

A Path to Excellence

The Blueprint for Achieving Your Greatest Potential

Tony Jeton Selimi

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To you, the growth seeker, the change-maker, the student, the visionary entrepreneur, the business owner, the leader, and the dreamer who seeks answers to life's greatest mysteries and solutions to life's greatest adversities. To all of you who turn to self-mastery as a way to face head-on all of your challenges, fears, hardships, and nightmares that may otherwise cripple the development of your human potential.

To the curious aspiring athlete, musician, scientist, doctor, father, mother, son, daughter, and friend who is ready to face all that stops you from making your dreams happen with excellence leading the way. My loved ones, worldwide friends, teachers, clients, students, and fans seeking a way out of an undesired situation and wanting to learn empowering ways of thinking, living, and being. Those of you pursuing more imaginative ways to help you climb to greater heights, ensure your fulfillment in every step you take, and reach excellence in your chosen area. It is how you grow your influence, worth and service.

To the leaders, business owners, professionals, truth-seekers, educators, health, and other professionals searching for tools and solutions to consciously overcome the ever-growing personal, professional, business, and global problems.

To the excellence-hungry individuals who pursue to harmonize material and spiritual intelligence and awaken themselves to a life of unprecedented achievements, freedom, and fulfillment. To those ready to awaken dormant parts of your magnificent being, upgrade your psychology to recover pathways to excellence, and embrace universal truths and the wholeness existing in each of us. Through self-reflection, you'll find that all of you want to inspire decisive action and life-changing transformation in others, with excellence leading the way. Many people who wait to seek a way out of an unwanted situation may be angry, frustrated, and stuck. If this is you, you have decided to invest the energy, time, and resources needed to gain self-mastery and awaken those dormant parts of your being that can help you create extraordinary life experiences. It is how you will feel empowered, loved, and triumphant.

Lastly, to my family, my partner, Dr. Sc. Todorche Stamenov, and my spirit, who volunteered for this assignment and continues to guide me to its ongoing unfolding and fruition.

## Acknowledgments

A book is always the result of all the experiences that simultaneously happen in our inner and outer reality. It would have been impossible to write this book without the love, support, and lifelong contribution from all the people who have been part of my life since the day I was born. It has been assembled from years of learning and unlearning, overcoming one challenge after another, and finding my calling, place, and role in the world.

The book embodies my lifelong quest for unraveling life's mysteries through continuous study and research into different life disciplines and philosophies. I acquired this knowledge by consulting thousands of business owners and people from all professional backgrounds that I now use to help people break through addictions, fears, phobias, health problems, relationship problems, mental health and identity crises, and leadership challenges. It also encompasses the knowledge I've gained through building a successful career in technology and leading and managing complex and large-scale multi-million-billion technology upgrade programs and software solutions. I feel blessed to have broadened my mental horizons from the books of thousands of authors I've studied, the writers of many of the blogs that I have read, the talks, workshops, retreats I have held, and the teachers' seminars I've attended.

We form unique relationships with people we date, get engaged to and marry, socialize with, learn from, and work with. Some touched my heart profoundly, and others challenged me to my core and turned my world upside down. For those who know me, I want to thank you for being the wind beneath my wings that helps me fly to higher grounds so that I can walk my path to excellence and fulfill my ever-evolving mission in life.

Your kindness, authenticity, and unconditional love helped heal my wounds, find my place in the world, and ensure my adventurous, freedom, and growth-seeking soul is never tamed. I would love to express gratitude to my partner, Dr. Sc. Todorche Stamenov, whose courage to leave behind all he once knew for love epitomizes what the road to achieving excellence is all about. Observing you overcome challenge after challenge, battling with your inner demons, and altruistically working during the COVID-19 global pandemic to save many lives inspired me to write this book. In seeing how selflessly you give your all for the one you love and to help others live, you've taught me, our families, our friends, and the nation the meaning of unconditional love. Thank you for all you do for others, for us, and for humanity. I love you for every moment we have shared, the good and the bad, and every argument and disagreement, dancing, smiling, dining, cooking, exercising, and traveling we've ever had. I am thankful for being a source of constructive criticism, immense inspiration, love, and wisdom.

To my late parents, Shaqir and Ljutvije Selimi, and my most avid supporters. There are not enough words to describe the caring, devotion, strength, patience, and unconditional love you've shown me and all of my siblings throughout our lives. Without the support and challenges you gave me, I would not be who I am today.

Mum, you taught me many life skills, you stood by my hospital bed when I was fighting for my life, and you instilled in me the importance of integrity, love, and speaking my truth. You created a healthy foundation in me of what love is and is not. You embedded the hierarchy of values that, to date, I embrace and continue to evolve on my journey to attaining personal excellence. Your life has been an inspiration to me and everyone who knew you.

Dad, you ensured that I spoke a few languages, had the best education one could wish

for, and taught me treasured business and entrepreneurial skills that prepared me for overcoming every storm life throws at me as I journey into attaining the gifts of excellence. You both dedicated your life's work for my siblings and me to have an education and a better chance for a healthy, meaningful, and fulfilling life.

Although the civil war separated us physically for almost ten years, I am blessed to have always had a mental, spiritual, and heart connection that transcends time and space with you. I trust that my love, appreciation, and gratitude to you both for all the love you have given me is captured in this book, written with a heart calling to help others climb to greater heights and transcend to higher levels of awareness.

This book is my way of honoring and appreciating you both and our ancestors, families, friends, clients, teachers, colleagues, journalists, event organizers, global leaders, and readers. My long childhood dream of making a worldwide difference and pursuing a path to excellence against all odds led me to create unimaginable breakthroughs and put me on a mission to travel globally and teach others what I have learned so that more people can achieve their full potential.

This is my gift to every human being who has ever felt the icy touch of not being good enough, not having enough wealth, and not feeling worthy of reaching their fullest potential. This is a gift to those whose lives have been affected by the fear of being abandoned, judged, rejected, and unloved. I dedicate it to the thousands of people who have been part of my journey, particularly Elgerta Ismailaj, Anila Gremi Krushova, Nora Rodriguez, Tammy De Mirza, Dr. Pietro Emanuele Garbelli, Paul McMonagle, Yavuz Altun, Ibrahim, Janet Uribe, Maria Lopez, Sue Bannister, Bernard, Valentin Petreski, Maja Aceski, Nazim Rashidi, Rita Behadini, Fadil Çitaku, Qëndresa, and Neo Brahimi Nikolla, Zërijeta Jajaga, and the global businesses, individuals, and VIP clients I have had the pleasure of assisting through my integrated coaching and mentoring business.

I have been blessed to learn, be supported, and be challenged by extraordinary people. A big thank you to Joe Dispenza, Tony Robbins, Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, Steve Harrison, Daniel and Andrew Priestley, Mindy Gibbins-Klein, Deepak Chopra, Brian Tracey, Jack Canfield, Gary Vaynerchuk, Lewis Howes, Dr. John Demartini, and the many other excellent teachers, leaders, and change-makers. Your determination, callings, and vision in life have been paramount for me to continue my quest for excellence, discover life's truth, and teach what I learn to help others climb to greater heights. Your lessons have significantly confirmed that I am on the right track, leading others by being authentic, objective, and mindful. They can expand their human potential and excel in all life endeavors. I thank you, and I love you.

