

DEMYSTIFYING LEADERSHIP SERIES

10 *Foundational
Elements of*
**INTENTIONAL
TRANSFORMATION**



HOW TO BECOME YOUR BEST SELF

MACK STORY

10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation: How to Become Your Best Self

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Mack Story

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DEDICATION

To those with the courage to press the reset button and
move beyond their current circumstances in order
to transform themselves into the person
they were destined to be.

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I would like to recognize those who have a desire to help others become the best version of themselves. You are making a difference in the lives of others who will make a difference in the lives of others. I wish there were more of you.

I will always be grateful to my wife, Ria, for the positive influence she has been in my life. She has inspired much of my transformation while experiencing her own.

INTRODUCTION

“What distinguishes winners from losers is that winners concentrate at all times on what they can do, not what they can’t do.” ~ Bob Butera

People who have known me since I was a teenager often want to know *how* I transformed myself. In the past, I drank alcohol, partied, had a short-temper, was very reactive, narcissistic, and blamed others for my circumstances. Today, I help develop leaders and their teams. I speak to thousands from the stage each year with a heavy focus on personal growth and leadership.

How did I transform myself? The short answer: I simply decided I wanted to be a better person. Then, I started making better choices and became a better person.

The long answer to the question of *how* I transformed myself is found on the remaining pages of this book.

The first thing I often tell people I haven’t seen for many years is, *“The person you knew in the past doesn’t live here anymore. He moved out years ago.”* Actually, he didn’t move out. I kicked him out because he was holding me back.

As you begin your journey through this material, you must understand this book is based on what I call the *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation*. Each *“layer”* of the foundation is supported by those layers that come before it. The book is divided into 10 sections, one for each of the foundational layers of transformation.

Each section will have three chapters. The first two chapters of each section are intended to introduce a specific foundational layer and teach you the related fundamental leadership principles you must apply as you move forward with your intentional transformation. The third chapter in each section is where I pull back the

curtain on my life a bit and share some of my personal stories of transformation. You will see where I failed, where I struggled, and where I eventually succeeded.

The success stories aren't meant to impress you. I share them to motivate and inspire you to move yourself to the next level and beyond. My story is simply that: my story. It is what it is. I *don't* think I'm special. I *don't* think I'm better than *anyone* else. I *do* think I'm *different* than *everyone* else, and *so are you*. We are all unique individuals shaped by all of our unique life experiences. We choose many of our experiences. But, many of our experiences choose us. Life happens.

My wife, Ria, has experienced an amazing transformation of her own after experiencing seven years of extreme sexual abuse at the hands of her father and others from age 12-19. Ria says, "*Transparency is the purest form of truth.*" I agree. I also believe *transparency is telling the truth when you don't have to simply because you want to*. When sharing my supporting stories, my intent is to be transparent.

Note: Ria shared her story in three of her books, Ria's Story from Ashes to Beauty, Beyond Bound and Broken: A Journey of Healing and Resilience, and Bridges Out of the Past: A Survivor's Lessons on Resilience. They detail her unimaginable experiences and how she moved beyond surviving and began thriving. More information on her books can be found in the back of this one.

There are many others, like Ria, who have overcome much more than I have and experienced a much more significant transformation than I have. My story is not their story. I can't tell their story. I can only tell mine. All of us who have experienced true transformation have one thing in common. We had to apply the *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation* in order to make it happen. It doesn't mean we read a book about it and did

it. It most likely means we learned the hard way through trial and error. There are no shortcuts.

However, you can intentionally accelerate your transformation with knowledge, understanding, and focused application of the right principles at the right time. This material will build upon itself as you make your way through it. It will be much more meaningful if read at least twice because the layers above add meaning to the layers below. Reflection and re-reading will greatly enhance your ability to understand and intentionally apply these principles of transformation.

Make this book a tool and a resource. Mark it up. Fold the pages. Highlight and underline key points. DON'T GIVE IT AWAY! If you think someone else will get value from it, that's great. Invest in them and purchase a copy for them as a gift, so they can also mark it up and use it as a resource of their own.

My intent is to ENCOURAGE, ENGAGE, and EMPOWER you as you become more focused and intentional about moving from where you are to where you want to be as you create the life you want. You can and will find yourself struggling in some areas while experiencing great success in other areas. That's normal.

Your ability to effectively move from where you are to where you want to be in any area of your life will be determined by your ability to transform your thinking relative to that area of your life. When it comes to true transformation, if you don't go within, you will go without. *You* are the key to your success.

