, your car, your house, your job, your bank account, your dreams, your sales calls, everything. That means telling yourself the truth!

Tell yourself out loud – “I am a Champion. I’ve been destined to achieve and I fully expect greatness in my life today. I will break records in my business, prospecting, recruiting, or showing properties (whatever is unique to your own path). I will soar like an eagle.” Bombard yourself with true words. Blast the negative thoughts right out of yourself and your environment.

- **Choose Your Own Title and Credentials**

You don’t have to use the same job title and credentials that most people choose. A national sales manager out in Dallas has Chief Concierge as his job title. I love that! Others may write Sales Manager. That same person sees his role as similar to what a concierge in a hotel does. . . . *“You want it, you need it, and I’ll get it for you!”* He is service oriented. Just like some people have BS, MA, PhD after their name (indicating the level of education or certification they have attained), why not put MCM (for Motivational Club Member) or SG (Smile Giver) after yours? If you think that’s silly, then

you are not serious about becoming a Champion leader in life instead of following the crowd.

My point here is not that Champions make a habit of trying to be different. Rather, Champions know their life is their own. So, they make a habit of designing it. Disregard traditional titles. You know you and your “Why” better than anyone else so be bold and design your life. Your life is yours to operate so don’t base it on someone else or society’s job descriptions. Put whatever you want on your business card.

- **Read Personal Development Materials**

Champions make a habit of reading positive, uplifting, encouraging, and inspiring books, articles, and other materials. Losers waste their time with the wrong kind of reading material (if they read at all). Just as you are careful about which foods to take into your body, you have to show as much or more care with what you take into your mind. That’s why Champions only digest those ideas, those stories, and those challenges that build up rather than pollute their mind.

- **Join Positive and Faith-Filled Events**

While losers are watching TV, Champions make a habit of immersing themselves in live or video training

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seminars, Monday night Motivational Club sessions, and CDs of Champions (like mine and other positive teachers). If you desire to become a success addict, then you have to make a habit of eating, drinking, breathing success.

- **Giving**

If you want to be magnificently successful, you need to know the one victory secret that all Champions have in common. That one thing is the habit of generous giving. When you sow generosity, you also reap generosity. On the same note, selfishness and miserly attitudes about money will reap miserable results. Stingy people do not become successful. Champions believe this statement; therefore, they build a habit of giving, giving, giving, and then giving some more. Always remember that habits predict your future so diligently form the ones that will give you the future you want. It's your life. Be there.

Principle 5: Lifeprint vs. Fingerprint

Just as we are all born with a unique fingerprint, we are also born with a unique life print. You are an exceptional one of a kind. You make an impression on people, on a room, on a project, and on your environment different than anyone else in the world. That is your life print.

Some life prints cause people to moan, complain, and avoid work. When opportunities come up, they whine, “It’s not my job.” Where losers see a chance to evade working, the Champion sees a golden opportunity to leave his or her lifeprint on their company by saying, “Let me help you. This may not be part of my job description, but I want to help you find what you need.” That’s how you display your lifeprint.

Champions go the extra mile. Just like eagles, Champions operate at higher altitudes. Part of the higher altitudes is a “servant attitude” that they can spread around in companies, at meetings, on airplanes, at little league ballgames, wherever. Champions are grateful for their life. That forms their lifeprint. Out of that gratitude, they spread gratitude around as they walk through the earth.

Some of this lifeprint stuff may seem small such as the life print of Champions causes them to pick up trash, to smile, to hold doors open for older people, etc. But, the importance of a life print is life-changing. You are actually leaving an impression of yourself on the earth. It is an imprint of your values and attitudes.

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Your lifeprint will determine your future. Those who try to avoid work will indeed end up avoiding work...they won't have a job in their future! Those who engage in petty theft (like stealing soft drinks from machines) will end up feeling like life is stealing from them. Those that are genuinely helpful to others, bless their environment, family, friends, and dreams will find their own future blessed.