Thank you to the hundreds of people who have interviewed me on their TV and radio, shows and podcasts and to every person who has written about me in their blogs, magazines, and newspapers. Thank you all for your time, for what you do, and for the unwavering support to help me keep my promise to educate, inspire, and transform your audience's perceptions so they are encouraged to function at their best. Every conversation and interview has planted a seed and ignited an idea in your viewers', listeners', and readers' heads. It has brought inspiration, saved lives, and given hope to billions of people from all walks of life to reach excellence and be all they can be.

My thanks go to the millions of readers of my multi-award-winning and multiple-times best-selling books: *A Path to Wisdom*, *#Loneliness*, *Fit for Purpose Leadership #3*, *The Unfakeable Code®*, and *Novum #10*. Thank you for taking the time to share your heart-wrenching stories with me, the breakthroughs each of the books helped you create, and the

Amazon reviews that inspired positive action in others.

Thank you to all people worldwide who have supported and challenged me in this journey to bring and share the message of hope, inspiration, love, and transformation. To John Corcoran of the John Corcoran Foundation and Nick Nanton, Esquire, of DNAFilms for the opportunity to be an executive producer in the new eye-opening documentary, *The Truth About Reading: The Invisible Crisis Hiding In Plain Sight*.

This book would not have been possible without my reviewers, my publisher, and the entire team of book experts and their capability and support that transformed my manuscript. They turned it into a life, a business, and a wise-to-have personal, professional, and business excellence guide for millions of people worldwide.

Thanks are also due to many of my clients for offering their stories, recollections, and testimonials and providing expert commentary and insights. Most of the people mentioned in my book have wholeheartedly shared their personal stories and have permitted me to use their names. I have deliberately changed or withheld the names of a few celebrity VIP clients to safeguard their privacy. Please accept my appreciation anonymously.

This book would not have been possible without the many months spent in lockdown, working long hours, and the commitment and consistency. It took sleepless nights, sacrifices, and discipline for my mind, body, soul, and heart to work in synchronicity so that this book could come to fruition. Thank you, and I love you.

Finally, may the rippling effect of *A Path to Excellence* and *The Octagon of Excellence* and its eight transformational principles help people achieve their potential and climb to greater heights. May this information be passed from generation to generation so, as a species, we can support each other on our journey to grow into our fullest potential and safeguard the sanctity of human life as we venture into space and make new waves.

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## About the Author

Tony Selimi was born on December 12, 1969, in Gostivar, Northern Macedonia. From an early age, his mother made sure he wore leg braces to correct a congenital disability. At the age of five, unbeknownst to his parents, he was sexually abused, and at nine, he was stricken by an illness that left him hospitalized. He fought for his life for almost two years.

If that was not enough, when he started high school in Skopje, he was bullied, threatened, and persistently told he would never achieve anything in life. Despite all the hardships, his academic prowess paved the way for him to graduate from high school with the highest marks and be accepted to study at one of the top engineering universities in Zagreb, Croatia. Having finished his first year at university, at the age of nineteen, against his free will, he was conscripted into the former Yugoslav army to fight a civil war he, deep down in his soul, despised.

As the war continued to spread across other parts of former Yugoslavia, his life was miraculously saved by his commander, Grbovič Luka, who saw the deceit in the Yugoslav army and government. With the help of his late mother, who followed her motherly instinct and borrowed money to buy him a one-way flight to London, he found himself homeless, hopeless, and worthless.

These early challenges set the scene for a remarkable transformation during his late teens, his twenties, and the rest of his life. Tony used all that pained him to catalyze a profound change by awakening an inspired vision to use all he learned to help others overcome the obstacles that falsely stop people from accomplishing their wildest dreams. His calling for traveling the world to positively impact people's lives and achieve more extraordinary professional, business, and leadership success kept him focused on his ongoing journey to educate, grow, and transform himself to achieve greater levels of excellence. His lifelong determination for climbing greater heights was inspired by many of his life predicaments, especially during his army days when he lost family, friends, and the country and the identity he once knew. He experienced things no teenager ever should. When you believe you are unworthy of being someone and then discover that you are, it awakens an insatiable appetite for growth, knowledge, wisdom, and service.

Having worked many jobs to put a roof over his head, support his family in a war zone, and pay for his education, in 1998, Selimi ended up graduating from one of the top universities in the UK, University College London (UCL). He led and managed multibillion-pound technology-transformation programs in the private and public sectors for more than eleven years. In 2009, after facing another life-transforming crisis, redundancy, he decided to start his own business and pursue his heart's calling: to travel the world and teach others how to find the answers and solutions to life's obstacles and cope better with their daily business, leadership and personal demands and pressures.

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, he went from being homeless and impoverished to successfully climbing the corporate ladder and becoming an internationally recognized leader in personal development. He is a professional speaker, an award-winning author, a filmmaker, a millionaire's life strategist, and a business coach specializing in human behavior, authentic leadership, and the psychology of peak performance, wealth, and success.

Tony specializes in assisting people in breaking through addictions, low self-confidence, depression, fears, self-deception, procrastination, phobias, mental imprisonment, and limiting

beliefs to awaken their inner leader, maximize their human potential, and accomplish higher levels of achievement, growth, and fulfillment. He is known for his ability to see through people's problems, behaviors, language, thought patterns, values, unspoken communication, and disempowering beliefs. He uses these to help them rid themselves of the lies that conceal their authentic individual, which is loving, powerful, and worthy.

Working in the corporate world, overcoming many personal and professional challenges, and coaching many people from all walks of life gives him unique insight into the magnitude of his clients' pressures, challenges, and callings. After all, it includes Fortune 500 CEOs, business owners, authors, entrepreneurs, managers, consultants, salespeople, scientists, doctors, royalty, music, film and TV stars, and politicians.

Senior executives of Microsoft, Apple, Facebook, SAP, Bank of America, Ignis Asset Management, Deutsche Bank, Ernst & Young, Santander, HSBC, and Mishcon de Reya across EMEA, Asia, and the United States seek his help to address personal challenges, improve their business performance, grow their leaders, engage employees, and increase team performance, productivity, and profitability. He creates customized training, coaching, and consulting strategies to help businesses improve productivity and performance and implement change programs and mental health, diversity and inclusion, and well-being strategies.

Tony helps people build the confidence, firm foundation, mindset, emotional resilience, strategies, and plans to create truly unique and lasting spiritual and material transformations through proven processes.

Tony is a qualified coach recognized by several reputable institutions, including the International Coaching Federation (ICF), the Institution of Leadership and Management (ILM), the Demartini Institute, the Complementary Therapists Association, and Martin Brofman's Foundation of Advanced Healers. He is also a certified Reiki Master Teacher.