“If you truly want to initiate a change that will redirect your life and unleash your potential, focus on transforming yourself.” ~ Mack Story

SECTION 1

THOUGHT IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHOICE

1

THOUGHT IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHOICE

WHAT YOU THINK
DETERMINES WHAT YOU DO

“The outer world of circumstance shapes itself to the inner world of thought.” ~ James Allen

If you already knew what you needed to know, you would already be where you want to go. Until you change what you think, you will not change what you do.

Your conscious thoughts are real but only in *your* mind. Your thoughts will lead to other private thoughts and subconscious feelings or emotions. Once you act on your thoughts and feelings, they are translated to the world as choices when they begin to shape your life.

You first make your choices. Then, your choices make you.

The Choice Formula:

Thought + Emotion + Action = Choice

Thought – something we are consciously aware of in our mind

Emotion – something we subconsciously feel based on our thoughts

Action – something we do based on our thoughts and emotions

Your choices flow from your thoughts. The quality of the choices depends on the quality of the thoughts. There is no conscious choice without conscious thought.

Think of what your home looks like or think of your favorite car. Not only can you choose your thoughts, but as you just experienced in this simple exercise, it is very easy for others to influence your thoughts. This is where our real problems start. Far too often, we accept bad influence instead of rejecting it and using our own reasoning to positively influence our thoughts.

James Allen in his book, *As a Man Thinketh*, wrote, “*Our mind may be likened to a garden, which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild; but whether cultivated or neglected, it must, and will, bring forth. If no useful seeds are put into it, then an abundance of useless weed-seeds will fall therein, and will continue to produce their kind.*”

Our mind can be prepared to produce great thoughts and choices just as a freshly plowed field is made ready to produce a great crop. Our mind can also be left undeveloped or underdeveloped to produce whatever thoughts it may without any intentional development. But make no mistake, our mind will produce thoughts. Thoughts and choices will flow from our mind whether good or bad, beneficial or harmful. *Sought or not, there will be thought.* Thoughts will sprout from our mind as plants sprout from the earth. Abundantly.

When you garden, you are responsible for planting seeds capable of producing a great crop. Likewise, you are responsible for developing your mind to produce great thoughts and choices beneficial to you and others. Thoughts that will lead you to where you want to be.

You can take another step and work the garden continuously by watering, weeding, and fertilizing to ensure and enhance the quality of the crop. You can go

farther in the development of your mind by associating with people who want to help you by choosing to remove bad habits and toxic people from your life, by intentionally studying positive people, by reading positive books, and by making positive choices.

One very powerful life and death choice is self-talk, *thoughts* you have about yourself and others. Self-talk is far more destructive than what others say to you or about you. Why? Because you are *always* listening to yourself.

People take their lives every day because of their own self-talk, not what others are saying. Sometimes they are not talking to others at all. Their own thoughts have brought them to the point of feeling worthless, helpless, and most often, hopeless. They have convinced themselves there is no reason to continue living.

These people no longer have hope and have given up. When you don't have hope, you must get it from others. You must connect with positive people, be with them, and talk with them. You must borrow their belief in you. They can and will lift you up. If the people you are around don't lift you up, you are around the wrong people. The right people will *always* give you hope and lift you up.

There are endless examples of self-talk (thought) being detrimental to our well-being. You can choose your thoughts and change your thoughts. When you do, you begin to change your habits, your circumstances, and ultimately, your life.

“We imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot; it rapidly crystallizes into habit, and habit solidifies into circumstance.” ~ James Allen

2

THOUGHTS ARE BASED ON VALUES

HIGH IMPACT VALUES LEAD TO HIGH IMPACT THOUGHTS

*“I cannot teach anybody anything,
I can only make them think.” ~ Socrates*

Ultimately, you choose your results when you choose your values. *Your values are the foundation for your results.*

Your values influence your thoughts, which influence your feelings, which influence your actions, which *determine* your results. Dramatically different values will always lead to dramatically different results.

V. Gilbert Beers had this to say about values, *“A person of integrity is one who has established a system of values against which all of life is judged.”*

Everyone has values. They can be good or bad. You categorize them as good or bad by asking, *“Are my values in alignment with natural laws and principles?”* Natural laws and principles are timeless. Every human understands them regardless of age, race, religion, gender, etc. Fairness is a great example. No one ever taught you the thousands of ways you can be treated unfairly. However, you know when it happens because you *feel* it.

