

"Why, having been endowed with the courageous heart of a lion, do we live as mice?"

Brendon Burchard



The
LION
Within.

Robert N. Jacobs

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By

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Chapter 1

The Lion Inside.

One of the most valuable things to come into anyone's life is that moment, that experience, that person, or that learning that touches your soul and reveals the real you. In some cases it can be an incident, accident, emergency, or even a catastrophic event that leads to the discovery of an inner strength and resilience that was hidden deep within, and it's in these moments that you realise your true self and recognise that you already have all the resources you need within you to become the best you can be.

There's an old fable about a lion cub that makes this point beautifully...

One day, a lion cub was playing in the forest while his mother took a nap. He was staying nearby, but interesting things soon began to attract his attention and before long, he'd wandered off deeper into the forest to explore the world beyond his den. There were so much to see that he forgot all about finding his way home, until he realised that he was lost. Suddenly feeling frightened, he called out for his mother, frantically running in all directions in the hope of seeing her, but no response came. He was lost and alone.

Tired and weary, the little lion cub had all but given up when a sheep that had recently had its lamb taken away heard his cries. Taking pity on him, she approached and comforted him, and became the cub's adoptive mother. She grew very fond of her foundling, but the cub very quickly grew in size, so much so that she was almost fearful of him at times. He often had a far-off look in his eyes that she could never quite understand, but the pair lived happily together as mother and son.

Then, one day, a magnificent lion appeared on the horizon. Standing proud, silhouetted against the sky, he shook his huge mane and roared from his vantage point on the top of a hill. The mighty roar echoed through the hills, leaving the mother sheep trembling with fear, but the lion cub found himself spellbound by the strange sound; a sound that sparked a feeling in him he hadn't experienced before. The lion's roar had touched a chord in his nature and aroused a force within him that brought a strange new consciousness of power – a whole new desire. Instinctively, without any conscious thought, he answered the lion's call with a roar of his own. Trembling with a mix of fear and surprise, the bewildered cub felt suddenly awakened. With only a glance toward his foster mother, he leapt away in the direction of the lion on the hill. The lost lion had found himself.

Until that roar, the cub had gambolled around his sheep mother believing himself to be a lamb, never for one moment imagining he'd become anything more or do anything more than his sheep companions. He never dreamed of having a power within him that could strike terror into other beasts, he simply thought he was a sheep. Like the other

sheep, he would run at the sight of a dog and tremble in fear at the sound of a howling wolf. In discovering himself to be a lion, he was amazed to see the creatures he'd feared now fearing him. For as long as he'd believed himself to be a sheep, he had been as timid and retiring as a sheep. Thinking of himself as a sheep, he had no more strength or courage than an ordinary sheep, and if it had been suggested to him that he had the strength of a lion, he would not have believed it, believing himself to be no different to any other of his kind. But, when the lion within him was awakened, he instantly became a new creature; king of his domain with very few beasts to rival him. This awakening unlocked the cub's conscious power, a power he may never have realised had he not heard the lion's roar. The roar from the hill top had not added anything to his strength, or given him a new power, it had merely unlocked what was already there within him. Of course, after such a startling discovery, this young lion could never again be content to live the life of a sheep. The life of a lion, the liberty of a lion, and the power of a lion was now his.

The moral of this fable is that there's a sleeping lion within all of us. We all have the power we need to succeed in life within us, it's just a question of reaching deep inside and awakening it. In the same way the young lion could no longer be satisfied with the life of a sheep once the lion within was awakened, we, as people, can no longer be satisfied with an ordinary life when we realise that we have all we need to live an extraordinary life.

You Are Not a Sheep

Why live a half-life when you can live a full life? Why follow the path through life that someone else chooses for you when you can choose your own path? And why limit your achievements to those others believe you are capable of? Set your own limits, and keep resetting as you aspire to be all you can be.

Think of all the people that have grown up in impoverished circumstances believing themselves to be no different to those around them, and therefore destined to live a life of poverty. The way they think becomes their reality, but then something happens – that moment of awakening. It may be an emergency, a catastrophic event, an encounter with another individual, or some other challenging experience, but in facing it, they discover the 'inner lion' and inner power they didn't know they had. Through this discovery, they realise that they are not destined to be the same as those around them, they have what they need to be more: they have all they need to live the life they want.

Self-belief is key to success. If you believe you are a sheep, you will go through life following the path of all the sheep that have gone before you. Until you believe that you can be more than you are, you will remain as you are. If the life you currently have is not what you want, you have the power within you to change it – but you must *believe* that change is possible. You are not a sheep; you can choose to take a different path.

