

“Wonderful coaching for a great life! If you’re ready to live the best life possible, then read *Life Lessons* and make it happen!”

—Marshall Goldsmith, *New York Times* best-selling author of *MOJO* and *What Got You Here Won’t Get You There*

# LIFE LESSONS

FOREWORD  
by  
JOAN  
LUNDEN

A Guide to  
Creating and Living  
Your Best Life

BRIAN E.  
BARTES

*More Praise for*  
**LIFE LESSONS**

“This wonderful book will inspire you to set bigger goals than ever before, and motivate you to take continuous action until you succeed.”

BRIAN TRACY, AUTHOR OF  
*NO EXCUSES: THE POWER OF SELF-DISCIPLINE*

“Brian Bartes has written a wonderful book that every child who aspires to a better life must own. His guide to successful living is exactly what we adults also need to inspire ourselves to be our children’s best role models.”

CHERIE CARTER-SCOTT, PH.D., AUTHOR OF  
*IF LIFE IS A GAME, THESE ARE THE RULES*

“*Life Lessons* is loaded with solid wisdom and practical advice with great stories that illustrate the teachings. We can all benefit from learning, or being reminded of, the proven principles of living a balanced, authentic and happy life. Brian Bartes covers the bases well with a clear, easy-to-understand and friendly style. You’re going to love it!”

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AUTHOR OF *101 BEST WAYS TO BE YOUR BEST*  
AND *101 BEST WAYS TO GET AHEAD*

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*THE ACCIDENTAL MILLIONAIRE*  
WWW.STEPHANIEFRANK.COM

*“Life Lessons* is a valuable addition to my success library at home. It is packed with good advice and illustrations that will educate and inspire readers of all ages. Give it a careful read.”

PAT WILLIAMS, SR. VICE-PRESIDENT, ORLANDO MAGIC,  
AUTHOR OF *EXTREME FOCUS*

“Brian Bartes writes about the tremendously important lessons in life. His insightful book will inspire anyone who wants to succeed in every area of life, and achieve their dreams.”

CHRIS WIDENER, AUTHOR OF *LEADERSHIP RULES*  
[WWW.CHRISWIDENER.COM](http://WWW.CHRISWIDENER.COM)

“I’ve read over 1,437 books on creating more success in your life. Brian Bartes’s new book, *Life Lessons*, is a valuable guide on how to create an outstanding life. I love the inspirational stories in every chapter and the simple to understand and apply action exercises. If you want to create more happiness, success and fun in your life, then read this book. And if you want your children to have the best life possible, give them a copy as well.”

GRAHAM MCGREGOR, SALES AND MARKETING CONSULTANT  
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND  
[WWW.EASYBUSINESSSUCCESS.COM](http://WWW.EASYBUSINESSSUCCESS.COM)

“Every great thought leader throughout history has taught us that wisdom is learning from other people’s experiences, as well as our own, in order to handle those road bumps with less stress and greater ease. How awesome that Brian Bartes did this with his book, *Life Lessons*! What a great gift for anyone you love. What a great gift for yourself!! What a powerful message for all of us!!!”

DONNA KRECH, ENTREPRENEUR, SPEAKER, AND AUTHOR  
[WWW.DONNAKRECH.COM](http://WWW.DONNAKRECH.COM)

“Brian Bartes beautifully combines two of my favorite things in *Life Lessons*—real life examples, and stories interwoven with practical and relevant lessons on creating a life that emulates your dreams. Continuing in his usual style Brian provides a fantastic read for those of us who are young, or just young at heart.”

KIRSTY DUNPHEY, AUTHOR OF *RETIRED AT 27—  
IF I CAN DO IT, ANYONE CAN*  
WWW.KIRSTYDUNPHEY.COM

“I believe in Brian Bartes and his new book, *Life Lessons*. There is no better time than NOW to apply Brian’s simple genius.”

FRANK MCKINNEY, 5X BESTSELLING AUTHOR, INCLUDING *THE TAP*  
WWW.FRANK-MCKINNEY.COM

“Brian picked the most important lessons in life, focusing on the ones that make it truly great. Anyone can learn a lot from his guidance and insights.”

