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SPECIAL EDITION

Living Your Dreams

Chicken Soup for the Soul

Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen

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♥ 10th Anniversary Special Edition

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Mark Victor Hansen

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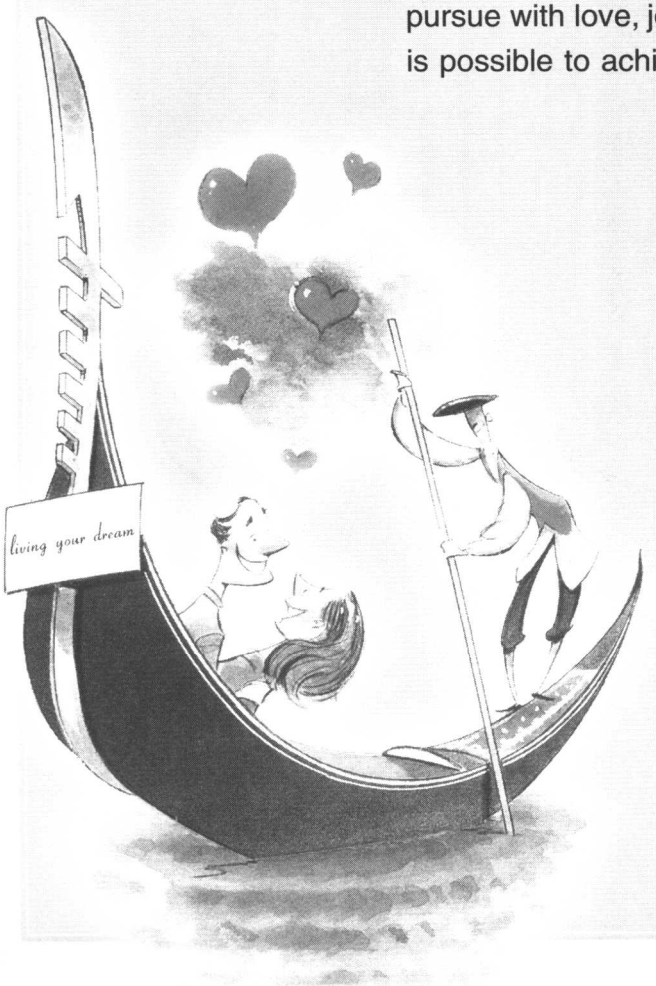
We dedicate this book to everyone who has had the courage and commitment to pursue their most heartfelt dreams with passion and perseverance. By your example you have shown the rest of us that whatever you desire, believe in, and pursue with love, joy and determination is possible to achieve.



Introduction

Congratulations. You've just picked up a book that could significantly change your life forever. You hold in your hands a blueprint for creating any success and achieving any dream you want—a better lifestyle, more interesting work, greater abundance, financial freedom, more meaningful and fulfilling relationships, a healthier body, and more frequent and enjoyable leisure activities.

Living your dream is always the result of information, inspiration and perspiration. This unique book contains the first two; you will have to supply the third. We will teach you a ten-step blueprint for making any dream you have come true. It doesn't matter if that dream is in the arena of wealth, health, sports, relationships, spiritual growth, education, travel, politics or social change. The same principles and techniques for making a dream come true apply at home, school, work, church and in the larger community.

You will also find 60 *Chicken Soup* stories that will inspire you to believe that anything is possible—and you'll be motivated to turn your heartfelt dreams into your daily reality.

We believe that living your dreams is as simple as completing one of those connect-the-dots puzzles you find in the

Sunday newspaper. If you just start at number one and keep connecting the dots, eventually you solve the puzzle. Dreams are like that, too. It's simply a matter of moving from point to point until you achieve your dream.

You Can Have the Life You Dream About

We have spent over thirty years studying America's most successful people—including those who are considered the world's greatest experts on success. We've applied what we have learned to our own lives. And the result is that we live the kind of magical lives most people would think are attainable only by the few. But we know that anyone who ardently desires to succeed, and is willing to apply themselves, can attain these same levels of success. How do we know with such certainty? Because we have taught these principles and techniques to hundreds of thousands of people just like you in our seminars and workshops, and we have watched them become star athletes, start and grow phenomenal businesses, become leaders in their fields, achieve millions of dollars in net worth, create dream relationships with their spouses and children, heal life threatening diseases, solve seemingly intractable social problems and achieve a happy balance between work and family.