As the beloved author of *A Path to Wisdom*, *#Loneliness*, *Fit for Purpose Leadership #3*, *The Unfakeable Code®*, *Novum#10*, and *A Path to Excellence*, he crafted the Octagon of Excellence Method, Behavioral Change Principles (BCP), The Unfakeable Code® Method, and the TJSMethod: ALARM® as one-of-a-kind, modernized formulas for self-mastery, business growth, and building wealth, excellence, and fulfillment. It has been hailed as the new self-improvement tool, and it contains the most potent principles for maximizing business, leadership, professional, and personal potential.

His self-mastery authenticity, integrity, values-based methods, principles, and strategies create the psychology and the mindset people need to make the life outcomes they intuitively know they deserve and want.

Tony travels the world to educate and inspire people with enlightening perspectives, humorous metaphors, client success stories, and a heart-illuminating personal transformation journey. He provides answers to questions and gives practical solutions to life's challenges through his one-on-one consultations, talks, workshops, corporate training, mastermind groups, Vital Planning for Elevated Living custom-made business and self-mastery advanced learning experience. He also writes inspirational articles for newspapers and magazines and is a regular contributor to diverse media outlets, high-profile blogs, TV programs, podcasts, YouTube videos, books (print, digital, and audio), the Unfakeability Index Test, the Life Fulfilment Oasis app, social media, masterclasses, webinars, Udemy courses, and TJS Evolutionary Meditation Solutions.

He has spoken on grandiose stages such as the United Nations, Rotary International, the

Cranfield School of Management, European University of Tirana, international film festivals, leadership conferences, the PSA, and the London Business Show. His TEDx talk, “Technological Armageddon: A Wake-Up Call” has been watched by millions of people and addresses the present and future challenges we will face and the opportunities we will create in the next hundred to thousand years with the rise of artificial intelligence.

His work also includes films and documentaries, such as the Emmy and multi-award-winning *The Truth about Reading* and *Living My Illusion* on Amazon Prime and *Into Your Divinity: Climb Greater Heights*, a documentary series that raises awareness of various life predicaments no human being can escape. Tony has appeared on more than eight hundred podcasts and radio and TV stations across the world, including interviews by Royal Correspondent Ian Pelham-Turner, Besim Dina on Oxygen TV, Top Channel Albania, by Jack Canfield and Brian Tracy in America and on BBC, SKY, ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX, reaching more than one hundred million viewers, listeners, and readers worldwide.

Tony founded TJS Cognition Ltd. With a heavenly vision to infiltrate his one-of-a-kind methods, principles, and teaching in business, leadership, government, education, and health care. In doing so, he aspires to inspire decisive action in the lives of billions of people, contribute to accomplishing the UN’s seventeen sustainable development goals, and evolve human consciousness.

He promotes the importance of listening to your heart’s voice, having integrity, and living daily according to your authentic values in your personal, professional, and business life. Excellence in leadership, entrepreneurship, self-mastery, and spiritual development can make a huge difference in shaping our modern world. They play a vital role in our well-being, the future of work, health care, education, environment, economics, and governance. Tony loves researching and teaching topics that bridge science, business, building wealth, psychology, energy healing, well-being, time, space, miracles, and belief.

As a world ambassador of excellence, equality, and empowerment and a positive role model, he uses his hard-earned fame and influence to promote the importance authenticity, coaching, education, integrity, mindfulness, diversity and inclusion, equality, and purpose in our personal and professional lives and in our communities, families, societies, countries, and the universe.

Tony’s global work and a mission to positively impact one billion people’s lives was recognized by the London SME Awards, which selected him as the winner of “The Most Visionary Entrepreneur 2020” and a “global educator to watch.” He also won the Corporate Coaching and Recruitment Business Coach of the Year 2021 Award, Silver Winner of Literary Book Award 2021, and the Maincrest Media Book Award 2021 for *A Path to Wisdom*, *#Loneliness*, and *The Unfakeable Code®*. His book *The Unfakeable Code®* is also the Winner of the Titan Silver and Book Excellence Award 2022 ®, in the Category: Personal Growth and Development.

No matter who you are or where you are from, this is your time to access your Inner knowing, plan, and transform your reality. Tony is known for helping people create transformational business, professional and personal breakthroughs, leaving them with a sense of inner peace and feeling confident, elevated, inspired, and worthy.

To connect, follow, and obtain further information on what Tony can do for you, your family, your audience, your business, your country, and your leaders, teams, and organizations, please visit <https://tonyselimi.com> and <https://tonyjselimi.com>.

## Preface

Far too many people never grow into their true potential. Not knowing how to overcome the challenges life presents can leave many discouraged, disengaged, and delusional. Instead of being inspired to overcome what crashes us, we succumb to temporary difficulties, pain, and stress that make us feel anxious, confused, disengaged, out of control, powerless, stuck, and unproductive at home and work. This is a growing problem in an uncertain world that is leaving behind a cosmic trail of mental, emotional, and physical health problems, as well as a significant rise in mental health issues, divorce, unemployment, and socioeconomic disparities.

I have been down enough, but something within me made me stand up and take the next step each time. When I felt like quitting, I remembered the pain I have been through and what I have overcome, and I continued building a stronger me and a more significant why. So, no matter what struggle you may be facing, remember to make yourself stronger and your why bigger. You can choose to change or remain where you are. You can choose to be a lion or a sheep. You can even make your pain evaporate so your purpose can fly. Whatever you choose is what you become. So, since a choice is yours to make, you may as well decide to be the most advanced, inspiring, and wise person so that others crave your vibes.

This awareness of our power inspired me to create original work that uses a combination of lessons from real-life experiences and scientifically proven self-awareness, self-growth, and self-mastery principles to find sustainable solutions to life's greatest adversities and challenges. I am inspired when I think of the billions of you who can use my work as a reason to believe in your dreams even when times are not in your favor. I have shared the most amazing formulae of success in this book to help you feel more confident, empowered, and accomplished while working on your aspirations, goals, and dreams.

Most of the content in this book is based on synthesizing personal, professional, business, and client breakthrough experiences and thirty years of research, lessons, study, and transformations. I have also shared the pains and the pleasures I've encountered living an adventurous, challenging, and combination of an equally painful and purpose-driven life. It focuses on how you can use the lessons from your struggles, hard work, and breakthroughs to build immense drive, clarity, energy, focus, and momentum. Every principle shared will make your journey to achieving excellence more achievable, bearable, and meaningful.

I believe that we wake up as new people every day because we never stop learning. When it comes to learning, the sky is the limit. Why? Because you are born divine, and it is your birthright to express the divinity of your infinity. Unfortunately, your life experiences coupled with the conditioning from the environment you live in may have conditioned you to think you are not.

I will share a simple eight-step process and scientifically proven principles you can easily follow to learn from your challenges and mistakes and never give up, regardless of the obstacles that come your way. As you read this book, indulge yourself in the much-needed transformation you have dreamed about for years. I will help you out as you take baby steps toward tackling any challenge and attaining excellence in your chosen area of life.