MICHAEL SLIWINSKI, FOUNDER OF NOZBE;  
EDITOR, *PRODUCTIVE!* MAGAZINE

“The best gift a parent can give their child is to help them discover what their unique gift or talent is, and then guide them towards using that gift to benefit humanity. Giving your child *Life Lessons* by Brian Bartes is the perfect way to accomplish this.”

ERIN A. KURT, B.ED. AUTHOR OF *JUGGLING FAMILY LIFE:  
A STEP-BY-STEP TO STRESS-FREE PARENTING*

“Brian Bartes’s masterpiece, *Life Lessons: A Guide to Creating and Living Your Best Life*, is a must-read for everyone. It is a refreshing reminder that work, vision, and execution still produce success even in challenging times. *Life Lessons* is a powerful resource that will help change your life.”

LES BROWN, WORLD RENOWNED MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

"The principles Brian Bartes shares in *Life Lessons* will change your life. These easy to understand lessons will put you on the right track to living a successful life."

MICHELLE PRINCE, BEST-SELLING AUTHOR  
OF *WINNING IN LIFE NOW*

"*Life Lessons* has the power to change the life of any reader who implements its inspirational and practical suggestions. Chock full of inspirational quotes, real life examples, practical suggestions and helpful summaries, Brian's new book presents his insightful blueprint for a successful life!"

CLARITY NEWHOUSE, AUTHOR OF *A SUNNY NOTE*  
WWW.ASUNNYNOTE.COM

"Bravo! Every now and again I read a book that forever impacts my future. *Life Lessons: A Guide to Creating and Living Your Best Life* is one of those books. Read and study this book and not only will you achieve your destiny, but you will also soar in life!"

PATRICK SNOW, INTERNATIONAL BEST-SELLING AUTHOR  
OF *CREATING YOUR OWN DESTINY*  
WWW.PATRICKSNOW.COM

"Brian gets it! Start now getting the life you want now with Brian's ideas. Life is too short not to!"

GREG HATCHER, CEO OF THE HATCHER AGENCY  
AUTHOR, *55 STEPS TO OUTRAGEOUS SERVICE*

"I love books that inspire and motivate people in a positive way, and *Life Lessons* is one of those books."

DR. KEVIN LEMAN, AUTHOR OF *THE BIRTH ORDER BOOK*  
AND *HAVE A NEW YOU BY FRIDAY*

*"Life Lessons: A Guide to Creating and Living Your Best Life* is an important book to read both for you and your children. In today's world we need important principles for success, and this book will help you to move in the direction of your dreams and make a positive impact in the world. Truth is, we need positive influences to give us the hope and inspiration to be our best. I highly recommend Brian's book."

LEE MILTEER, AUTHOR OF *SUCCESS IS AN INSIDE JOB*  
AND *SPIRITUAL POWER TOOLS*  
WWW.MILTEER.COM

*"Life Lessons* is a powerful book that can help you achieve your goals in life. Read what Brian Bartes has to say because it can change your life . . . starting today!"

ROBERT STUBERG, AUTHOR OF *THE 12 LIFE SECRETS*

"Brian Bartes presents a proven, easy-to-follow formula for achieving the 'GOOD LIFE,' whatever that may mean to you. Read, reread, digest, and practice the techniques that Brian shares in these great *Life Lessons* and you will Create and Live Your Best Life!"

ED FOREMAN  
U. S. CONGRESSMAN, RTD.  
(TEXAS AND NEW MEXICO)  
SPEAKER, AUTHOR, ENTREPRENEUR

"If you're looking for a great book on how to live your life, you don't have to look any further. I strongly encourage you to read *Life Lessons*."

PEGGY MCCOLL, NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR  
WWW.DESTINIES.COM

*"Life Lessons* provides a simple, powerful plan for living a full and successful life."

MARK SANBORN, AUTHOR OF *THE FRED FACTOR* AND  
*YOU DON'T NEED A TITLE TO BE A LEADER*

“Brian Bartes’s new book, *Life Lessons*, will inspire a generation of young people to dream big and follow his excellent principles on how to succeed in life. A valuable tool that will have a great influence for all who read and follow his wisdom.”