You came fully loaded with the innate ability to understand right and wrong. And, you also came fully loaded with free will, the ability to choose to adhere to natural laws and principles or to go completely against

them. You have an internal “*map*” with street lights along the path you should take, but you also have the awareness and ability to see and travel the dimly lit and dark paths you should avoid.

Do you *value* accepting responsibility or transferring responsibility? When you look through the window and blame others, you are transferring responsibility. Statements like “*You make me so mad!*” are made by those who choose to blame and transfer responsibility. When you look in the mirror to find the solution to your problems, you are accepting responsibility. Statements like “*How was this my fault?*” and “*What could I have done differently?*” are made by those who choose to reflect on and accept responsibility for the situation.

Your values are the foundation upon which you base your thoughts. My book, *10 Values of High Impact Leaders*, details 10 key values everyone should work to master because those values will have a tremendous impact on one’s ability to positively influence others. The more influence you have, the more options you will have. Since influence is very dynamic and complex, the more values you have been able to internalize and utilize synergistically together, the more effective you will be and the more influence you will have. So, where do you start?

There is a story of a tourist who paused for a rest in a small town in the mountains. He went over to an old man sitting on a bench in front of the only store in town and inquired, “*Friend, can you tell me something this town is noted for?*”

“*Well,*” replied the old man, “*I don’t rightly know except it’s the starting point to the world. You can start here and go anywhere you want.*”

That’s a great little story. We are all at “*the starting point to the world.*” We can start where we are and go anywhere.

We can expand our influence 360° in all directions by simply starting in the center and expanding ourselves.

Consider the illustration below. Imagine you are standing in the center. You can make a high impact. However, it will not happen by accident. You *must* become *intentional*. You must *live with purpose* while *focusing on your performance* as you *unleash your potential*.



Why we do what we do is about our *purpose*. **How** we do what we do is about our *performance*. **What** we do will unleash our *potential*. Where these three components overlap, you will achieve a **HIGH IMPACT**.

“The values that form the basis for your True North are derived from your beliefs and convictions.

In defining your values, you must decide what is most important in your life.

Is it maintaining your integrity, making a difference, helping other people, or devoting yourself to family?

There is no one right set of values. Only you can decide the question of your values.” ~ Bill George

3

THE THOUGHT THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM YOURSELF, YOU
MUST FIRST BE ABLE TO LEAD YOURSELF

“Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside themselves was superior to circumstance.”

~ Bruce Barton

I'll never forget the first time I heard Stephen R. Covey say 14 words that would change the rest of my life. He said, *“Between stimulus and response, we have the ability to pause and choose our response.”* As simple as these words sound today, they were profound at that moment. I had never intentionally thought about what he had just taught me.

The year was 2008. I had recently resigned from 20 years in the corporate world to start my own process improvement (Lean Manufacturing) consulting business. At the time, I was listening to a one hour audio featuring the highlights of Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. I didn't find out there was a book by the same title until many months later. I would also later learn the entire audio book was approximately 13 hours.

One hour only scratched the surface. However, that was exactly what I needed to get me going, not too much at the start, just a taste of what could be. This book is

meant to scratch the surface in the same way. It's meant to stir your thoughts, motivate you to action, and inspire you along the path of transformation.

Many of us need to experience a character-based transformation. Unfortunately, most of us don't know it. I didn't know it until 2008. I thought I was a great person.

We naturally tend to spend more time looking out the window judging others instead of looking in the mirror judging ourselves. Transformation requires a lot of time intentionally looking in the mirror as we reflect on who we really are. For most of us, our intentional growth focuses on developing our competency (what we know) and very little, if any, intentional effort is put into developing our character (who we are).

Well-developed character *always* serves as a multiplier of our competency.

During our lifetime, most of us only experience accidental character growth. There aren't near as many among us who will experience a real, intentional character transformation. Transformation at the core, at the character level, does not happen by accident. It happens by choice. A choice to change your values followed by a lifetime of choices to align your behavior with timeless, tested, proven, natural laws and values.

When I first heard Covey speak about stimulus and response, I actually paused the audio and thought about what he was saying. Fortunately for me, I was paying attention, and those powerful words didn't go unnoticed. It was actually as if he had reached out of my car stereo and literally shook me to get my attention while saying, "*Listen to me, son. I'm talking to you!*"

At the time, I needed to hear those words for many reasons, some of which I wouldn't understand until much later into my transformational journey. The key for me at

that moment was how they effortlessly *stuck* in my mind. They resonated with me at the core. They made a lot of sense. I still think about them, say them to myself, and use the principle found in them daily. That day in 2008, I actually pressed rewind on my audio player and listened, paused, and reflected on his words many times before I let the audio continue.