Make sure your lifeprint rocks and rolls. When you walk through life, leave blessings in your path. When you attend an event, leave positive words in the atmosphere. Remember "The Lone Ranger" TV show? He rode into town, chased off the bad guys, kept the widow from losing her farm, and helped the town find a new sheriff. When he rode away, everyone stared at his cloud of dust, saying, "Who was that masked man?" They were in awe of one good, noble Champion. He rode through town and left a lifeprint of help, action, integrity, and joy. Is that the kind of lifeprint that people will remember when you ride through town?

Losers tend to have a reactionary life print. They wait to see how others treat them and then they react to that. Champions are pro-actionary (yes, that's a Di Lemme word). They don't wait for others to act. They just make a decision about what the moment calls for. They know that the company does not own them so they act according to their own integrity. They don't need the company or a boss to tell them the right thing to do. Their heart tells them. They decide what they're going to do, and it doesn't matter what others do. They smile, they are thankful, they

are helpful . . . regardless of what others say or do. That is a lifeprint of a Champion!

Principle 6: Build a Dream Dashboard

You must be absolutely clear about your goal and be relentless in the pursuit of your Why. A large part of the reason for that particular quote of mine is this: what you see in your heart is what you will get. If you have a clear vision of your goal, then you will achieve it. Much of success is visualizing the right things. Expect miracles every day. I do. When you expect and visualize miracles, they tend to start happening.

Visualization is a very strong dynamic. When you continually SEE something, it begins to become a reality. Good golfers visualize the ball rolling into the cup. They don't visualize it slicing off into the lake. Visualization plus action will produce the results that you desire.

I believe in dream boards. What are they? It is what it sounds like - a board with pictures of your dream. Perhaps a house, a car, a church, an office building, a family . . . it is a visual interpretation of your perfect life dream. My dream is changing lives, making millionaires, helping others achieve their Why in life. So, my dream board is a visual compilation of those dreams.

I know many Champions that actually have their dream board on the dashboard of their car. When friends and associates ride with them and ask about the dream board, these Champions confidently announce, "This is a board of my dreams, and I'm going to achieve them because I am a Champion."

When people try to discourage you by saying, “Oh, come on, get real! You’re not going to have that house”, you can simply tell them that you will definitely achieve those dreams no matter what. They may not believe you, but they won’t forget it. Then when it comes true, they will never doubt you again.

As part of the dream board, I also encourage people to have a mini-version of their Why Card taped to their dashboard. Look at it a hundred times a day. When you’re driving, making sales calls, taking clients to lunch...always have the visualization of your dreams and your Why Card in front of you. By the way, I don’t care if your car is old and beat up. That’s even a greater reason to have a dream board. If your car is a piece of junk, then as an act of faith in your future put the most beautiful and exciting dream board you can imagine right there on the dash. Oh, and one more thing. Send me a photograph of your car and your dream board. Seriously. I want to see it.

Epilogue: See the Future!

A very wise man once said that *vision is an inspired look at reality*. Some people see despair and darkness everywhere they look, and they believe that is reality. It's not. The problem is not in reality; the problem is in their head. They were born a Champion and then made into a loser. As a result, they cannot see the truth. But, those who have released their inner Champion have vision. They can see the future. They have an inspired look at reality.

Which lady do you see?

Have you seen the drawing below? One of the most famous optical illusions of all time, it is a picture of a lady. Actually, there are two ladies here. Do you see an old and decrepit creature or a young and radiant beauty?



The future is so much like this optical illusion. Some see a radiant and beautiful future; others see something ugly and decaying. Which one do you see?

My personal WHY is to assist people to accurately see their real future. My hope and prayer is that as you read (and re-read) this book, and you will catch a glimpse of your destiny. I believe God is a generous and kind Creator. He created you for massive success. He made you a Champion. If you can catch an inspired look at reality, then you will start to believe that. The moment you start to really believe it will be the most important day of your life. God bless you. Dream big. You are a born Champion.

Appendix: Your “Why” Card

As I've said and written so many times, the beauty in all achievement is that 95% lies in the “Why” and only 5% comes is the actual “How” you will accomplish it. In other words, don't worry so much about the How; just keep focusing on the Why at this point. My own experience is that if your Why is strong enough, then you will never have to worry about the How. Strangely enough, the How will present itself. Trust me; I've seen it happen many times.