WYLAND, PREMIER OCEAN ARTIST

“Finally, Brian Bartes reveals his keys to success. If you want to make your dreams come true, then read *Life Lessons!*”

MARCIA WIEDER, CEO/FOUNDER, DREAM UNIVERSITY

“Timeless lessons can be taught in new, powerful ways. Brian Bartes does this and more. Read his book and create value for your entire family.”

ROBERT WHITE, EXECUTIVE COACH AND  
AUTHOR OF *LIVING AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE*

“*Life Lessons* is filled with inspirational stories, quotes, and strategies for successful living. Read it today, and give a copy to the teenagers and young adults in your life!”

MAC ANDERSON  
FOUNDER OF *SIMPLE TRUTHS AND SUCCESSORIES*

“If you’re ready to live your best life, then read, absorb and use the principles in this book. Brian is giving you a road map for success!”

JAMES MALINCHAK, FEATURED ON  
ABC’S HIT TV SHOW, “SECRET MILLIONAIRE”  
FOUNDER, [WWW.BIGMONEYSPEAKER.COM](http://WWW.BIGMONEYSPEAKER.COM)

To read more praise for *Life Lessons*, visit:

[www.lifelessonsthebook.com](http://www.lifelessonsthebook.com)

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*Coach Yourself to Success*

*LifeExcellence Treasury of Quotes*

*Peace of Mind For You And Your Loved Ones*

*Co-Authored Books:*

*Success Simplified*

*Building an Extraordinary Business*



# LIFE LESSONS

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A Guide to  
Creating and Living  
Your Best Life

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BRIAN E.  
BARTES

LEGACY PUBLISHING GROUP  
Plymouth, Michigan

*[www.lifelessonsthebook.com](http://www.lifelessonsthebook.com)*

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With thanks to everyone who has positively impacted my life. Especially my children—Andy, Abby, Carly, and Caleb—who are my greatest contribution to the world. I hope I have made as much of a difference in their lives as they have made in mine.

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# FOREWORD

When Brian Bartes asked me to write the foreword to this book, I was both honored and excited. I often speak to audiences about success, making the most of your life, finding balance and giving back, and have written a number of best sellers with these messages. So Brian and I clearly speak the same language. As I read the manuscript for *Life Lessons*, I realized the application of the lessons Brian shares, combined with enthusiasm and a positive attitude, have made all the difference in my career, and in my life.

My career in TV journalism began in the '70s—a time when there were only a handful of women on news programs. As a senior in college, still contemplating what to do with my life, a family friend said television stations were being pressured by the FCC to put women on their newscasts. I called the News Director, and was soon working as a full-time intern.

As I look back on my career, making that call was the most important thing I did, and it's a key trait in most successful people I've interviewed. They don't wait for

good things to happen, they seize opportunities and they make their own success! If you wait around for something great to happen, you could wait a lifetime.

I approached that first job with enthusiasm, a “key ingredient” in turning an opportunity into a success story. I got a lot of people coffee during that time, but I also made myself so valuable in the newsroom that when bigger opportunities came along, I was well positioned to take advantage of them. You have to be willing to say yes to opportunities, to venture out of your comfort zone and take some risks. Over time, the opportunities I said yes to would include local assignments as a weather girl, consumer reporter, news anchor and street reporter, and eventually co-host of *Good Morning America*.

People often ask me, “What was the hardest part of doing *Good Morning America* for 20 years?” I think the biggest challenge was to consistently project—day in and day out—a positive attitude and an exuberance for the day no matter what was happening in my life. I knew that my enthusiasm and my attitude was the first thing the viewer would be exposed to, even prior to the information I had to deliver.

A positive attitude has a tremendous impact on others, but it also has a powerful impact on you. The most important opinion you can possibly have is the one you have of yourself, and the most important things you say

all day long are those things you say to yourself. I truly believe that my positive attitude and my enthusiasm for life have been key elements in helping me get to the top of my profession and making it enjoyable along the way.

Brian is very excited to share *Life Lessons* with you. There is always such a need for inspiration in this world of ours, and you will be inspired by the lessons he shares. You will find amazing, real-life stories of those who dared to dream big and stay the course, despite doubters or adversity. I trust that you will enjoy and benefit from reading this book, just as I did, and I hope you will use it to create and live your best life.