This book aims to address the things in your mind that make you feel frustrated, not good enough, lost, or stuck in life. It will awaken the desire to regain a sense of clarity, vision, and purpose. Yes, it's natural to feel demotivated at times, but the real winner is someone who knows

how to rise back from their lowest ebb. Imagine if you knew for sure that you came to this world to carry out a unique role that nobody else can. Wouldn't you invest the energy, the money, and the time to dig out that purpose and take actionable steps that help you align yourself with it? How about consciously choosing to adopt an attitude of living each day like it's your last. My life's work and many of my client stories highlight those examples and lessons that shed light on the beauty of being resilient, persistent, and committed to your divinity and the goals you need to accomplish to get there—no matter how hard the situation gets.

I aim to educate, motivate, and inspire you, the reader, especially youths, to believe in the beauty of your dreams, even if you perceive that nobody is there to help you out. To enjoy the peace and comfort that growing into your potential gives you, it is sensible to learn to fight the wars life presents. While relying on others may be helpful temporarily, it is wise to learn to depend on yourself in the long run. Just take the journey yourself, get up each time you fall, and keep moving forward. As long as you keep learning from your mistakes, it does not matter how many times you fall and fail.

Lastly, I intend this book to be a source of immense hope and enthusiasm for you, the reader, to empower the eight key areas of life and become the best version of yourselves. May it bring you the gift of clarity and objective thinking and assist you in building a step-by-step plan that makes your spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, relationship, career/business, wealth, and social quests come true.

This is your chance to awaken and own your God-given abilities, look deeper into perceived weaknesses and strengths, and gain control of your attitudes, feelings, and thoughts. In learning to upgrade your mind's software, your psychology, you build the confidence to make a successful personal, professional, and business life. I wish you all the best in using the Octagon of Excellence principles that you will be learning more about throughout this book to create the sustainable happiness, purpose, and growth that your body, mind, heart, and soul have ever hoped for. Someday, you will be so proud that you did not give up. Let each trial life presents you with be a new reason to believe in yourself. It is what will help you keep falling more and more in love with yourself each day.

## Chapter 1 Introducing Excellence

From the moment you are born, your destiny awaits you; it's yours for the taking. The opportunity to be an inspiring person exists as long as you do, and the only thing that can stop you from achieving it is yourself. Growing into your greatest potential and achieving excellence are often thought of as unattainable or impractical. Often, you are so bogged down by your consistent habits and routines that they become the norm for your day-to-day life. In fact, doing something "out of the ordinary" becomes nothing short of a test. In doing so, you confine yourself and restrict your full potential without even getting anywhere close to it.

Many of you, either conditioned by society or otherwise, believe that your life corresponds to the same actions. Get an education, get a skill, get a job, get a mortgage, get married, have children, work for two-thirds of your life, get a pension, and retire—and that's it. Yet, time and time again, there have been many individuals who have broken this norm and reached greatness—true pioneers of their respective fields—who started from where you are. You are destined for excellence. Reading this right now, in the initial stages of this book, might sound rather far-fetched, but when you finish reading this book, remember to revisit this very segment to remind yourself that you are destined for excellence—and you *can* achieve it.

You will cultivate this feeling throughout the course of this book. It will be something you will take with you on your journey in life. This innate desire to grow into our most significant potential is present in us all, but life bogs us down. Be it work, school, personal life, or otherwise, we all have multiple responsibilities to cater to. In the process of doing so, we lose sight of this innate greatness and diverge from this path. Many people give up on this journey because they:

- did not know what they truly wanted
- were told they couldn't
- felt powerless, stupid, or unworthy
- feared and didn't believe they could
- had no way of knowing how to do it
- couldn't dedicate themselves to it
- kept making and giving in to excuses
- did not have clarity, plan, and vision

Now, after more than thirty years of studying, bridging together science, psychology, technology, and universal laws, and assisting thousands of clients, I have deduced the perfect method to guide people onto the path of excellence in their chosen areas of life. Let us commence our journey and dive straight into just why you are destined for excellence.

### Achieving the Impossible Becomes Possible When You Have a Big Why

Whenever we consider any successful individual, an often-forgotten fact of life is that we put them on a pedestal. Since they've achieved global recognition and accolades, we assume they are a step beyond us. However, this is far from the truth. Nearly all of the notable, successful entities in the world who have significantly contributed to humanity as a whole arose from relatively humble beginnings. Many of those individuals have changed the world's shape and

nature as we know it today.

If the Wright brothers weren't as tenacious and resilient when it came to their first aircraft, we might have never taken to the skies. In fact, the very aircraft-control system they devised for their airplane more than a century ago is still used in aircraft today. (It's been modified to meet modern-day demands, but the same fundamental idea still persists.) Two brothers who didn't even have high school diplomas set the foundation of modern-day aviation! Imagine that!

Similarly, if it weren't for Bill Gates, a college dropout, developing the operating system that is now used by more than a billion people worldwide—solely based on a big why and a goal he set—I would probably be using a typewriter to write this book! The Wright brothers, Nicola Tesla, Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, Nelson Mandela, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Barack Obama, Usain Bolt, Elon Musk, Richard Branson, Madonna, Adele, Rita Ora, Dua Lipa, Simon Cowell, Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos, and other people who have changed the world did so because they lived with certain principles and had clear-cut visions and goals that were driven by a big why and aspirations that they had planned to the dot.

Being raised in average circumstances does not restrict you from achieving above average results. I am living proof that anything you set your mind to is achievable. As a child, I was subjected to various forms of abuse. As a teenager, I was bullied, was forced to fight in a civil war I despised, and became a homeless refugee on the streets of London. As an adult, I faced anxiety, depression, discrimination, an identity crisis, loneliness, poverty, and inequalities that crippled my being. To make matters worse, I had to face people who got high by making others feel small with their homophobic and xenophobic comments. Little did I know back then that every adversity I faced would eventually help me clarify who I am, why I do what I do, and what do I want to dedicate my life to. This is important, yet very often underestimated, step on the journey to growing into your fullest potential.

Today, my why is to use all I have learned and continue to learn to change positively, impact, and transform the lives of billions of people. I've used the same principles of personal excellence you are about to discover and learn to overcome various life struggles and unforeseen roadblocks. Each one of them assisted me and those I have coached over the years to transcend disempowering mental concepts and align actions, behaviors, and plans with our big why. It is why I travel globally to coach and assist countless entrepreneurs, CEOs, businesses, celebrities, and people from all professions to create the personal, relationship, financial, professional, and business breakthroughs and results they seek. Most of them achieved their success because they did eight things:

1. They somehow managed to turn their pain into a purposeful vision that inspires them.
2. They envisioned their success and worked day and night to achieve it.
3. They worked with a set of priority of values and principles that were aligned with their astronomical vision, which was driven by a big why.
4. They established systematic plans to achieve their success.
5. They invested in working consistently with a coach who would help them overcome challenges, expand their vision, clarify the next steps, and keep them accountable and focused.
6. They never made excuses or blame others when things went wrong.
7. They saw anything that was not working as an opportunity to grow, learn, and transform and not as an insurmountable hurdle.
8. They didn't play it safe, and they operated from a place of willingness to fail; if they didn't, they would never create the ability to win.

Begin to do these eight things daily and willingly, and you may soon see things change for the better in your personal, professional, and business life. Doing what others refuse to do can give you the edge you need to find the success you want.