Until I was exposed to the formal principles of character-based leadership I started learning from Covey, I didn't think very intentionally about my character at all. I had been experiencing non-stop growth throughout my entire life. In my mind, I had been very successful.

Success is a relative term. To most, success means a good job, a good and steady income, a nice home, and a nice life. To a few, those who have highly developed character, success means mastery of self. Only when we have mastered self are we truly successful. Then, everything else in life becomes a bonus. We don't simply live our life. We design, build, and create our life on a foundation of solid well-developed character.

I didn't experience transformation in my life until I was 42. My character growth had always been accidental. If you would have spoken to me before then, I would have told you I was successful. I would have felt proud of what I had accomplished. However, after hearing those words, my *thoughts* began to change. My *thoughts* began to move me away from the window and closer to the mirror.

I believed every word Covey had said. I also believed *I could change myself*. For the first time, I began to imagine what would change if I changed my thoughts.

“All that a man achieves or fails to achieve is the direct result of his thoughts.” ~ James Allen

SECTION 2

CHOICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF VISION

4

CHOICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF VISION

IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING,
YOU'LL END UP SOMEWHERE ELSE

“Destiny is not a matter of chance, but a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for but is a thing to be achieved.” ~ William Jennings Bryan

There is no conscious action without conscious thought. You can turn your potential into your reality. The quality of your *choices* depends on the quality of your thoughts. When is the last time you spent 10 minutes per day for 90 consecutive days thinking about where you want to be and how you're going to get there? Doing so is simply a *choice* you can make.

Most people haven't spent one day thinking intentionally for 10 minutes about where they want to be and how they are going to get there. Far too many people get trapped in a never ending cycle of doing the same thing day in and day out while hoping, wishing, and praying for different results. This makes absolutely no sense when you *actually* think about it. But, most people *don't* think about it.

You are responsible for *choosing* to move yourself forward. Until you *choose* to realize this simple fact, you will be at the mercy of society. And, society doesn't have a lot planned for you. Once you make the *choice* to

become responsible you have positioned yourself to make some amazing things happen.

As Dee Ann Turner stated so simply, *“Wise choices in the beginning provide a better chance of success in the end.”* When you make the *choice* to respond to everything based on internalized values that are timeless, tested, and have been proven across generations, you are prepared to launch yourself to the next level and beyond.

When it comes to creating a compelling vision for yourself, you must intentionally tap into your passion and purpose to begin to think of what could be. Too many people chase money instead of things that make them happy. As a result, they get neither. You will be the happiest when you’re earning a living doing something you are passionate about and that interests you. Odds are, you will also earn more money over a lifetime doing it. And if you don’t, it won’t matter because you’ll be happy simply because you’re doing what you love.

Developing a vision, big or small, is a *choice*. We must think on purpose about our purpose. Most people are far removed from their purpose. When asked what their purpose is, most don’t have an answer. However, the most common answer is, *“I don’t know.”* Or, *“I’ve never really thought about it.”*

If you are serious about creating the life you want instead of continuing to live the life you have accepted, it’s time to *choose* to think about your purpose. Once you know who you are and who you want to become and once you know where you are and where you want to be, you can begin your transformation. Transformation is a choice that only responsible people can and will make.

Transformation turns vision into reality. You must intentionally *choose* to dream of what is possible. You must *choose* to let your imagination run wild. Who do you want

to become? What do you want to do? Where do you want to go? When do you want to go? Don't ask, "*Can I do it?*" Ask, "*Is it possible?*" Think, "*How can I make it happen?*" and "*When can I make it happen?*" Then, follow up with the most important question of all, "*What's stopping me from making it happen?*"

When you ask these questions, don't look out the window for excuses. An effective vision taps into your strengths not your weaknesses. Look into the mirror, *choose* to be responsible, and find a way to make it happen. You are exactly where you're supposed to be based on every choice you've made leading up to this moment.

Will things outside of your control happen to you? Absolutely...until the day you die. Those things are important and will influence you along your journey. However, there's something much more important than what happens to you.

The most important thing is your response to what happens to you. You don't always get to choose what happens to you. But, you will *always* get to *choose your response* to what happens to you. Your response to what happens will determine much, but not all, of what happens to you in the future.