Interestingly, much of my success today revolves around health, home and family. All those “little stories” that I learned in my early days have helped shape every area of my life. I hope they have that same effect on you.

JOAN LUNDEN

Television journalist, best-selling author,  
motivational speaker, and entrepreneur



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has been said that one learns something the best by teaching it. The research, writing, and editing of this book has enabled me to learn anew the life lessons contained herein.

I am eternally grateful for everyone whose efforts have enabled me to share this book with you:

All my mentors—including Jim Bonahoom, John Maxwell, Jim Rohn, and Brian Tracy—for teaching me their best lessons about business and life.

Dawn Dugan, who labored throughout the project, and without whom this book would not have been written.

My special friends who reviewed the book—Beth Anctil, Marti Cowman, Dave Dahlin, Cheryl Geesey, Amy Gillard, Michael Miller, and Bob Smith. They read what I thought was a pretty good book already, and constantly challenged me to improve it. *Life Lessons* is better because of their involvement.

Allyson Aabram, Suzi Deal, Michele DeFilippo, Kris Dulapa, and Ronda Rawlins, for their help at various stages of the project.

Joan Lunden, for believing in the project, and for her Foreword to this book.

And last, but not least, my wife Heidi, for her patience and support while I worked on the book, and her helpful suggestions along the way.

# INTRODUCTION

I have studied success my entire adult life. In the last 25 years, I have read hundreds of books and articles about people who have achieved greatness as inventors, artists, scientists, businesspeople, entertainers, and athletes. I have personally met and learned from Super Bowl champions, Olympic athletes, billionaire businessmen, Hollywood actors, and others who have reached the pinnacle of their professions.

My models for success aren't limited to people whose names you would recognize, because many of life's greatest inspirations are neither rich nor famous. They are seemingly ordinary people who have achieved great personal success in their marriages, or as parents, or serving others in a variety of ways. I continue to observe and learn how people create success, in every area of life.

Everyone loves a good secret, and I am constantly on the lookout for "secrets to success." I suspect that you, too, would enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to learn these "secrets." The fact is, while infomercials, magazines, and

marketing campaigns would have us believe otherwise, there are no secrets to success. If you're looking for a magic pill—something that can be quickly obtained and easily applied in order to create immediate success—you won't find it here. Or anywhere.

What I can offer you is this: While there are no “secrets to success,” there *are* certain immutable principles—“life lessons” if you will. This book is a compilation of those principles. By learning and applying the lessons contained in this book, you will greatly increase your likelihood of achieving success, however you define it.

*Life Lessons* is written for two groups of people. The first group is children, who are the future of the world. This book started out as a way to gather in one place the most important lessons I wanted my own children to learn. I hope you will be inspired to give this book to your children, and to the high school and college graduates in your life—that they will learn, embrace and apply these lessons, and that their lives will be better for having done so.

As much as *Life Lessons* started out as a book for young people, I realize that it also provides an opportunity for adults to learn these important principles for success. It is never too early to start learning these lessons, and it is never too late to begin applying them in your own life.

## Introduction

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As you read *Life Lessons*, I hope it will move you to create greater success in your life, and that your actions will make a positive impact in the world.

BRIAN BARTES

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SECTION I  
LIFE LESSONS

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**“These motivation tapes have really inspired me!  
I’m going to make a million dollars, buy my own company  
and retire early. Then I’m going to write a screenplay,  
cure a disease and give all the profits to charity.  
And tomorrow I’ll do even MORE!”**

CHAPTER 1

# DREAM BIG DREAMS

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*Cherish your visions and your dreams,  
as they are the children of your soul — the  
blueprints of your ultimate achievements.*

—NAPOLEON HILL

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## A CELL PHONE SALESMAN SINGS OPERA

It was March 17, 2007. Simon Cowell's new show, *Britain's Got Talent*, was holding auditions at the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff, Wales. Paul Potts, a 36-year-old cell phone salesman, strolled awkwardly onto the stage.