You may be afraid to fail because you're overly concerned with the judgments of others. You do the minimum and try to fly under the radar, but what would change in your life if you never were afraid of failure? If you want to bring your goals to life, an attitude that behind every mistake is an opportunity to learn will serve you well.

Unsuccessful people spend a lot of energy and time making excuses and blaming government, the economy, the customer, prices, or competition. Even if the excuses are all true, complaining about it likely won't improve the outcome, and successful people know this. No matter how justified you are, try never to make an excuse for any result.

Truth be told, many of us are not prepared for life's greatest adversity or are equipped with the knowledge from an early age of how each life challenge, fear, or pain can be a brilliant catalyst for reaching excellence. If we don't have an end in mind, how on earth will we know when we have arrived where we want to be? Suppose you are not living in harmony with a set of personal excellence principles to get you the health, the relationship, the family, the job, the career, the wealth, the customer, or the desired lifestyle you want. In that case, you will remain stuck in old paradigms designed to keep you imprisoned in the illusion created by disempowered expectations of you. If this is not what you want, it's time for you to embrace the importance of creating a clear life-fulfillment plan.

A lack of planning for the spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, relationship, financial, career/business, and social growth you want creates havoc and discord in your life. You don't plan a vacation without some sort of plan; why would you do the same for your life? Lack of precise planning, not knowing how to break through fears, self-imposed limits, overcoming challenges that cause us pain, losing hope, not seeking help, not choosing to live by priorities of actions driven by a hierarchy of authentic values, and giving up are the eight fundamental causes of failure.

Don't be fooled. Challenges do not end, and they do not get easier. However, you can get stronger, smarter, and soulful enough to face them head-on. You can utilize the challenges you face as stepping-stones to achieve greatness. Planning, using a set of principles for personal excellence, and facing adversities are going to be things you look forward to.

### The Comfort Zone: Quicksand

To achieve greatness, fulfillment, and our true potential requires bravely venturing into uncharted avenues of life: the terra incognita. Throughout history, those who have made a significant difference for society's betterment have done so by completely altering and reshaping the existing conceptions that prevailed at the given time.

For many people, escaping the comfort zone deems to be the most challenging hurdle to overcome. Responsibilities bind most people, and they simply cannot take the risk to venture out of their comfort zones. They believe that trying out or even considering new avenues could result in something detrimental. These people often fail to recognize the endless possibilities that can be found right outside the comfort zone! Their lives are reflections of what's going on in their minds.

It's best to jot down whatever restraints you have when it comes to leaving your comfort zone. Much like the heading suggests, it is quite like quicksand. The more you convolute yourself in self-doubt and continuously question yourself, the deeper you will sink. The most effective way to break free is to use a streamlined method to pull yourself out. To break free of your comfort zone requires you to create a huge why to make you comfortable

with discomfort.

The further you venture from the safety nets you have put up, the more you will discover. Ultimately, things you would once consider out of your comfort zone will become a fundamental part of it! In this pursuit of excellence, you need to remember that the journey begins with the very first step you take to clarify your authentic values and bravely journey outside of your comfort zone.

## Why This Book?

Once you've read this far, you may be wondering what you will gain from this book. I have encapsulated my decades of teachings into an easy-to-follow method, and it will be a one-stop guide for excellence in your chosen area of life with a set of principles for any troubles you are facing in your life. You will walk away with a blueprint for achieving your greatest potential.

Everyday life became stagnant due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. At some point, most of the world's population had enough, some lost their jobs, and others struggled to cope with the loss of loved ones or making ends meet. For many people, years of hard work seemingly came to a halt. If that was not enough, the world watched in horror as Russia invaded Ukraine, creating another worry for the people of Russia and Ukraine and the world. In trying times such as this, I wish to utilize my knowledge and use this book as a way to spread hope, knowledge, and inspiration. Despite all odds, there are still ways to put yourself onto the path toward achieving your wildest dreams with personal, professional, or business excellence leading the way. In doing so, you can be the hope that others use to rise when everything around them forces them to fall.

This book is relevant for anyone who picks it up. If you're looking for a job, are currently unemployed, or are an overwhelmed professional, entrepreneur, or CEO experiencing burnout or stress, continuous improvement is at the forefront of the road to overcoming challenges and frustrations and achieving excellence. This is what I aim to teach everyone. It is never too late to make amends or grow from where you already stand.

Don't think of this as a miracle cure-all drug! I will provide you with the necessary tools and a blueprint for reaching your greatest potential. This book contains a set of personal excellence principles to help you face your challenges and the corresponding emotional responses and tackle them accordingly. By using a blend of scientific and spiritual teachings, you will get the best of both worlds! As they say, "Give a man a fish, and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he eats for a lifetime."

The next chapter will explain why it takes guts to climb to greater heights and how you can move forward on your specific path to attain your goals by striving for excellence in your chosen field. The only thing that differentiates you from other successful people is the willingness to do the actions and the work it takes to make your why create a significant difference in the lives of others. By the time you complete this book, you will have already set foot in the direction of change by eliminating the barriers that were created by society's mirrors.

Using a set of personal excellence principles, you can upgrade your mind's operating system, change your response to stimuli, and find the perfect equilibrium. You can evolve your mindset, alter your behaviors, and balance your perceptions.

On my continuous and ever-evolving personal excellence journey, I realized that things that matter the most must never be at the mercy of those who matter the least. To climb to greater heights, it's wise to have a set of principles of personal excellence to determine, examine, and modify our actions, behaviors, focus, and thoughts. It is why I synthesized years of learning into the Octagon of Excellence method, which you will be

learning about in the follow-up chapters, and have a center point. The blueprint to your greatest potential consists of eight powerful, scientifically based principles for personal, professional, and business excellence. When used regularly, these principles will help you build a resilient mental framework and an easy-to-follow, step-by-step plan to face any adversity life throws at you as you climb to greater heights. They will guide you to meet any challenge head-on, adapt, behave, and act in ways that are best suited for the path of excellence you envision for your life.

The energy, the language, the meaning, and the power of each of the principles of personal excellence will become the foundation of any individual, relationship, professional, financial, or business transformation you seek and help you successfully deliver any task at hand.

Unleashing the true power of the Octagon of Excellence's principles requires you to acknowledge the role you play in the bigger scheme of life. The kind of thoughts you think and the type of language you use influence how life responds to the experiences you create in life. Remember, the principles only work if you choose to work with them every day.

What you will learn from this book will become your bread and butter. This is a book that you will read more than once, and you will probably have multiple bookmarks throughout!

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## Chapter 2

### It Takes Guts to Climb Greater Heights

Life is nothing short of a culmination of challenges. You have been faced with challenges from the moment you were born. Even as a baby, you overcame challenges by learning how to talk, crawl, and walk. One might think that challenges are simply something only humans face, but the truth is far from it. For the gazelles in the Serengeti, their challenge is learning how to walk within minutes of being born and acquiring enough nutrients such as vitamins and carbohydrates from plant-based diets. Challenges are a natural part of life for every living creature on our planet.