This is why a Why Card is so important. One little 3x5 index card can and will change your life. It will massively change your life! At the top, write “My Why Card” in big letters. Then, write your personal Why statement on this card. Why do you exist? Why are you on this earth? Why are you alive? What does your existence call you to do with your life? What is your dream? All of that is your “Why.”

After you've done that, you must commit to reading it over and over and over again! The power of the Why Card lies in its mobility. You can take it everywhere you go, and you will never lose focus on the achievement of your Why. With every challenge or obstacle in life that you face, simply face it head on and READ YOUR WHY CARD. Start internalizing your Why in your mind, heart and spirit. It will change your life forever, and you will never go back to that point you were at before you found your Why.

If you need further help with this, just send an email to Team@ChampionsLiveFree.com and ask for a sample Why Card. While you're there, join my Elite Team. This is my own club of truly focused and determined leaders. We have a place for you...a Champion!

**Special Bonus Section:
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Introduction

Leadership is one of the most important issues of life. First, leadership is inevitable. Any serious study of any civilization or any period of history will reveal that people always separate into the roles of leader and follower. There is *something* that causes some people to stand apart from the crowd. They impart a clarity, confidence, and command that compels others to follow. People just naturally defer to them in moments calling for headship and direction.

Leadership is essential. Leadership is required in order for human beings to proceed in a direction, develop a plan, build something, organize resources, etc. Someone has to be the spark plug or administrative point for large or significant ventures. Leadership also has many counterfeits. Today, many people confuse fame or celebrity with leadership. As a result, many are called leaders, but the quality of leadership cannot be known until a crisis appears. Crises reveal legitimate leaders and disqualify and often humiliate false leaders. Hurricane Katrina is a prime example.

But, here is my true purpose for writing this book on leadership: Many are leaders and do not know it. These men and women have never heard a call that speaks to something buried deep in their heart. I believe this book could be that call to you. So, I invite you to read this with an open heart and an eager mind. Let your inner champion respond to the *Inner Secrets of*

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Leadership. Think of it: This book carries the sound you've been listening for all your life!

Chapter 1: What is Leadership?

First, consider that leadership is comprised of two words: leader and ship.

A leader is the position at the front of the crowd, the team, the project, the vision, etc., literally (according to Webster's 1828 Dictionary¹) *one who goes first*. Leaders make deliberate decisions to break away from the crowd.

A ship is a transportation vehicle, a large water craft. So, I think it's fair to say that leaders have the right to captain the ship so as to transport life dreams, noble plans, magnificent goals, other people, and themselves from point A to point B.

Those who board the "Leader Ship" have a right to expect they will go somewhere. Yes, there may be storms in route – there may even be hurricanes – but if you stay with the ship, you will achieve your destination. You will achieve your Why in life. I believe there is a secret of leadership for each letter of the word. So, I've organized this book into chapters for each letter. I trust this will help you to remember the inner secrets of leadership.

¹ *I like modern dictionaries. But, this nearly-200-year-old version of Webster's Dictionary is invaluable. It takes you back to a more pristine and clean look at English words. It gives you a view of our language that is not cluttered by modern culture.*

Chapter 2: Learn & Listen

The first inner secret is captured by **L: LEARN & LISTEN**. Always remember that the more you learn, the more you earn. The real foundational issue is learning not earning. Over the years, I've learned that when people focus on getting the money, they are always broke!

The Bible says that *When you set your eyes on [money], it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle...*” *Proverbs 23:5*. People who set their eyes on money are usually driven, exhausted, stressed out, and going nowhere. You see and hear them screaming into cell phones, pounding tables, driving like maniacs, and making life miserable for their family and friends and coworkers. It is far better to focus on making a difference in the lives of others. It is changing the lives of others that enables you to earn income.