He stepped in front of the microphone, and stood nervously in the cheap suit he had just purchased for the audition. His appearance was further diminished by the sight of a chipped tooth, which was damaged in a childhood accident.



When he announced to the judges that he was going to sing opera, their eyes rolled in disbelief. Based on what they had seen so far, the judges and audience undoubtedly thought Potts was about to make a fool of himself. In fact, even Potts seemed to doubt his ability. After all, his only experience had been singing in the school and church choirs when he was younger. Later, he would

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*The great thing in this  
world is not so much  
where we stand as in what  
direction we are moving.*  
— Oliver Wendell Holmes

---

state that being bullied in school probably had an influence on his lack of self-confidence.

Then the tenor from south Wales opened his mouth, and started to sing.

Just 10 seconds into Giacomo Puccini's "Nessun Dorma," everyone knew they were listening to something quite extraordinary. Within 20 seconds, the audience of 2,000 began cheering loudly. By the end of the performance, many in the audience (and one of the judges) had been brought to tears by the amazing performance they had just witnessed. Potts received a standing ovation.

"Simply magical," said Simon Cowell. "Incredible," agreed fellow judge Piers Morgan. The third judge, Amanda Holden, was moved to tears, and said his voice had left her covered in goosebumps. "We were not expecting that," said Cowell.

Potts went on to win *Britain's Got Talent*, and performed later that year at the *Royal Variety Performance*, in front of Queen Elizabeth.

"By day, I sell mobile phones," said Paul Potts. "My dream is to spend my life doing what I feel that I was born to do . . . to sing opera."

## A BILLION SERVINGS OF CHICKEN SOUP

Mark Victor Hansen and Jack Canfield already had successful careers when their first *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book was published in 1983. Part of their early success in selling and professional speaking was due to the inspirational and motivational stories they would tell. By the time they gathered the collection of 101 stories that would comprise their first book, Hansen and Canfield had already created big dreams for *Chicken Soup for the Soul*.

Their initial dream was to sell 150,000 copies the first year and 1 million copies the second year. They hoped to

create a book that would make a huge difference in the world. But they far surpassed that dream. Before long, they had dozens of titles, and had sold over 50 million books.

Rather than resting on their laurels, they decided to create a bigger dream. They are now on a mission to sell

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*As long as you're going  
to be thinking anyway,*

**THINK BIG.**

—Donald Trump

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one billion *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books. So far, there are almost 200 *Chicken Soup* titles with more than 112 million books sold in more than 40 languages!

Hansen and Canfield wrote in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Living Your Dreams*: “We have learned that as soon as you commit to a big dream and really go after it, not only will your creative mind come up with big ideas to make it happen, you will also start attracting the people you need in your life to make your dream come true.”

## IT ALL BEGAN WITH A MOUSE

Walter Elias Disney grew up on a family farm in Marceline, Missouri. As a young boy, he loved to draw. Though money was tight and the chores needed to be done, his mother and older brother encouraged Walt to pursue his passion. After studying art and photography in high school, he took night classes at the Chicago Art Institute.

Walt’s dream was to become an animator and create a cartoon character that he would be remembered by. He based the character on a pet mouse he had while working in Kansas City. Walt named the mouse “Mortimer,” but his wife thought the name didn’t suit the mouse’s character. Walt renamed the character “Mickey Mouse.”

Today the name “Walt Disney” is synonymous with cutting-edge animation, award-winning entertainment, and quintessential theme parks. But back then Disney

was turned down for jobs and told he lacked talent. Since others wouldn't hire him, Walt started his own company. It soon went bankrupt. With only \$20 in his pocket, Walt headed to Hollywood to pursue his dreams.

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*All our dreams can  
come true, if we have the  
courage to pursue them.*

—Walt Disney

---

The rest is history. Walt Disney went on to become one of the largest influences in 20th century entertainment, and one

of the most prolific and well-known producers in the world. Disney dared to do what other animators didn't, and as a result became one of the industry's most important innovators.

Walt Disney proved that the largest dreams have no boundaries or timelines, and have the ability to positively impact others long after the dreamer is gone.

And it all started with a mouse . . . and a dream.