Most of us are fortunate enough not to worry about survival. We are born with a roof over our heads, food to eat, access to clean water, clothes, education, and so on. Yet, there are still a considerable number of humans who lack even these basic necessities. Before discussing the concept of challenges and how to face them, remember that the definition of a challenge varies from person to person. For some people, learning how to drive might be a challenge. For others, it's routine. However, this does not take away from the fact that it is a challenge in itself for them.

Without even realizing it, we are faced with challenges every day: a test in school, an important work project, resolving disputes between friends or family—the list is endless. However, most of us prefer to avoid these challenges; we study for the test later, reassign the project, or ignore the dispute until things fizzle out. We are all guilty of this. Accepting where we falter is the first step to understanding the importance of challenges.

It goes without saying that we are the masters of avoidance. To truly appreciate life for what it is, we need to face reality head-on—along with the challenges that follow. Once we are guided with a fundamental principle of personal excellence, we delve deeper into combatting life's many challenges. Buddhist teachings emphasize “wanting what you have.” Learning to accept the challenges that you encounter is a crucial step of self-betterment and excellence. When we submit ourselves to the very reality of who we are, we allow ourselves ample opportunity to achieve what we can do.

All of this is a time-consuming process. It took me decades of changing cycles and facing adversities to reach where I am today. Had I not faced my challenges and succumbed to self-pity, I would still be homeless on the streets of London—or I would have been killed during the civil with my body buried somewhere.

There are no shortcuts to this; slow, incremental steps are the approach you need to take. One crucial thing is to practice gratitude. Even if your most significant challenge is being able to pay the bills on time, find ways to be grateful. There are millions of people who would love to be in your place. Practicing gratitude humbles you and provides you with a holistic view of people as a whole. By identifying your privilege, you can help those in need.

Accepting and taking on challenges is a daunting task, but to overcome any challenge, you have to face it head-on. You might fail a dozen times before you succeed. You can even learn from a baby! Do babies quit walking after falling once? No! A baby will fall dozens of times every day while it is learning to walk. For the baby, learning to walk is an unsurmountable challenge that needs to be addressed. The motivation behind their thinking is simple—they want to overcome their challenge and will not take no for an answer. Learn from babies! Be persistent, resilient, and willing! After all, life is nothing more than a series of learning encounters. Don't let anything undermine your ability to unlock your greatest potential and fulfill your ever-growing vision in life.

Before you continue reading, take a moment to write down the answer to the following questions:

- What does personal excellence mean to you?
- In what critical area of life do you want to achieve personal excellence? Is it spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, family, social, financial, or business or career? Be very specific.
- What specific challenges, difficulties, and fears do you need to overcome to climb to greater heights?
- What positive differences would overcoming those challenges, difficulties, and fears make in your personal, professional, social, financial, and business life?
- What is one new thing that could bring you a step closer to personal excellence?

### Why Do People Give Up?

If people had retained their ingrained adaptability and resilience, I wouldn't have had to write this book! We all get bogged down by life and lose enthusiasm, faith, and sight; we've all been there. Often, we are merely procrastinating. Don't be quick to assume that this is simply due to laziness. Constant procrastination usually indicates not living by your hierarchy of authentic values. Some cases may be due to a more severe underlying mental health concern, such as anxiety and depression.

Another motivator for procrastination is wasting time on social media! I don't mean to demonize it in its entirety. In fact, I think it's a wonderful tool. However, it is wise to understand how they're not made to break this social media addiction that makes you mindlessly scroll through several apps for hours. Their very nature is to be addictive. The algorithm is designed to show you whatever interests you the most to keep you hooked. As long as you know that the scrolling is bottomless and that you will literally never run out of content, it can wait!

Do not confuse procrastination with taking a break from something you are doing that aligns with your authentic, values-driven excellence goals. The first is endless; the latter is mandatory! The significant difference between the two is that you know where your break starts and ends; there is a clear, defined definition. After helping thousands of people break free from procrastination, I observed that it shows up in sporadic, random ways and can last for hours if unchecked. It is vital to remember that procrastination is the result of not living in alignment with your authentic values and not seeing the hidden drawbacks and benefits of taking action. Whatever challenge you face, taking a break will often help clear your head and allow you to contemplate the situation from a fresh perspective.

Another barricade, when it comes to facing challenges, is people's perceptions. We fear failure and the judgment that comes with it. No matter how many failures I met, I've always thought of failure as a blessing in disguise. It continuously taught me how to evolve from my mistakes and expand my limits. If we fail to overcome challenges, we feel like failures. Individuals who go through infinite cycles of destruction and construction can fail a dozen challenges in life and still end up as the epitome of excellence.

A shining example of this is Jack Ma, the founder of Alibaba, one of the world's largest e-commerce platforms. He proudly states that he's been rejected from more than thirty jobs he applied for after failing out of university—even KFC didn't hire him! TO this day, he proudly wears his rejections and failures, highlighting just how glad he was that he failed but never gave up. From being unable to find any job to having a net worth of more than \$36 billion, Jack Ma is an example of living life according to a set of personal excellence

principles. You can use your failures for your betterment.

Judgments, if used wisely, can be very beneficial to you. Why? Because they can awaken your awareness to listen to yourself, sincerely. Frequently examine your daily priorities to make sure they align with your inner crucifix for personal excellence. Take failure as a stepping-stone to greatness and achieve excellence in your chosen area of life.

Another concern usually associated with failure is self-doubt. The first course of action is to accept it by acknowledging the role it plays in your ever-evolving life. There is no point thinking about what could have been. Instead, focus on your next course of action, "So this led to a dead-end, maybe I need to try a different approach." Improvise, adapt, overcome.

### An Exercise for You

Please take a moment to write down everything that makes you give up, and next to each item, write down the reasons why you think it is so. Once you clarify what makes you give up, write down how this is a drawback and why it benefits you.

### The Kinds of Experiences You Attract Depend on You

There is so much information about the universal laws that govern life: the law of vibration, compensation (fair exchange), polarity, correspondence, cause and effect, rhythm, relativity, gender, perpetual transmutation, karma, attraction, and divine oneness. Every adversity I overcame made me even more curious to learn why billions of people keep attracting what they don't want despite all of the knowledge of the above laws shared by some extraordinary teachers throughout history.

I spent years mastering the personal excellence principles you will be learning more about throughout the book to demystify our relationships with many of the laws that govern life. I did that because I never trusted my abilities, talents, looks, or luck, and I had no family, friends, or valuable industry connections when I first arrived in London to turn to for help. I studied what successful people did and tried to mimic that. I also researched what unsuccessful people did and avoided that.

While many things seem to differentiate those who are successful from those who aren't, I've noticed a clear difference that stands out the most: successful people are in flow with these universal laws. I had to ensure that my study and research included these laws and how they would increase my chances of making them work for me as it did for the successful people I studied. What I was learning was awakening me to embrace my quest to climb to greater heights, and it increased my faith in achieving what I desired. This discovery inspired me to create and embed the wisdom of these universal principles into the Octagon of Excellence Method that you will learn about in more detail in the following chapters. What could you achieve if you had a blueprint to unlock your potential? What if you had an easy-to-use method to break through perceived limits and achieve personal excellence in the areas of life that matter to you the most?