Regardless of what has happened to you or what will happen to you in the future, the *choices* you make daily will *always* shape your future. When you *choose* to intentionally create a vision for your future, you're aligned to make the *choices* that will create that future. Things will happen outside of your control. When they do, you simply regroup, reevaluate the situation, look forward, make the necessary adjustments, and continue creating your future.

"A man's environment is a merciless mirror of him as a human being." ~ Earl Nightingale

5

CHOICES CREATE THE FUTURE

WHAT WE CHOOSE TO DO
TODAY WILL DETERMINE WHAT
WE GET TO DO TOMORROW

“Show me someone who is humble enough to accept and take responsibility for his or her circumstances and courageous enough to take whatever initiative is necessary to creatively work his or her way through or around these challenges, and I’ll show you the supreme power of choice.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

When you *choose* to accept responsibility for your future, you will be able to define your future.

Apply what is on these pages, and you will be amazed at the future you will create. A future you can’t begin to imagine now. There are opportunities for you right now that you can’t see. You must start preparing for those opportunities without knowing what they are. You must *trust they are there* and begin moving toward them.

It’s much like taking a trip in a car at night. You can’t see very much in the dark. If you want to see ahead in the dark, you must first turn on the lights. Then, if you want to see farther ahead, you must start moving slowly in the direction you think you want to go. As you move, you will begin to see what was previously unseen.

Your growth toward a better and preferred future is exactly the same. You’re holding in your hand a way forward, if you’ll turn the light on (take responsibility) and

start moving forward toward your vision (growth). As Henry Cloud says, *“If you have already been trying hard, maybe trying harder is not the way. Try different.”*

If you don’t choose to create your future, the cumulative choices of society will determine your future. You can choose to navigate your way to your destination, or you can refuse to navigate your way to your destination. If you refuse to navigate your way forward, it’s like being adrift in the ocean. There’s no telling where you’ll end up or when you’ll get there. In other words, you will be helpless and hopeless.

Unfortunately, that’s exactly how many people live their lives. They are where they are because that’s where they ended up. By not choosing to be someplace else, they chose to be there. By not choosing to navigate their way forward, they simply drifted into a career or job, and maybe, into a bad relationship. Instead of intentionally creating their future, they accidentally created their future.

Too often, people who are searching in life find what they will settle for and stop looking for what they were searching for. As John G. Miller remarked, *“There’s nothing you have to do. We all have the power to make a decision that will direct us to a new destination. Each of us can make a choice that will change our life.”*

The future is in you now. Think about that for a moment. Your future really is in you now. That’s not a play on words. It’s the truth. Your future is defined and refined by the *choices* you make every day. Make a bad *choice*, and you get a less desirable future. Make a good *choice*, and you get a more desirable future. You can easily see you are very much in control of creating your future. You don’t have to settle. It’s your choice.

You can’t predict your future, but *you can create your future*. This is powerful and profound if you have never

taken the time to slow down and truly think it out. The thousands of *choices* we make every day of our life, not only shape our life, but they also create our future.

Remember, with only a few exceptions, you're exactly where you're supposed to be based on all of the *choices* you have made leading up to this moment. If you were supposed to be someplace else, you would already be there. You must own the results your *choices* have produced. James Allen said it best, "*We are anxious to improve our circumstances but unwilling to improve ourselves. We therefore remain bound.*"

Until you own that you're responsible, you're being irresponsible. That's why those blaming others for their circumstances can't improve their circumstances.

The thought process of blaming someone else for your circumstances has a zero chance of making anything in your life better. Many people wake up and live out this model from start to finish every day.

Why? Because when we blame others, we don't have to do anything. We truly believe someone else is responsible, and think they should do everything. But, when we take the blame, we are 100% responsible. Now, *we* must do everything.

Most people take the easy way out and blame others for their circumstances. It takes a higher level of character development to accept responsibility for your circumstances and make changes when necessary. Don't fear change. Embrace change. Then, learn to leverage change for greater benefit.

Don't be fearful. Be hopeful. It's a choice.

*"May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears."
~ Nelson Mandela*

6

ONE OF MANY BAD CHOICES

OUR CHOICES ARE THE INK WE USE TO
WRITE OUR STORY. CHOOSE WISELY.

*“Choices always come with consequences.
Choosing wisely brings the consequences we want in
life. Choosing poorly will bring the consequences
we don’t want in life.” ~ Ria Story*

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CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Who you are tomorrow is determined
by the choices you make today.” ~ Ria Story*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Do you know about the [Special Blue-Collar Leadership®
Offer](#)? Get complimentary copies of books with on site
leadership speaking/training from Mack and Ria.

