

Life Manual

Foreword by Jeff Allen

In 1990 I came to a crossroads in my life, as many people do. I had a choice between continuing my independent lifestyle and doing what I wanted, or choosing to be with my wife and two young children. Needless to say, one direction seemed to promise freedom and the other seemed like certain slavery, but somehow deep within myself I recognised that maybe there was another truth. I also knew that the truth and myself had long been separated.

Then it dawned on me that this choice was not about freedom versus slavery but about courage. Until this moment in my life I had believed I was fearless. I had sailed oceans, been reckless in business, and performed fantastic acts. I had no idea how much cowardice all these activities had hidden, and I had no idea about true courage, the courage I needed when I turned and faced myself. Finally, when I faced my buried emotional state, the hidden aspect that I had been running from most of my life, I saw that I had been running from my original family. I realised that to be successful, I needed to see things differently, to learn a new way to approach my world in order to find the peace and happiness I craved. Being a practical person, I needed something quick and effective and I found that in Psychology of Vision.

And in Psychology of Vision I got a lot more than I bargained for.

When I entered the field of self-discovery, I realised there are many books making many promises about changing our lives. They seemed to promise a leap from zero to hero, an easy way to find true love, get a great job, win a million pounds, lose weight, grow hair and never suffer again. As I looked around it seemed to me that most of these books have helped a little, for a while, and maybe some have helped a lot. But typically, like diets, without an inhuman degree of will power, discipline and acceptance that life is basically dull, they do not work and we all return to our former unreconstructed selves. For most of us, the thrill of meditation wears off, we forget to visualise the day ahead, our goal setting wears a little thin and the list of perfect qualities of our perfect partner is in the bin next to the torn up decree nisi.

I soon understood that most of us have not grown up in loving bonded families, and so we live lives of struggle and pain, or independence and dissociation, often protected by a solid layer of cynicism. Rather than try to modify our behaviour, I believe we need to look more deeply at the hidden patterns, raise them to consciousness, and make new choices. Our behaviour then automatically changes and we live a more loving and effective life. As we recreate the bonding in our original families, we recreate the unity in our minds, and vice versa. We know when we have done this, because we then have a life of success with ease, without so many buried aspects of ourselves that work to our apparent disadvantage.

I found through Psychology of Vision, the inspiration and willingness to look at my fundamental unhelpful patterns, and I found permanent change. I hoped my search would improve my relationship with my wife, and I discovered it also changed my relationship with my kids, my job, and everything else too. To my engineering brain, I was offered effective and practical solutions that naturally engaged me in a powerful and transformational learning

experience. I feel in love with people and life again and count myself amongst the many people who have experienced deep and profound changes in their lives.

Now that I have entered the profession myself and coach and lead workshops, it seems the list of broken promises in the self-development movement is both long and expensive. And I say this as a member of that community. During many years of being involved in this work, I have made and broken some of those promises myself. I believe this book comes out of the honesty and maturity of what it takes to truly live a great and powerful life. To keep things in perspective I remind myself of what was written by a former president of the Association of Humanistic Psychology, Floyd Matson:

"What we were against was man's inhumanity to man, everywhere in the world but specifically in the laboratories and consulting rooms of our profession. And what we were for was the humanity of man in those same places. In the labs of the humanists, analysis gave up its priority to synthesis; in their clinics, diagnosis gave way to dialogue. To be humanistic meant, amongst other things, to be holistic, to see man as a whole; not as pure reason, not as a mere mechanism, but as a unity of heart, mind, and even spleen."

We are, you are, a mighty force. Statistics about the human being simply on the physical level are phenomenal. Each of us has more potential nerve connection combinations in the human brain than there are particles of matter in the whole universe. If you counted the nerve connections on the surface of the brain at a rate of three a second it would take you thirty three million years [Susan Greenfield]. And that's just the brain. Probably we were meant to do a little more than get a job, sit in traffic, and save up to spend a couple of weeks in the sun. In my experience, there is awesome power and energy in each and every one of us. There are gifts and capabilities within us that can transcend the laws of nature, space and time. We need to find the courage to uncover these gifts, because in the end, nothing else will really satisfy us.

As the wise know, the real issue is not our fear of problems or of being inadequate, but our fear of our power and what is truly possible for us. You cannot expect to change something as powerful and mighty as you are without encountering resistance and fear. This book understands that. It is built on decades of experience of working with human minds all round the planet. It takes you through every step that is necessary to really engage with yourself in a way that means you have, truly, got a life.

The Greek philosopher Socrates said, 'An unexamined life is not worth living', and he was onto something. But an examined life can change the world.

When you find the courage to change at deep levels then change is permanent. All the promises made by all the self-development and personal growth movements do then come true. Every problem in your life can be solved. There is nothing on earth that cannot be healed. But this book in itself will not change you. Nothing can change you, except you.

So this is not a book with glib answers to huge questions. It recognises your power and your sophistication; it goes into the deepest parts of your mind. And it guides you through the traps, self-defeating patterns and sabotage that stop life being lived to the full. This book sets out to teach transformational methods that help to peel back the layers of our minds and

In this book we hope to remove the blocks to living a life of fulfilment; to help find the purpose which is essential to our human experience, so that each of us can realise what it is that we uniquely can do and give to others, the earth and ourselves. To find our purpose in life we must find meaning in everything we have experienced so far, for if we don't we will live a life of quiet desperation surrounded by fear. But when we do find meaning, we will recognise that we have been pointed in a purposeful direction. For most of my life I couldn't even conceive of this possibility for myself, so I have also gained a profound gratitude for all that has happened to me. Through our change, we start to live a life of love and peace, for that is what is essential about us.

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