Leaders are perpetual students. We are always in the classroom of life. A major part of that means the lost art of LISTENING. Leaders know that listening is far more important than speaking. Isn't it amazing how often our culture seeks out failures and asks them to tell their story? Our news media, universities, movies and novels so often find those who failed and prod them for answers to things like *“Tell us what went wrong? How did others fail and disappoint you? How is the system rigged against you? Shouldn't our government have done more for you?”*

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Wouldn't it be better to listen to Champions who have made the journey to their destination of dreams? People who have traversed the oceans, who have encountered the hurricanes, and have made it successfully to the destination and achieved their dreams just might have something of value to say! LISTEN to them.

That's why I sow at least one hour each day into my personal development. I must LEARN & LISTEN to my teachers and mentors in order to be the right kind of leader. I must diligently listen to them in order to steer the ship through the seas to its destination.

Chapter 3: Encouragement

Remember, the primary role of leaders is to lead other people perhaps a team, a construction crew, a classroom, or a church. One of the greatest privileges and responsibilities of leading is to touch human lives.

I teach leaders to find the 1% positive. What does that mean? I once heard a story of an unusual teacher who took over a class of bad apples in an inner-city school. They were the worst of the worst. After spending one semester with this little old lady, these tough kids all got straight A's. The principle was thunderstruck. He wondered how she accomplished such a miraculous turnaround.

He wanted to find her secret. So, he asked. Here was her secret...She was baffled by a class register that listed every student and columns of pertinent information about each. She confused their locker numbers with their IQs. So, on the first day, she said, "Wow! How did you kids get to be so brilliant? Please tell me why you're so smart."

The famous German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe once said, *Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is. Treat a man as he should be and he will become what he should be.*

One passage in the Bible gives an interesting nuance about leaders - those who *extract the precious from the worthless.* *Jeremiah 15:19*

Are you an encourager? Leaders must truly CARE about those they lead. Out of that care, they must search for that 1% buried in the heart and that precious 1% that can make all the difference in that person's life path. When they find it, they must water it with encouragement. Sometimes, leaders have to be patient and drill below the surface of those they lead in order to find the 1%.

Encourage your team! I've come to understand a clear pattern for leaders. It is this: care = respect = leadership. When you care for and about someone, you will begin to respect what their Creator built into them. That care and respect causes them to see you as a leader.

Remember, that inside the word encourage is courage. It takes courage to gaze into the eyes and heart of some people in order to extract the precious from the worthless. It also takes courage to ignore what other voices are saying about people. Encouragers must ignore those (sometimes, even their parents, family, friends) that call a person bad names like stupid, failure or, the one they called me...STUTTERER. Leaders must be encouragers. They have the power to call an inner gift from out of obscurity into prominence.

Chapter 4: Acceleration

You cannot steer a parked car, and you can't just think and talk about going forward. You have to actually step on the accelerator. Obviously, acceleration requires forward focus. If we're not looking forward, then acceleration can be deadly. Just like a driver, leaders must take in the whole scene, and then drive into and through it. They must be entirely focused on getting to their destination and accelerate "the ship" in order to get to that point.

So, what are we accelerating? Primarily, I have to accelerate...ME! I have to make a conscious decision to do certain things in order to become a leader. I must drive (accelerate) my vehicle forward. That personal acceleration makes me accountable to others, makes me manage my time, and makes me evaluate my speed. Sometimes, you have to decelerate (primarily for safety reasons).

Yes, as a leader, I know that brakes are sometimes important. But, the brake pedal is my least favorite part of the vehicle; I like to go forward! I don't like to stop. Success is a straight-ahead endeavor. You have to accelerate to get there. Acceleration takes you through time and space. You're not a victim of the clock; you manage time.

You never hear true leaders say things like, "I just don't know where the time goes." Trust me: they KNOW! Learn to keep

your life, your team, your dream, and your work accelerated forward. As Vince Lombardi said, “Never, never, never quit.”

Chapter 5: Determination to Make a Difference

Leaders are and must be determined to make a difference. Leaders are truly and completely focused on making and seeing a difference...a difference in those they lead, a difference in their project, a difference in their market, a difference in themselves, etc.