Of course, this can be easier said than done. There are lots of examples of people throughout history who would not have believed the things they would go on to achieve in life if they'd been told they would in their childhood. The path you'll take in life is not always clearly defined from a

young age, and it's fair to say that many young adults will embark on the career path they think is right for them, only to discover that it's not providing the fulfilment they'd hoped for further down the line. When this is the case, it takes self-belief to change direction and try a different path, but in so doing, you are choosing not to settle for a half-life, you are choosing to be and do more, and to realise your true potential.

You Are Not Alone

It really is your life to live and your success to achieve, but no one makes it to the top of their 'game' on their own. As humans, we're all connected; everything we do, say, think, and believe has an effect on others. In the grand scale of things, we're all just a small part of something much bigger than ourselves. For some, the something bigger is a higher power found in their religious or spiritual beliefs, for others it might be the strength found in being a part of a team with genuine team spirit. Even those who choose to go it alone are connected to others who have followed a similar path before them, and it's in these connections that inspiration is found.

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." – Isaac Newton

Many children grow up wanting to be just like the people they know and admire, whether that's their parents, aunts and uncles, or people they encounter in daily life such as teachers, bus drivers, and shopkeepers. These are people in roles they're familiar with, but it's not unusual for children to also imagine themselves growing up to become a storybook character, a superhero, or some other fantastical being. Children don't get hung up on practicalities or realities, they simply use their imagination and dream of being whatever they want. For them, nothing is impossible.

As we grow into teenage years and adulthood, life has a way of taking the ability to imagine ourselves being whoever and whatever we want to be away. Sometimes this happens because of the negative influences of others around us. You might have your dreams for your future shot down by someone saying, "Dream on! You need to get your head out of the clouds and get real," or little nagging doubts put into your mind by those around you saying, "Things like that don't happen to the likes of us." Over time, the beliefs of others can subconsciously become your own... you believe yourself to be a sheep, no different to the other sheep around you. This raises the importance of surrounding yourself with positive, like-minded people who will not only inspire you to achieve more, they will support you in all you do, helping you to awaken your inner lion.

Ask yourself, are the things you believe to be impossible *actually* impossible, or is it more a case of them just not being possible *yet*? Think of it this way, before Neil Armstrong took his "one small step" in 1969, how many people would have believed it was possible to walk on the moon? In more recent history, consider the idea of having 3-D printing machines in our homes and medical specialists being able to print out prosthetic limbs and body parts for use in surgical procedures. Not so many years ago, how many people would have believed this to be impossible? What about the capabilities of the latest smartphones? You don't need to go back a great many years to find a time when few people would have believed that we'd all have access to this type of technology, not just James Bond.

If no one had believed these things were possible, they would never have happened. The inspired thinkers and doers behind these happenings *made* it possible, and in so doing, they made it possible for others to believe in greater possibilities. To get what you want in life, you must believe it's possible for you to achieve it. Entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson's backstory is a good example. In his teenage years, he wanted to be a magazine editor. However, with dyslexia, a poor academic history, and no relevant experience, no magazine would employ him. He could have chosen to give up on his dream, but instead, he chose to establish and publish his own magazine, giving himself the position of editor. From those early beginnings, Richard Branson became an internationally recognised billionaire business magnate. To all intents and purposes, he's a self-made man, but it's important to recognise that he didn't get there on his own. From an early age, he had the support of his parents in all his endeavours – even those that failed – and as an entrepreneur herself, his mother undoubtedly provided an inspirational influence. When asked about his decisions to start new ventures, his airline in particular, he has said, “My interest in life comes from setting myself huge, apparently unachievable challenges and trying to rise above them... from the perspective of wanting to live life to the full, I felt that I had to attempt it.”

Knowing What You Want

When you know what you want, you're already taking a step towards achieving it – mentally. The word 'want' adds power to your thoughts and actions, compared to thinking that achieving something might be a 'nice idea' someday but in the back of your mind you're not convinced it will ever happen. Achieving what you want takes commitment and dedicated effort, and it's always going to be easier to do what you *want* to do rather than something you feel you *have* to do, or *should* be doing.

Of course, not everyone knows what they want from a young age. However, something all successful people have in common is that they always want to be the best they can be. For example, when the Beatles were writing songs, they weren't intent on achieving a string of No.1 hits, they were simply focused on writing the best song they could – one song at a time. Olympic medallists aspire to win gold, but they succeed by focusing on one training session at a time and always giving a best effort.