As you journey through life, it is important to remember how you make people feel with your deeds. It goes without saying just how far a good deed can take you. A good deed always rewards you in unimaginable ways, from helping someone with a flat tire or paying for someone's meal at the drive-through. By actively enveloping yourself in conscious thinking, gratitude, and random acts of kindness, you project this vibration out into the universe. In return, the universe aligns you with like-minded individuals who vibrate on a similar frequency. They often share the same sentiments as you. Good deeds harm no one and benefit everyone. On the other hand, bad deeds create karmic chains that tie you to negativity. The universe aligns you with individuals who vibrate with similar energy.

Have you ever been stuck in a rut, and despite overcoming whatever challenges you were presented with, you still failed to find inner satisfaction? For moments like these and everything else, make sure you know the principles of personal excellence that you want to lead your life by and make sure your actions, intentions, and authentic values are clear. The moment you make the intention to do something in alignment with your values and vision of excellence—to overcome challenges—cosmic energies put you on the path toward it. If, for example, you are expecting a promotion at work, it is wise to think, *I am grateful I got this promotion. I worked very hard for this!* That is better than thinking, *I hope I get this promotion! I don't want Emma to be my boss!* By speaking in the present tense and practicing a mindful way of thinking, we can vibrate in the energy of our desired outcomes.

Similarly, instead of harboring envy and resentments for those who have surpassed you, it is better to use them as inspiration, especially if you started together. *I'm grateful to Simon for getting this promotion instead of me. I'm sure he worked much harder than I did. I am grateful to have more time to learn and to set a higher benchmark for professional excellence!* That is better than thinking, *I can't believe Simon got a promotion rather than me! I deserved it! It doesn't matter if he is better than me or if he put in extra hours. I want it!* See what I mean?

Admirable intentions help cultivate excellent karma, and they also help shape your perceptions for the better, ultimately making you a better person who can handle challenges without grievances about the outcome.

## How to Handle Challenges and Make Difficult Decisions

Just like Aristotle, through countless cycles of change and overcoming adversity after adversity, I concluded that excellence is not an act. It is a product of a habit of overcoming challenge after challenge. The more you evolve and grow as a person, the more complex, demanding, and stressful the challenges you will be facing will become. Ultimately, if you do not stay on top of them, they'll make you doubt your abilities and lose sight of your goals.

We are faced with innumerable challenges every day, but we overcome them with ease and without a second thought. Driving to work or the grocery store may seem mundane, but when you were learning to drive, it was a challenge. Every novice driver has insecurities and uneasiness when they drive; they are working on overcoming their challenges. Do you consider driving a challenge anymore? Congratulations! This is just one of the many daily challenges you have overcome without even realizing it! It is another step toward excellence!

You may falter many times while achieving your goals. There are going to be many bumps or potholes that you're going to encounter along this journey. Is it going to be easy? Unlikely. Is overcoming it going to be satisfying? Most definitely! You are not alone when you face your challenges. Humanity has been facing challenges that come from infinite cycles of creation and destruction since the advent of humans themselves! Our hunter-gatherer forefathers had to trek for hundreds of miles in search of food and water. Had they been unsuccessful in doing so, I wouldn't be writing this book—and you wouldn't be reading it!

Challenges come with a surge of uncertainty. Ancient humans had to watch out for predators, poisonous food, natural disasters, famine, and more. Although most people do not have to worry about these things anymore, everyone has challenges. Every life cycle is a different experience, and whatever you're going through is exclusive to you. I plan to help you overcome these and any other challenges you might encounter in your life's journey.

A way to visualize overcoming challenges is to think of yourself climbing a steep hill. The more complicated the challenge is, the steeper it is. However, right at the top is a plateau—a place where you can rest and recuperate. If you make that push and reach the top,

you can take a much-needed break and look down to see your progress. The only difference is that the hill goes on forever! It has multiple facets and varying heights and extremes. The only thing keeping you from achieving greater heights is you.

Whether it's an important work assignment or a difficult school exam—anything of importance and equal difficulty—overcoming your day-to-day challenges will help you stay centered and calm under pressure. Think back to the driving example. Do you stress out at the thought of having to drive on roads? If you've been driving for a while, your answer will most definitely be no!

Challenges reveal your true character. No one is perfect—and that's a great thing! Being perfect signifies achieving the pinnacle—there's nothing more to gain. However, realizing that we are flawed and subject to our highs and lows highlights that we can continuously improve. This is not just limited to us as individuals. It extends throughout every facet of our lives, including work, school, and friends.

All of us have weaknesses and flaws. The first sign of growth is that you can self-reflect; you can pick out where you lack and where you excel and work on those parts of your personality. Doing so will hone your skills and diligently guide you down the path of excellence that is created by your ever-evolving values, mission, and vision.

Contrary to popular belief, success isn't a one-hit wonder! Most people think it's possible to be successful by developing a revolutionary idea, which is true. However, the crucial detail they want to miss out on is how hard work and dedication are intertwined throughout the process! Bill Gates is a college dropout, but he went to Harvard. He applied himself throughout his school career to gain admission to Harvard. He also worked tirelessly to make Microsoft the tech behemoth it is today.

My life can serve as an example to everyone reading this. I had to survive a civil war, fight homelessness, and struggle with poverty and a series of mental, emotional, and physical health issues. If I had kept to my self-destructive ways, I wouldn't have been an award-winning author of many books. In fact, I doubt I'd even be alive at this point. Nevertheless, I understood the real meaning of personal excellence through my struggles and envisioned this fact. Despite the challenges I faced, I used the same principles of personal excellence you will be learning to make me believe that I was destined for greatness and achieve it. This simple act of manifesting put it out into the universe, and the universe always responds to what you send out with your vibration.

How you face the challenges in your life might be significantly different than how Bill Gates or I did, but there are a few tips and tricks that remain constant for all challenges. Curious? They're right around the corner!

## One Decision Can Change Your Life

As I travel globally to consult with clients, train groups, and be interviewed on TV and radio, I am often asked what it takes to change one's life. My answer is always the same: "It takes one decision." This often sparks curiosity in those who ask.

We make countless decisions every day, and each one of them creates a new reality. For instance, if two friends arrange to meet in one place, they need to decide to create that reality. If, however, one of the friends makes a different decision, that reality in meeting in that one place would never manifest.

Obviously, certain decisions hold more significance than others, such as what you choose to eat for breakfast or how your company handles its transactions. Consciously and unconsciously, we make decisions that affect our lives—whether we actively want them to or not. It's like rolling a snowball down a hill.

Every decision sets off a chain reaction of events, which is known as the butterfly

effect. Perhaps you gave one of your employees a bonus for their continuous hard work. Although you might not know this, maybe they were in a financial bind, and you helped them immensely. What did you do? You simply valued someone for their worth, but you gained positive karma in the process. The opposite also holds true. You might fire an employee for their mistakes, unbeknownst to the internal and external factors that led to their underperformance.