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*It Starts With a Dream*

If you ever want to learn about the concept of "dreaming big dreams," talk to a child. For children, no dream seems too big. When asked what they want to be when they grow up, kids say things like "I want to be a fireman," or "I want to be a doctor," or "I'm going to be an astronaut!"

When you talk to children about what they want to do, their responses have no boundaries. “I want to build the world’s tallest skyscraper.” “I want to eat ice cream on the moon.” “I want to dig to China!”

Kids grow up with heroes all around them. Some heroes play sports such as basketball, football, and golf. Others are “superheroes,” whose powers are limitless, and who appear larger than life on movie screens and in comic books. Even “ordinary” people are viewed as heroes by children whose parents, teachers, and other mentors have made a positive impact on their lives.

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*Dreams come a size too big  
so we can grow into them.*

— Author unknown

---

life on movie screens and in comic books. Even “ordinary” people are viewed as heroes by children whose

Children possess a beautiful innocence about the world. A refreshing naiveté of what is truly possible.

Of course, our child-like perception of the world changes as we grow older. Those with good intentions start to “protect” us from the harsh realities of our world today. At first, they explain that our dreams *might not* come true. They mean well as they prepare us for the possibility of failure, and soften the blow of inevitable defeat.

As children grow up, they are advised by those around them to forego goals and dreams that get labeled as “unrealistic” at best, or “impossible” at worst. They are encouraged to pursue a more conservative life path than

the one described in their dreams. “Settle down and find a job,” they are advised. “Preferably something dependable, with a regular paycheck and health insurance.”

All the while, the unsupportive messages seep into their subconscious. They are reinforced by experiences which tend to support the idea that dreaming big dreams is a path to disappointment.

Eventually, most people let their dreams die. They are consoled by others who have traveled down a similar road. Their dreams for the future get tucked into the past, together with their Lego® toys and their astronaut uniform.

### *Hold Onto Your Dreams*

Your dreams are seeds that grow and take on a life of their own. They inspire you to take the actions necessary to make them come true. The more you dream, the more you are inspired. The more inspired you are, the more actions you take. This continues, until one morning you wake up to find that your dream has come true.

Everything great that has ever been accomplished started with a dream. Here are a few examples:

- Katie Couric dreamed of becoming a news anchor. She held onto her dream, even after being pulled off the air by a CNN executive who told her she had no future. After co-hosting the *Today Show* for 15 years, Couric

became the first solo female news anchor for a major network's nightly news. She also became the highest paid news anchor at the time, earning a reported \$15 million per year.

- Jim Carrey dreamed of being a successful Hollywood movie star. Long before he was famous, Carrey wrote a check to himself for \$10 million. On the memo line, he wrote "For Services Rendered." He carried the check in his wallet for years, occasionally pulling it out to remind himself of his dream. Carrey's dream eventually came true, making him one of the highest-paid entertainers in the movie business.
- Mary Kay Ash "envisioned a company in which any woman could become just as successful as she wanted to be. The doors would be wide open to opportunity for women who were willing to pay the price and had the courage to dream." Although Ash sold only \$1.50 in products at her first beauty show, she never lost sight of her commitment to making life better for women. Today, Mary Kay® is one of the world leaders in the beauty care industry. More importantly, the company continues to inspire, enrich, and empower women to achieve their potential and bring their dreams to life.

What do all of these people have in common? They dreamed big dreams, and they held onto those dreams until they came true. This is a characteristic common in all great achievement. David McClelland, a Harvard psychologist who has studied high achievers, has concluded that people who are successful have one thing in common: they are constantly dreaming about how to achieve their goals.

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*Go confidently in the  
direction of your dreams.*

Take a few minutes right now to define your dream. Think about what

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*Live the life you have imaged.*  
—Henry David Thoreau

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life would be like if you accomplished it. If you don't know where to begin, start by asking yourself these questions:

- If you could be, do, or have anything in the world, what would you want?
- What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?

### *Commit to Your Dream*

In his well-known book on success, *Oh, The Places You'll Go*, Dr. Seuss introduces something he calls "The Waiting Place." This is the place where many people become stuck. They don't have the courage to pursue their dream, because they are afraid of failing. They know they need to do something,



but fear and indecision keeps them stuck in neutral. Deep down they think their dreams are unrealistic or silly, or

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*The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.*

—Eleanor Roosevelt

---

they just don't think they have it in them to do what it takes to succeed.