Someone said, “If you keep doing what you’re doing, you’ll keep getting what you’ve got.” That’s why leaders carry such a relentless, full-throttle, passionate determination to get out of the ruts and to make a difference. Once again, I want to remind you that the almighty dollar cannot be the object of a true leader’s passion.

When you make a profitable, prosperous difference in life, you are sowing a seed. There is a universal, unalterable law that whatever you sow, you will reap. So, if you focus on making a difference in life, in those around you, in your environment, then you will reap that in your own life and part of what you reap is financial reward.

But, if you focus on just “getting,” then you will reap that in those around you; they will also be trying to “get” from you.

F.A.I.T.H. - Whenever I see the word faith, I think “**Find Answers In The Heart.**” Proverbs 4:23 says *Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.* You see, down in the heart is the key to the mystery of the life. It requires a

super-determination to seek that out in those you lead and in yourself. A large part of determination is excavating the heart.

Determination is life's rudder. I like to sail on open waters. I've owned sailing vessels, and one of the things I've learned is that a rudder is absolutely essential to sailing. The rudder is the broad, flat sheet of wood or metal that is hinged vertically on the stern of a boat. Most of the rudder is below the water. By turning it, you control the direction of the boat. Without a rudder, a sailing vessel will literally spin around in circles. Without determination, a life will literally spin in circles. As soon as storms hit you (and they will hit you!), your life boat will be taken by the waves and the wind. Without a rudder, you can end up hitting the shoals of life and breaking apart. Never underestimate the power of determination!

Chapter 6: Extreme

Leaders must be extreme as in, extremely committed, extremely focused, and extremely passionate. The movie “United 93”, which is about the commercial airliner that crashed in a Pennsylvania field on September 11, 2001, carries a power lesson of EXTREME leadership. In the movie, when Ben Sliney, the Air Traffic Control boss (who plays himself) realizes the scope of the 9/11 attack, he immediately orders all planes grounded. Every airplane commercial, military, and private in the United States on the ground NOW! The massive inconveniences, the logistical nightmares, and the financial costs to the airlines did not matter to him. He was a leader. He saw the dimensions of the moment and knew he had to go to the extremes of his professional knowledge and position.

Leadership requires that kind of extreme commitment, focus, and passion. Many people are captivated by what is called Extreme Sports. In these kinds of sports, athletes take a contest to its extreme outer limits. Over the years, I’ve learned that leaders are those who take life to its extreme outer limits. That’s why they are leaders. Others are content to let life lay there; leaders push it to and beyond the limitations that typically stop others. Just as only 5% of athletes ever compete at the extreme level, only 5% of people ever push to the extreme heights of life.

When I started “Find Your Why,” I was inundated with people who wanted to get rich. The dollar was their focus, but

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they weren't extremely committed to the vision. So, I had to weed them out and go for something much better – extreme commitment.

This kind of extreme commitment is the result of a personal decision. Every one of you reading this book right now has the power to become extremely committed. It's in you! All you have to do is make the decision to become EXTREME – extremely committed.

Wherever you are, stand up and say it right now: I AM A LEADER! I AM EXTREMELY COMMITTED!

Now, remember: every decision gets tested. That's just the way life is designed. So, don't be surprised when you get hit by a storm, a crisis, or a complete life reversal. If you are extremely committed, you'll go through it. But, if you are not extremely committed, the storm will reveal that also.

Chapter 7: Return and Rebuild

One of the inner secrets of leadership is that they learn to return and rebuild. Sometimes, you have to go back to all those people that laughed at you, to those who criticized you and to those who said you would never make it. Yes, it's difficult, but leadership requires us to be generous in heart.

I did this. I went back to those who discouraged me and to those who laughed at me. I told them, "I made it, I have achieved my goals, and now I want to help you do the same." There is a time to leave them behind. When your destiny is exploding in your heart, you have to walk away from the negative voices. As a responsible leader, you have to ignore those who would tell you to abort.