It doesn't matter where you live, how old you are, what your level of education, or how much money you currently have. As you'll see in the inspirational stories that follow this first chapter, none of that matters. All that matters is that you are willing to decide what you want, believe you can have it, learn the principles of success, apply them to your life, persevere through the tough times, and never give up. You can literally have the life you dream of—if you are willing to pay

the price of learning, assimilating and applying a few basic principles and developing a few powerful disciplines over time.

Read the Book Twice

We suggest that you read this book twice—once for a general overview and for the inspiration and insights you will get from the stories. Then read this first chapter a second time and begin to write down your goals, write out your affirmations, make time to visualize your ideal life, create or join a Dream Team, and utilize all the other techniques that we teach you.

This book contains a success system that never fails—if you put it into practice. All it requires to work is for you to work it. We are excited about the new possibilities that this will open up for you. And we are eager to hear from you once you start living your dream. Please write to us and share your successes. We look forward to hearing from you.

Have a great adventure, and remember to enjoy the ride as well as the destination.

Love to you!

— Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen

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1

HOW TO LIVE YOUR DREAM

The human spirit cannot be paralyzed. If you are breathing, you can dream.

—Mike Brown



How to Live Your Dream

In our dreams we all aspire to be, do and have great things. Yet most of us simply aren't creating the results we want. We don't have enough money, romance, success or joy in our lives. What we need to understand is that greatness exists in all of us, but it is up to us to pull it out of ourselves. It is true that we all have genius. We just need to learn how to apply our genius.

This book is divided into ten sections that parallel the ten strategies that you will need to employ to successfully live your dreams. Each one is an important piece of the overall system that will take you from where you are to where you want to be. Let's get started.

Step 1. Decide What You Want

The indispensable first step
to getting things you want out of life
is this: Decide what you want.
—Ben Stein, actor and author

In order to get what you want, you must first decide what you want. Most people get stuck at this crucial first step because they simply can't see how it's possible to get what they want—so they don't

even let themselves want it. Don't sabotage yourself that way! What we now know about how the brain works is that you must first decide WHAT you want, before your brain can figure out HOW to get it.

Be willing to dream big dreams

Always dream and shoot higher than you know you can do. Don't bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to be better than yourself.

—William Faulkner



When the two of us decided to write *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, we had a big dream. We wanted to create a book that would change millions of lives. Our dream was to sell 150, 000 copies the first year and a million copies by the end of the following year. We were thinking number one on the bestseller lists from the very beginning. We wanted to touch as many lives as possible—to make a big difference in the world. Our corporate mission statement is to inspire and empower people to live their highest vision in a context of love and joy. Through the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books we wanted to heal and change the world one story at a time. It was a big dream.

Later, after selling 50 million books, we decided to make the dream bigger. We created what we call our "2020 Vision"— to sell one billion *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books worldwide and raise 500 million dollars for charity by the year 2020. So far we are approaching 70 titles with almost 90 million copies sold in 39 languages, and almost 4 million dollars contributed to charity.

Two years ago, we set the goal to sell one million books in one day. The main purpose was just to stretch our thinking. We realized if

we were going to sell one billion books by 2020, we were going to have to pick up the pace. Only a few weeks later we were at the Book ExpoAmerica in Chicago. Jack was riding the bus taking people back to their hotels when he learned the woman sitting next to him was the head buyer for the WH Smith Stores—the chain that sells books and magazines at airports.

When Jack shared our goal of selling one million books in one day, she quickly said, "I can help you do that! "She then helped formulate an elaborate plan of creating book signings in all of the airport bookstores across the country. It would start early in the morning in the East Coast airports—O'Hare, JFK, Newark, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Dulles, Atlanta, Miami and Orlando—and then follow the sun first to the Midwest and eventually the West Coast. We would find an airline partner that would fly all of the *Chicken Soup* coauthors from airport to airport taking advantage of the peak rush times, thus reaching millions of potential buyers in one day.

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 into your life to make your dream come true. Big dreams inspire you and others to want to play all out. So let your dreams be as big as you want them to be.

Set Goals That Will Stretch You

Another value in giving yourself permission to go after the big dreams is that big dreams require you to grow in order to achieve them. In fact, in the long run, that is the greatest benefit you will receive from pursuing your dreams: mastery over your life. It is not just about the material benefits you receive (the car, the house, the

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