How do you get out of the waiting place? By fully committing to the pursuit of your

dreams. Once you have defined your dream, you must decide that you are going to go for it, and that nothing is going to stop you.

### *Create an Action Plan*

In order to accomplish your dreams, you must develop a step-by-step plan for getting from where you are to where you want to be. Write down everything that will have to happen to make your dream a reality. Here are some things to consider:

- **A timeframe.** How long will it take to realize your dream?
- **Action steps.** What has to be done, and when will you complete each step?
- **Resources.** How will you accomplish each step? Who else needs to be involved? What support structures will need to be in place?

- **Measurement.** The old adage, “what gets measured, gets done” is true. How will you evaluate your progress?

This is the point at which many people put all of this information “in a box” to be taken out at a “more convenient time.” Don’t be one of those people because, for most of them, that time never comes. Instead of putting this information away, act on it right now. You may have to move outside your comfort zone to take the first few steps, and it’s quite likely you’ll encounter challenges. Climb over them, go around them, dig under them, or knock them down.

Remember, everyone who accomplished their dreams started right where you are today. If you continue to take action in the direction of your ideal life, you’ll eventually realize your dreams.

### *Encourage Others to Dream Big, Too*

It’s so easy for people to let their dreams die. It happens all the time, for a variety of reasons. Dreams are easily dismissed by those around us, which can cause people to let their dreams go.

Don’t add to this phenomenon. Don’t be a naysayer, someone who dampens the dreams of those around you. Instead, encourage others to dream big, too. Talk to those around you about their goals and aspirations.

Ask them questions, listen to their responses, and provide the kind of support that will inspire them in the pursuit of their dream. Your encouragement will not

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*The only place where your dream becomes impossible is in your own thinking.*

—Robert H. Schuller

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only help them, but it will inspire you, as well.

Here are a few famous people whose encouragement by others made all the difference in their success:

- Marine life artist Wyland was encouraged by his first-grade teacher, who told him he could be a great artist.
- Ray Charles was encouraged by a local pianist named Wylie Pitman to pursue his dream of playing the piano, despite the fact he was blind.
- Babe Ruth was an orphan who was encouraged by the orphanage priest to pursue professional baseball.

Where would we be as a society if these people had not been encouraged by others? When a dream goes unfulfilled, it's a huge loss not only for the dreamer, but for those around them, and perhaps even for the world.

### *What Is Your Dream?*

Neil Armstrong dreamed of landing on the moon. Thomas Edison dreamed of creating a simple and inexpensive

source of light. The Wright brothers dreamed of flying a powered machine. Bill Gates dreamed about a computer on every desk and in every home.

What is *your* big dream . . . and what will you do *today* to make it come true?

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*When you want something,  
all the universe conspires in  
helping you to achieve it.*

— Paulo Coelho

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## LIFE LESSONS

- ✓ Take out a piece of paper, and write down the answer to the following questions: If you could be, do, or have anything in the world, what would you want? What would you attempt to do if you could not fail?
- ✓ Resolve today that you are going to make your dreams a reality, and that nothing is going to stop you. Write down everything that will have to happen in order for you to make your dreams come true.
- ✓ What one action can you take today toward realizing your dreams? Whatever your answer, do it now!

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For more stories about people who dream big dreams, visit Brian Bartes's *Life Lessons* blog:  
**[www.lifelessonsthebook.com/blog](http://www.lifelessonsthebook.com/blog)**

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If you would like to set up a speaking engagement for Brian Bartes, please contact him at the above number, or via email.

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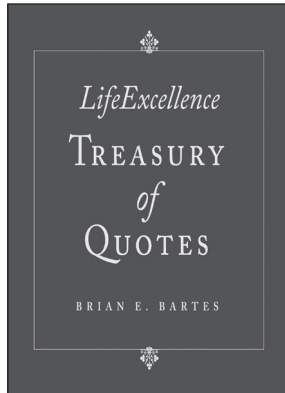
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