True leaders will return to those same people to offer them a chance. This is a huge test. It requires LOVE and FORGIVENESS. You see, real leaders aren't selfish. They are not in it for number one. They have a vision, commitment, heart and love that is larger than themselves. Otherwise, they wouldn't be leaders.

So, look around at those who are holding you down. You have to walk away from them – mentally and emotionally – in order to become the leader than God intended you to be. That is only for a season. True leaders are always ready and eager to forgive and share. Those people who hold you back, who criticize, and who laugh at you are not evil people. They are in the dark.

They cannot see. But, if you're a leader, you have a candle! Take that candle back to them. Return to them. Let them have the benefit of your light.

Rebuild. It's not enough to just return; you have to rebuild. I quote the Bible because it is one of the world's greatest repositories of wisdom and life. And, the Bible says a great deal about rebuilding. For example, Isaiah 61:4 gives a beautiful description of true leaders:

They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

Think of that! One of the things that mark true leaders is that they rebuild and restore what has been destroyed.

Chapter 8: Scheduling

Leadership requires a strategic approach to scheduling. One vital characteristic of leaders is their recognition of the value of time. They work to maximize each moment. A “strategic approach” means to enact certain steps or schemes in order to achieve a goal. Leaders take a strategic approach to scheduling their day.

They do not allow the day to schedule them. It is critically important to have a planner, a paper or an electronic organizer. You must have a place where you can record goals, appointments, trips, progress evaluations, etc. Disorganization will derail your progress and undermine your dreams. Someone said *the future belongs to the organized*. Don't forget that!

Control your day. When you let a day control you, you've lost the strategic advantage. When you lose control, you're like a football quarterback who has a headset communication failure and can't hear the coaches who are sitting up high in the stadium. He is at the mercy of the forces aligned against him.

Yes, I know that life is full of surprises. But, when you develop a habit of approaching your day with an excellence of time management, then you take control of life. Consider Proverbs 21:5: *The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty*. The word haste in this translation actually means “pressed by outside forces” in the original Hebrew. In other words, this scriptures says that planning (or a strategic

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approach) leads to profit, but those who are pressed by outside factors will end up in poverty. Be diligent to plan – strategically schedule – your life.

Chapter 9: Habits

Personal habits represent one of the most important inner secrets of leadership. Your future is created by your habits. Let me give you some essential habits for leadership:

1. **Journaling.** Keep a learning journal. Everyday, you should write down 3 things you learned.
2. **Smile!** Disarm the smirks and snarls that you encounter. Simply smile at them. It's a powerful weapon in your arsenal. Joy is almost non-existent in modern society. A smile is a window into your joy, and it's contagious! Be a carrier of joy; your smile releases that joy into your environment.
3. **Scheduling.** Reread Chapter 8
4. **Health.** Leaders must take care of their body. If your body breaks down, nothing else will matter. Your body is a vehicle. It will carry all your good ideas, all your dreams and all your skills to success. But, if your body breaks down by the side of the road, nothing will travel one inch further.
5. **Respect.** Honor is another major deficit in our society. Honor should always be extended to those people, ideas,

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and institutions that are worthy. The Bible says *respect those who lead you*. It is vital to develop a habit of respect toward your mentors, your inspirations, your parents (Honor your father and your mother), and other people and values worthy of respect.

As a leader, commit to developing habits that lead to success. As human beings, we naturally develop habits. That's not difficult. The secret is found in developing habits that support rather than destroy success.

Chapter 10: Inside

We live in a culture that emphasizes external things – like physical beauty, job titles, and advertising. But, reality is what is INSIDE. One of creation’s greatest mysteries is the seed. When you hold an apple seed in your hand, you’re not only holding an apple seed, you’re holding an apple tree, and future generations of apple trees. They are all resident in that seed.

The most important parts of your life are INSIDE you. They exist in seed form. So, much of life is a matter of planting the right seeds in the soil of your life. A seed cannot produce anything unless it’s in the SOIL. Your soil is your daily life – the events you attend, the books you read, the work you do, the people you spend time with, and the habits of the heart. This is your life and your soil.

