

In Pursuit of Excellence

P u r s u e y o u r d r e a m w i t h p a s s i o n .



by Michael Jordan

I HAVE THE GOAL OF BEING the best, but I approach everything step by step using short-term goals. When I meet one goal, I set another reasonable goal I can achieve if I work hard. Each success leads to the next one. Each time I visualize where I want to be and what kind of person and player I want to become. I approach it with the end in mind. I know exactly where I want to go, and I focus on getting there. As I reach those goals, I gain a little more confidence. It's all mental for me. I never write anything down. I just concentrate on the next step.

I'm not afraid to ask anybody anything. Why should I be afraid? My attitude is "Help me; give me direction."

I could apply that approach to anything I might do. It's no different for the person whose goal is to become a doctor. All those steps are like pieces of a puzzle. They all come together to form a picture. If it's complete, you reach your goal. If not, don't get down on yourself.

Don't Think About Failure

I never look at the consequences of failing. Because when you think about

the consequences, you always think of a negative result. If I'm jumping into any situation, I'm thinking I'm going to be successful—not about what happens if I fail.

Some people get frozen by fear of failure by thinking about the possibility of a negative result. They might be afraid of looking bad or being embarrassed. I realized that if I was going to



achieve anything in life, I had to be aggressive. I had to get out there and go for it. I don't believe you can achieve anything by being passive.

I know fear is an obstacle for some people, but to me it's an illusion. Any fear is an illusion. You think something is standing in your way, but nothing is there—only an opportunity to do your

best and gain some success.

If it turns out my best isn't good enough, then at least I'll never be able to look back and say I was too afraid to try. Maybe I just didn't have it. Maybe I just wasn't good enough. There's nothing wrong with that and nothing to be afraid of either. Failure always made me try harder the next time.

My advice is "think positive" and "find fuel in failure." Sometimes failure gets you closer to where you want to be. The greatest inventions in the world had hundreds of failures before answers were found.

Fear sometimes comes from a lack of focus or concentration. If you know you are doing the right things, just relax and perform. Forget about the outcome. You can't control anything anyway.

When you make a presentation in business, you may do all the things necessary, but then it's out of your hands. Either the clients like the presentation, or they don't. It's up to the client or the buyer. So don't worry about it.

I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying. It doesn't matter if you win as long as you give everything in your heart and work at it 110 percent. If you put in the work, the results will

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The Art of Well-Being

Own your inspiration.



by Karen A. Dahlman

HOW OFTEN DO YOU WAIT for the muse of inspiration to knock on your door?

Sure, inspiration will eventually make its rounds, but you can also increase your experiences of inspiration by creating them yourself. You can access and create inspiration from within your own being, all the while augmenting your current sources of inspiration.

The word *inspiration* is derived from the Latin root *spirare*, meaning, *breathe* and the preposition in yielding the meaning to breathe out or into. Thus, to be inspired, you must learn to focus on your inner world from where all your actions, reactions and experiences emanate. How do you achieve this focus? Here are six steps you can take:

1. Demystify inspiration. During moments of inspiration, a connection between your conscious and your unconscious is established. At these moments, your unconscious comes through unhindered. Inspiration slips in when you allow the flow of breath (creative energy) to connect the unconscious with the conscious. This happens when you surrender for a moment, let go of outcome and breathe. Often the most inspiring moments occur when you learn to remove yourself from the outcome.

2. Take responsibility. You must actively work to become inspired and you can only feel inspired if you have your heart tuned in properly. This means you must actively participate on an internal level with whatever you feel might inspire you (artwork, music, literature, sports).

3. Debunk the anguish myth. It is often believed that the inspired life requires pain. This is a farce. Inspiration can come out of hardship, but it is not necessary. Inspiration flows when your consciousness removes its guard and your unconscious has a turn. When you feel stuck while working on something, stop and breathe. Take a break from it. Do not fight it and create unnecessary turmoil. Instead, take a moment and reframe your thoughts

about your project. See it as flowing smoothly out of you, not to you.

4. Have patience. A gestation period is associated with inspiration. Provide a conducive atmosphere. Inspiration can't be forced or controlled. However, you can make an effort to bring it about by being patient, while you feed your inner world by taking notice of inspirational moments. You can receive more inspiration when you understand that these gifts may not be packaged as you wish them to be.

5. Capture the moment. Keep a visual or written journal of inspirational memories and inspiring thoughts, poems and pictures. Be in the habit of carrying paper and pen with you at all times because you never know when insights, reveries and the "ah ha" experience will occur. By providing attention to these experiences, you are sending a message to your inner world and unconscious mind to create more of these events within your life.

6. Breathe. Remember to breathe. Pause. This small pause, when you remember to "breathe into", allows you to let go of conscious control, and allow the unconscious its space to maneuver. Breathe. Remember to breathe into. Pause. Give credence to your inner musings. Remind yourself to make contact with the inner world first, allowing your behaviors to enter the outer world as they flow from your inner world thoughts. Think and feel before you respond. Take that extra breath before you react or speak. This will make a difference in what you say and how you say it.

By listening, supporting and giving attention to your inner world, you will create increased moments of inspiration. True genius is born from the pathways of inspiration. You will become this genius when you own your inspiration. ♥

Karen A. Dahlman is founder and CEO of Creative Visions Consulting, Inc. and author at www.creativevisionspublications.com

ACTION: Seek more inspiration.

SPORTS / SPIRIT

Spirit & Sport

Team is not a one-man show.



by Phil Jackson

WHEN I WAS NAMED head coach of the Chicago Bulls in 1989, my dream was not just to win championships, but to do it in a way that wove together my two passions: basketball and spiritual exploration.

Intuitively I sensed that there was a link between spirit and sport. Besides, winning at any cost didn't interest me. From my years as a member of the championship New York Knicks, I'd learned that winning is ephemeral. Yes, victory is sweet, but it doesn't make life any easier the next season or even the next day. After the cheering crowds disperse you have to start all over again.

In basketball—as in life—true joy comes from being fully present in each moment. The day I took over the Bulls, I vowed to create an environment based on principles of selflessness and compassion. I knew that the only way to win consistently was to give everybody a vital role on the team. I wanted to build a team that would blend individual talent with

group consciousness.

Working with the Bulls and Lakers, I've learned that the most effective way to forge a winning team is to call on the players' need to connect with something larger than themselves. Even for those who don't consider themselves "spiritual" in a conventional sense, creating a successful team—whether it's an NBA champion or a record-setting sales force—is essentially a spiritual act. It requires the individuals involved to surrender their self-interest for the greater good.

When you free players to use all their resources—mental, physical, and

spiritual—an interesting shift occurs. When players are mindful of what's happening, they not only play better and win more, they also become more attuned with each other. And the joy they experience working in harmony is a powerful motivating force that

comes from deep within, not from some frenzied coach pacing the sidelines, shouting obscenities.

Since a team is not a one-man show, you need to transcend the divisive forces of the ego that cripple many gifted players and embrace a vision in which the group imperative takes precedence over individual glory. ♥

Phil Jackson is head coach of the LA Lakers and coauthor with Hugh Delahanty of Sacred Hoops (Hyperion), from which this article is adapted.

ACTION: Be fully present in each moment and aware of those around you.