We spoke at Yale University’s School of Management
on the topic of
Blue-Collar Leadership®: Innovation in Talent Development.
[Watch our entire 1 hour presentation here.](#)

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SECTION 3

VISION IS THE FOUNDATION OF HOPE

7

VISION IS THE FOUNDATION OF HOPE

**WHAT WE CHOOSE TO IMAGINE WILL MAKE
US FEEL FEARFUL OR HOPEFUL**

*“There are three requirements for humans to act:
1) dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs, 2) a
vision of a better state, and 3) belief that we can reach
that better state. When just one of the requirements is
missing, people will not act.” ~ Ludwig von Mises*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Cherish your vision and your dreams as they are
the children of your soul, the blueprints of your
ultimate achievements.” ~ Napoleon Hill*

8

VISION PROVIDES DIRECTION

**KNOWING WHERE WE'RE GOING
ALLOWS US TO CHART THE COURSE**

“Clarity of vision will compensate for uncertainty in planning. If you are unclear about the destination of the journey, even the most sophisticated, well-thought-through strategy is useless. Pencil in your plans. Etch the vision in stone.” ~ Andy Stanley

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Vision is not enough. It must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps; we must step up the stairs.” ~ Vaclav Havel

9

VISION ALLOWS FOCUS

**CHANGE IS OFTEN TEMPORARY, BUT
TRANSFORMATION IS USUALLY PERMANENT**

*“Nothing is impossible, if only your
will power is strong enough.” ~ Bruce Barton*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“What we fear doing most is usually
what we most need to do.” ~ Tim Ferriss*

SECTION 4

HOPE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SACRIFICE

10

HOPE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SACRIFICE

**WHEN THERE IS HOPE FOR THE FUTURE,
THERE IS MEANING IN THE SACRIFICE**

*“There are no hopeless situations; there are only men
and women who have grown hopeless about them.”
~ Marshal Ferdinand Foch*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Extraordinary people survive under the most terrible
circumstances and then become more extraordinary
because of it.” ~ Robertson Davies*

11

HOPE IS NOT A STRATEGY

HOPE HAS THE POWER TO LAUNCH YOU,
BUT HOPE CANNOT DELIVER YOU

“It really is amazing what happens when you recognize the importance of the opportunities ahead of you, accept responsibility for your future, and take positive action.” ~ Michael F. Sciortino, Sr.

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“When you decide to pursue greatness, you are taking responsibility for your life. This means that you are choosing to accept the consequences of your actions, and to become the agent of your mental, physical, spiritual, and material success. You may not always be able to control what life puts in your path, but I believe you can always control who you are.”
~ Les Brown*

12

FOR ME, HOPE WAS THE KEY

HOPE ALLOWED ME TO SEE
THROUGH THE DARKNESS

“One of the most common causes of failure is the habit of quitting when one is overtaken by temporary defeat.” ~ Napoleon Hill

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“The ability to be successful is the ability to go from failure to failure without giving up.”
~ Winston Churchill*

SECTION 5

**SACRIFICE IS THE
FOUNDATION
OF DISCIPLINE**

13

SACRIFICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF DISCIPLINE

TOO OFTEN, YOU CAN'T REACH WHAT
YOU NEED MOST BECAUSE YOU WON'T
LET GO OF WHAT YOU WANT MOST

*“Everything I’ve ever let go of has claw marks on it.”
~ David Foster Wallace*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Whenever you see a successful person, you only see
the public glories, never the private sacrifices
to reach them.” ~ Vaibhav Shah*

14

SACRIFICE DEMONSTRATES COMMITMENT

WHEN YOU GIVE UP SOMETHING OF LESSER
VALUE, YOU ARE POSITIONED TO GAIN
SOMETHING OF GREATER VALUE

*“The price of anything is the amount of life you
exchange for it.” ~ Henry David Thoreau*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Why do you enter into any activity with anything but
commitment to achieve your objective of that activity -
not a desire to achieve your objective, but
a commitment?” ~ Samuel L. Parker*

15

IT WAS TIME TO SACRIFICE MOST OF MY RELATIONSHIPS

**OFTEN, THOSE CLOSEST TO US ARE
HOLDING US BACK THE MOST**

“How many of us walk around being weighed down by the baggage of our journey? You can’t possibly embrace that new relationship, that new companion, that new career, that new friendship, or that new life you want while you’re still holding on to the baggage of the last one. Let go...and allow yourself to embrace what is waiting for you right at your feet.”