By planting the right seeds in your soil, you will find yourself entering an almost agricultural rhythm. When a seed falls into the soil, it takes on a life of its own. That seed takes over. It’s like a woman pregnant. The growing life inside her womb takes over. It calls the shots. Her whole life – her health, her moods, her activities, everything – flexes to accommodate this growing life.

It’s the same way with other seeds. For example, if you read Norman Vincent Peale’s classic book “The Power of Positive Thinking,” it will plant the seed of a positive attitude down deep in your life. And, you know what? That attitude takes over. Every

time a negative thought comes to your mind, that positive attitude growing inside you will emit a small beep in your mind. You'll suddenly realize, "Uh oh. I need to be careful. I reject that negative thought. I gotta take care of this baby of positive thinking growing inside me."

You have the power to destroy the seeds growing up in you. You can destroy them. For example, a watermelon seed has enormous power. But, if you douse the ground with gasoline or other toxic substance, that watermelon seed will die. It will never produce fruit. Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "What lies in front of us is a small thing compared to what within us." So, it is critically important for leaders to spend much more time on what's inside, than on the externals. We must always be careful to maintain internal integrity.

Chapter 11: Patience

Every single thing you do has a gestation period. Just like a baby growing in a womb or a seed of wheat germinating in the soil, all processes have a certain amount of time in which the mystery of creation must work for maturation to be complete.

That's why patience is, perhaps, the ultimate virtue of a leader. Just as a farmer must be patient while the harvest grows, every leader learns to be patient while waiting for the seeds to grow up in his or her life.

Of course, patience is tied to planning. For example, if you know you must make one hundred cold calls in order to make five sales and it takes you a whole day to make five calls, then you know it will be ten days before you meet your quota. That ten day phase is the gestation period. If you try to shorten it because of personal financial pressures, you will injure the process.

Patience involves consistency. You must be steadfast and constant in allowing the seed of leadership to spring from the soil of your heart. I will also tell you that this is one of the most difficult inner secrets for many leaders including me. I am so fired up and focused that I want results NOW, but that is like wanting a baby six months after conception. It just doesn't work that way.

Very often, NOW is not possible or even desirable in the larger pattern. Growth is a process. Some things just take time in order to mature properly. Write and say this right now: **I AM A PATIENT LEADER!**

Chapter 12: Affirming Your Leadership

As a leader, start telling yourself the truth! You remember that earlier in this book, I quoted Goethe, “Treat a man as he is and he will remain what he is. Treat a man as he should be and he will become what he should be.”

That also applies to YOU. Learn to speak the truth to yourself about what you should be. Shake off the negative thoughts, the pessimistic evaluations of yourself, and the harmful thoughts about your abilities and your future. They are all lies. The Bible says, *“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; Therefore, choose life that both you and your descendants may live.”* Deuteronomy 30:19

You have the power to choose life and death, blessing or the curse. As a leader, choose life. Yes, it’s that simple. You have the power to make that choice. You can go with the flow of negativism, doubt, and fear that is so rampant in our society. Or, you can choose to bless your life, your dreams, your family, your work, and your entire environment. You can make a difference!

One person told me that she arrives at her office one hour before anyone else. In that hour, she walks the halls praying for everyone who works there and for the goals and the tasks at hand. She speaks blessing over the entire building. She is choosing life.

From what I’ve been teaching you in this book, let me give you some truths to speak to yourself and your environment. Stand up

right now and speak these things. You may feel silly or awkward. Get over it! Begin speaking to yourself out loud.

- I am making a difference today!
- I am an extremely committed leader!
- I am persistent, patient and constant in my leadership vision!
- I am a determined leader!
- I am listening, learning and journaling daily!
- I am allowing time to be my ally!
- I am learning and earning the right to live a leadership lifestyle!
- I am going to the top!
- I am focused, committed and determined to succeed!
- I am the light to others who once told me it wasn't possible!
- I am doing every day what is necessary to achieve success and be a leader!
- I am leaving a legacy for my family and others who will follow my leadership!

Now, take ownership of your leadership abilities & go out and Find Your Why!