Let me share an example from my own life. I have been running my own business for a few years. However, like the rest of the world, my business suffered a significant blow after the pandemic hit. I could have given up and relied on the government's financial aid or adapted to the change. I chose the latter. I made a decision. The first thing I did was adjust my goals, set new priorities, and clarify my vision of excellence during this period. I eliminated most of my other face-to-face consulting work. I adapted to the new environment shaped by countless government decisions to contain the coronavirus pandemic. I utilized the energy I would have otherwise used in person in an online manner.

My consulting sessions, seminars, interviews, and everything else were being conducted online from the comfort of my home. With the travel restrictions in place, I could not catch a flight to travel to my clients. Under normal circumstances, I would travel to exotic locations worldwide to teach my five- or ten-day business and self-mastery class, a custom-made VIP coaching program for visionaries, high achievers, leaders, and business owners: "Vital Planning for Elevated Living."

This decision changed my perceptions. I realized I didn't need to be physically present to help my clients overcome their personal, professional, or business challenges. My books, courses, virtual consultations, and Vital Planning for Elevated Living had been selling regularly. I could use all of the travel time I would typically use to plan for the journey in times of extreme uncertainty and global meltdowns.

I clarified my vision and updated my business and my financial, marketing, and sales processes. Consequently, my mind was not focused on the "Armageddon doom-scenario" the media and conspiracy theorists want you to believe. I adapted fast and decreased my workload dramatically. I used this free time to keep growing my business, learn new skills, do Zoom talks for nonprofit organizations, and spend quality time with my partner, family, and friends. It helped me support several of my clients who had COVID.

Now that I had more time, I realized that my heart was calling me to evolve my sense of purpose beyond what I was doing, and the decision to utilize the stay-at-home lockdown initiative focused me on writing three more books. I wrote *The Unfakeable Code*® to raise awareness about the negative mental, emotional, and physical impact of living an inauthentic life. Furthermore, it promotes authenticity as a powerful tool to solve emerging global social, economic, business, and leadership problems. In creating another one-of-a-kind method, I knew that people from all walks of life would be called to use it to redefine themselves in adversity, take back control, lead authentically, and live freely on their terms.

Essentially, I found new ways to contribute to the world, irrespective of what income my consultancy business and my retreats generated. My clear vision of positively impacting the lives of one billion people makes me crave a greater sense of connection, contribution, and personal excellence. I decided to write more books, and I published "Take Off the Mask, Your Soul is Waiting: Poetry Selections that Quench Your Thirst for Growth, Love, and Wisdom" in *Novum #10*. I wanted my poetry to be the inspiration you need to be brave, scared, or sad and to radically embrace and truly be grateful for your imperfections. At the beginning of my entrepreneurial journey, my mind could not conceive of that, and I never thought it was possible to achieve it.

Over the seemingly endless months of lockdown, I received offers to speak in various international forums online. I did interviews for TV, radio, podcasts, magazines, blogs,

Facebook Lives, joint-venture leadership, and business-building webinars. Not traveling as much and using personal excellence principles helped me adapt quickly to the challenges COVID-19 brought into our lives.

My first paid speaking gig was for a tech company back in 2012, but it felt meaningful to speak at virtual events for free and inspire as many people as I could to not let the pandemic overshadow their quest for excellence.

I felt fulfilled in seeing others' hopes light up. The intention of giving value freely and seeing others happy created a lot of business. Many people attending those online events booked private sessions, and some even signed up to my yearly virtual coaching program and booked themselves on my Vital Planning Advanced Life and Business Mastery Coaching Program. Since I understand how difficult it is to have everything taken from you, I used a portion of my free time to freely help those going through hardship.

It is essential to realize that money isn't the root of happiness; your sense of purpose goes beyond meeting your existential needs. Sure, it's helpful to have money to meet your primary and ever-growing needs, but true contentment comes from within. No expensive gifts can change that. Remember, those who give freely receive freely, and those who pay for the value they receive end up being paid generously.

Looking back, I can see how many of my problems began in primary school and when I spent two years in the hospital. I was in and out of a life-support machine due to collapsed lungs, a heart murmur, and the various illnesses that followed. The many drugs I was given contributed to my becoming overweight and overdeveloped. I was bullied and physically harassed and verbally abused by other kids. Furthermore, seeing your mother, father, older sisters, and older brother being abused gives you little hope that your life will be better. Since that time was so traumatic for me, I revel in the opportunity to speak to those who may be struggling to break through challenges and see a clear vision of their purposeful vision of excellence.

This led me to a tough decision. Would I listen to the instinct that told me to try to make sense of the global uncertainty the pandemic and the raging war in Ukraine brought to us? Would I listen to the intuition that told me to stay unplugged while writing this book, virtually consulting clients, and spending time with my partner?

Would I do what comes naturally to me? I've used various ways to remain on track, stay on a path to excellence, and inspire positive action in the lives of one billion people? Would I keep advising clients virtually and help whenever I could online? Would I step outside the world of the lockdown and war and onto a path of personal excellence and see where it would lead?

One seems to involve a lot more certainty. I feel fulfilled when I'm assisting more people globally. Coaching, mentoring, and teaching my five-day transformative business and life-mastery program helps more people climb to greater heights, create the breakthroughs they seek, and keep growing to their fullest potential. I sometimes feel frustrated that I'm spending so much time alone on my computer.

I have been helping my clients with a million unknowns. What's next for them if it isn't online? How do they pick one of the many ideas they shared with me? How can the principles in the following chapters help them bring it to fruition? How do they know that what they choose will work out, and if it doesn't, will they regret not going the other way?

The answer is they don't, can't, and won't. We can never know for sure when we make a decision that it's going to pan out. No one thought we would face a pandemic like this or the invasion of Ukraine. All we can do is follow our most vital calling and then trust that the future will wake us up and enrich our lives in one way or another.

Many of my clients have been struggling with personal and business decisions recently. In the next chapter, I share the wisdom of the Octagon of Excellence method. Why

did I create it? How can it help you on your never-ending journey through overcoming adversity after adversity, challenge after challenge, doubt after doubt, fear after fear, and stress after stress?

The principles embedded in this one-of-a-kind method are endless. Use them to clarify your vision for excellence in any of the eight critical areas of life, get unstuck, improve your relationships, grow your teams, and commit to embracing the challenges and blessings that will come as a result. You can even use them to help you in your decision-making process, strengthen your will, grow your wealth, influence the world, and upgrade your psychology in alignment with what you want to achieve in any of the critical areas of life. The actionable steps embedded in the method can help you make difficult decisions quickly.

There are consequences for every course of action. It is wise to decide which course of action will be best first and foremost for you and then for everyone else. Seeing the situation objectively from all angles can help you decide wisely. Think about how the decision will make you will feel when you're eighty, ninety, or one hundred years old. Following what you are learning will put the difficult decision into perspective (maybe it's not as big a deal as you think it is). Secondly, it will help you make an informed and wise decision for the long term rather than just for instant gratification.

To give you every chance possible to succeed in your journey to climb to greater heights and achieve the kind of personal excellence your body, mind, heart, and soul are capable of attaining, be sure to pay extra attention to the next chapter.