~Steve Maraboli

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“If you want a better life personally and/or professionally, you have to ask yourself this question, ‘Who am I surrounding myself with, day to day?’ Those who support and create energy for change? Or those who are stuck in the comfort of what is?”

~ Henry Cloud

SECTION 6

**DISCIPLINE IS THE
FOUNDATION
OF GROWTH**

16

DISCIPLINE IS THE FOUNDATION OF GROWTH

**YOU MUST TO DO THE RIGHT THING AT THE
RIGHT TIME FOR THE RIGHT REASON**

“When it comes to self-discipline, people choose one of two things: Either they choose the pain of discipline, which comes from sacrifice and growth, or they choose the pain of regret, which comes from taking the easy road and missing opportunities.”

~ John C. Maxwell

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“The pain of discipline weighs ounces.
Regret weighs tons.” ~ Jim Rohn*

17

DISCIPLINE LEVERAGES SACRIFICE

THE GREATER THE DISCIPLINE,
THE GREATER THE REWARD

“Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goals; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.”

~ Thomas Jefferson

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“We are not victims of our situation.
We are the architects of it.” ~ Simon Sinek*

18

DEVELOPING THE DISCIPLINE TO INVEST IN MYSELF

**IT WAS TIME TO START LIVING MY LIFE BY
DESIGN INSTEAD OF BY DEFAULT**

“There are 24 hours in a day. What will you do with yours? If you write, you will become an author. If you exercise, you will become an athlete. If you study, you will become an expert. Your life is a result of how you invest your time.” ~ Denard Ash

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“If you have too little confidence, you will think you can’t learn. If you have too much, you will think you don’t have to learn.” ~ Eric Hoffer

SECTION 7

**GROWTH IS THE
FOUNDATION
OF CHANGE**

19

GROWTH IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHANGE

IF YOU'RE NOT GROWING, YOU'RE SLOWING

“When I go through change it is because I am passive; I accept it as inevitable. So, I sigh and say, I hope this comes out all right. When I grow through change, I become active. I take control of my attitude, my emotions. Years ago, I determined that while others may lead small lives, I would not; while others may become victims, I would not; and while others will leave their future in other’s hands, I will not. And while others go through life, I will grow through it. That is my choice, and I will surrender it to no one.”
~ John C. Maxwell

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Where there is no belief or hope for growth to be real, it is no longer attempted. People, or organizations, enter into a state of sameness, and as we have seen, that is really when things are no longer alive. Death is taking over not growth.” ~ Henry Cloud

20

GROWTH CREATES OPTIONS

**WHEN YOU GROW YOURSELF,
YOU ATTRACT NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

“The moment you take responsibility for everything in your life is the moment you can change anything in your life.” ~ Hal Elrod

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“On the path to your God-inspired future, attractive alternatives will be offered. You will be presented with more money, a better position, or a more sedate lifestyle in a more comfortable geographic location. You are going to face other kinds of more dramatic temptations as well. We all do. But, we have to constantly remember our future.” ~ Terry A. Smith

21

THE IMPACT OF INTENTIONAL GROWTH

WHEN I BEGAN TO LIVE ON PURPOSE,
I DISCOVERED MY PURPOSE

*“You must have a long-range vision to keep you from
being frustrated by short-range failures.”*

~ Charles Noble

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Into the hands of every individual is given a
marvelous power for good or evil - the silent,
unconscious, unseen influence of his life. This is
simply the constant radiation of what man really is,
not what he pretends to be.” ~ William George Jordan*

SECTION 8

**CHANGE IS THE
FOUNDATION
OF SUCCESS**

22

CHANGE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SUCCESS

**IF YOU ALREADY KNEW WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW, YOU WOULD ALREADY BE
WHERE YOU WANT TO GO**

*“Those who cannot change their minds
cannot change anything.” ~ George Bernard Shaw*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“The first step toward success is taken when you
refuse to be a captive of the environment you
first find yourself in.” ~ Mark Caine*

23

CHANGE RELEASES POTENTIAL

**WITHOUT CHANGE, YOUR POTENTIAL CAN
NEVER BECOME YOUR REALITY**

“When we are faced with change, we either step forward into growth, or we step backward into safety.” ~ Abraham Maslow

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Small, Smart Choices + Consistency + Time
= RADICAL DIFFERENCE” ~ Darren Hardy*

24

A CHANGE I DIDN'T SEE COMING

WHEN WE EXPERIENCE THE RIGHT CHANGE,
THE RIGHT THINGS CHANGE

*“Without change, something sleeps inside us, and
seldom awakens. The sleeper must awaken.”*

~ Frank Herbert

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Things do not change; we change.”