Everyone has the capacity to be the best they can be, and your circumstances do not dictate who you are or who you can become. You may not set out in life knowing exactly what career path you want to follow, but you *can* set out knowing who you want to be as a person. When you know that you want to be the best version of you it's possible to be, you're on your way to realising your true potential – no matter where your journey is beginning from. Those who succeed know that success is a journey, not a destination. Not achieving 'instant' success doesn't mean you can't succeed, and failure to achieve something doesn't make *you* a failure. Your journey to success begins with your decision to succeed. Continuing on your journey takes commitment – the *want* to succeed.

Something it's important to question is whether the dream you're pursuing is *your* dream, or the dream someone else has for you. When your dream is in fact someone else's dream for you, you're in danger of doing what you feel you *should* want to do, not what you truly want to do. 'Want' is a word that has power, but when it becomes 'should want', its power is instantly diluted.

Successful people do what they love and love what they do. What you love to do may not be what others believe you should do, but if you're doing what you love, you're going to be doing it often, and through doing – and doing your best – you are going to get better and better at doing it. You may not have all the external resources you need to succeed initially, but when you have the *want* to succeed, you have all the inner resources you need to bring the people, the things, and the opportunities you need into your life.

Believing in You

Knowing who you want to be, not who others believe you to be, is essential if you are to become that person. The negative voices of doubt can come from many directions, both external and internal, but Vincent Van Gogh once very wisely said, "If you hear a voice within you say, 'You cannot paint,' then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced."

To further illustrate this point, here's some food for thought:

- Elvis Presley was turned away by the manager of the Grand Ole Opry. He told him, "You ain't goin' nowhere, son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck."
- Charles Darwin's father told him, "You will amount to nothing and be a disgrace to your family and yourself."
- Michael Jordan was initially prevented from joining his high school basketball team because he wasn't tall enough. On his second attempt, he was cut from the team because the coach didn't think he could play well enough.
- Thomas Edison was informed by a teacher at school that he was "too stupid to learn anything."
- Walt Disney was fired from his newspaper writing job by a boss who told him he "lacked imagination."

Imagine if all these famous people had chosen to adopt the negative opinions of those who didn't believe in them? Instead, they chose to believe in themselves and to continue pursuing their own dreams. They chose to follow their own path and to become the person they knew themselves to be. They recognised their inner lion.

Chapter 2

How to Get What You Want.

Successful people believe in their ability to succeed; they believe in themselves. No matter what the goal may be – big or small – those who achieve are those who believe. No matter how far from achieving the goal they may be as they set out to achieve it, they *believe* it's possible for them to get the outcome they want. So, the question you now need to answer is, "How strongly do you believe you can have what you want?"

You Are As You Think You Are

The way you think impacts *everything* you experience in life. Your thoughts influence the way you feel, and those feelings influence the way you perceive reality, or what you believe to be true. What you believe influences the way you feel about things, and those feelings influence the thoughts in your mind... and so the cycle continues. To help put this into context, think of a time when you felt really bored. If your thoughts are all linked to being bored, you're *thinking* about how bored you are, generating *feelings* of being bored, leading to experiencing a sense of total boredom as your perceived reality. You *think* you're bored; therefore you *are* bored. When you realise this, it becomes clear that getting what you want begins and ends with believing that you can get it.

Everything in the universe is a form of energy, thoughts and feelings included. Everyone is familiar with the reality of physical vibrations, but not everyone is familiar with the equally real existence of mental vibrations. Thoughts and emotions are energy, and every thought and feeling creates its own unique vibration. To understand this, just take a moment to consider a time when you have walked into a room or some other place and felt an 'atmosphere' in there. What you're feeling is the energy in the room; energy being created by the thoughts and emotions of the people in the room. Those people may not say a word or even appear to move, but the good or bad vibe you feel is their mental energy.

A 'good' or a 'bad' atmosphere is being created by the mental vibrations of others, but your own mental energy is responsible for those moments in life when you get a 'good' or a 'bad' feeling about something. You might consider it a gut feeling; that moment when you feel in your gut whether the thing you're about to do is going to be the 'right' or 'wrong' thing for you to do at that time. Energy is all around you, and when you're getting a good feeling about something, it's because you're choosing to think positively about it. Your positive thoughts are being sent out into the universe, and the positive energy attracts positive outcomes in return. Of course, if you're getting a bad feeling about something, it's because you're thinking negatively about it. You are as you think you are; your circumstances are as you believe them to be, and what you think about, you bring about.