~ Henry David Thoreau

SECTION 9

**SUCCESS IS THE
FOUNDATION
OF SIGNIFICANCE**

25

SUCCESS IS THE FOUNDATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

**TO BE SUCCESSFUL, YOU MUST FOCUS
ON BECOMING MORE VALUABLE,
NOT MORE SUCCESSFUL**

“Your ability to achieve your own happiness is the true measure of your success in life. Nothing is more important. Nothing can replace it. If you accomplish everything of a material nature, but you are not happy, you have actually ‘failed’ at fulfilling your potential as a human being.” ~ Brian Tracy

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“When a challenge in life is met by a response that is equal to it, you have success. But when the challenge moves to a higher level, the old, once successful response no longer works - it fails; thus, nothing fails like success.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

26

SUCCESS CREATES MOMENTUM

**WHEN YOU CREATE MOMENTUM, DON'T
REST UPON IT. BUILD UPON IT.**

“Where success is concerned, people are not measured in inches, or pounds, or college degrees, or family background; they are measured by the size of their thinking. How big we think determines the size of our accomplishments.” ~ David Schwartz

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.” ~ Jack Welch

27

SUCCESS LED ME TO MORE SUCCESS

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO
DETERMINES WHAT WE GET TO DO

“Where God guides, He provides.” ~ Dee Ann Turner

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“I’m learning more everyday that God doesn’t prefer hearing what we are programmed to ask and pray for, He wants to hear and talk about what we were born for!” ~ Tonya Spence

SECTION 10

SIGNIFICANCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF LEGACY

28

SIGNIFICANCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF LEGACY

**SUCCESS IS ABOUT GETTING RESULTS,
SIGNIFICANCE IS ABOUT HELPING
OTHERS GET RESULTS**

“We build and defend not for our generation alone. We defend the foundations laid by our fathers. We build a life for generations yet unborn. We defend and we build a way of life, not for America alone, but for all mankind.” ~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“I dare you, whoever you are, share with others the fruits of your daring. Catch a passion for helping others and a richer life will come back to you.”
~ William H. Danforth*

29

SIGNIFICANCE IS NOT ABOUT YOU, BUT IT STARTS WITH YOU

WHO YOU ARE ON THE INSIDE IS WHAT
OTHERS EXPERIENCE ON THE OUTSIDE

*“Talent is God-given. Be humble.
Fame is man-given. Be grateful.
Conceit is self-given. Be careful.”
~ John Wooden*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“When you do the common things in life in an
uncommon way, you will command the attention
of the world.” ~ George Washington Carver*

30

CHOOSING A LIFE OF SIGNIFICANCE

IT'S NOT ABOUT ME,
BUT IT STARTED WITH ME

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.” ~ Helen Keller

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“I am not what happened to me,
I am what I choose to become.” ~ Carl Jung*

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We spoke at Yale University's School of Management on the topic of *Blue-Collar Leadership®: Innovation in Talent Development*. [Watch the entire 1 hour presentation here.](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mack's story is an amazing journey of personal and professional growth. He began his career in manufacturing on the front lines of a machine shop. He grew himself into upper management and found his niche in lean manufacturing and along with it, developed a passion for leadership development.

Mack has logged over 11,000 hours leading cross-functional blue-collar leaders and their teams through various types of process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation.

Mack is also the author of *Defining Influence*, *10 Values of High Impact Leaders*, *Change Happens*, *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation*, *Maximize Your Potential*, *Maximize Your Leadership Potential*, and *Who's Buying You?*. He's an inspiration for people everywhere as an example of achievement, growth and personal development. His passion inspires people all over the world! [Listen to Audio Book samples here.](#)

A few highlights: In 2013, Mack participated in the Cultural Transformation of Guatemala with John C. Maxwell where more than 20,000 Guatemalan leaders were trained; In 2014, Les Brown invited Mack to speak at his event in Los Angeles, CA; In 2018, Mack was invited to speak at Yale University.

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Mack's wife, [Ria](#), is also an author and speaker with [an amazing personal story of overcoming seven years of extreme sexual abuse](#) by her father and others from age 12-19.

RiaStory.com