Like Attracts Like

Thinking positively attracts positive outcomes. Now, this is not to say that sitting around daydreaming about all the great things you want to come your way in life will make them magically materialise. Thinking

positively leads to positive actions being taken, and it's those positive actions that lead to achieving what you want. The key thing to realise here is that it takes positive thoughts to drive positive actions, and as you know already, your thoughts and feelings influence your perception of yourself and your circumstances. This means that outwardly saying you want to achieve something holds no power if inwardly you don't believe you can. *Saying* that you want to pass your driving test is of no value if inwardly you're thinking that you'll probably fail; *saying* that you want to quit your job and start your own business is of no value if inwardly you don't believe you have what it takes to actually do it; or *saying* that you want to save up the cash you need to fund a dream trip but inwardly doubting your ability to ever do it can only lead to your thoughts becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. Like attracts like, but it's not just what you say that matters, it's what you believe and what you do that attracts positive outcomes. In this sense, you might think of it as being a bit like a battery – when you think positively, your thoughts charge up the energy in the universe, and when you think negatively, those thoughts deplete it.

On the topic of energy drains, have you ever found yourself in the company of people who seem to suck all the positivity out of any conversation or situation? They have a way of being down on everything, and no matter how good your mood is before you hook up with them, their negativity rubs off and you find yourself getting dragged down into their negativity. As the saying goes, 'misery loves company,' meaning that miserable people like to share their woes with others to ensure that everyone around them is put in a position to feel their pain. Being able to empathise with others is a good thing, but too much time spent in the company of misery will lead to their negative energy depleting your positivity.

Just as there are energy drainers in the world, there are energy boosters. Think of the people you've met that seem to generate a positive 'buzz' in a room and have a way of adding positivity to any conversation or situation. These people are putting out positive energy into the atmosphere and it positively charges the energy of everyone around them. Clearly, time spent with positive people is a good thing, making it important to step back and consider how the people you spend most time with might be influencing your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and therefore actions. This is not to say that you should go through life turning your back on people experiencing tough times, it simply means avoiding the potential to have misery as your only companion. You can be there for people who need to share their problems, but you also need to spend time with positive people who can give your mental energy a boost.

Be a Success Magnet

Like attracts like, and what you think about you bring about, so think of yourself as a success in the making and all that you need to achieve your goal will be attracted to you – you become a magnet to success. What you focus on, you give energy to, so keep your thoughts focused on what you want, not what you don't want, and on what you *can* do, not what you can't. When you think positively, the positive energy you put out into the universe is returned to you, taking you closer to the outcome you want and bringing the things you need closer to you. Negative thinking, or not truly believing in the things you say you believe in, can only ever result in repelling rather than attracting the outcome you want.

To attract the best outcomes, you need to be your best and give your best in all you think and all you do. If you're putting in a best effort, you're giving yourself the best opportunity to get the best return for your efforts. This is easily put into context by simply reflecting on the outcomes of any projects you've half-heartedly embarked on. If you're not fully committed to making something happen, it won't happen, and if

you're setting out with doubts over whether you'll see something through, you won't see it through. Like attracts like.

See Yourself as a Success

Success is always going to mean different things to different people, so *your* success can only be defined by you. In knowing what it is you want to achieve, you're already taking a step towards achieving it and, as you know, the *want* to do something adds power to your potential to succeed. However, getting what you want is always going to be inextricably linked to how strongly you believe you can have it. In effect, you can only get what you believe is yours for the taking.

For those with religious beliefs, it's perhaps easier to accept that whatever it is you need is already yours. There's a quote by Harriet Emilie Cady, 19th century homeopathic physician and author of 'Lessons in Truth', that sums this up beautifully: "A desire in the heart for anything is God's sure promise sent beforehand to indicate that it is yours already in the limitless realm of supply." With this belief, the desire you feel to pursue a particular course in life might be considered your calling – that deep inner feeling that guides you in the direction of your true purpose. Of course, discovering your purpose can take time and a bit of trial and error may be needed, but achieving your true potential and becoming the best you can be in whatever you choose to do in life comes down to believing that all you need to succeed is available to you.

With or without religious or spiritual beliefs, believing in yourself and seeing yourself as the person you want to be, living the life you want to live, is key to making it your reality. Seeing yourself as a success is made possible through a technique known as visualisation. Utilised by top-level athletes for many years, visualisation (also known as mental imagery) is now used in all areas of life, and by anyone interested in realising their true potential. It's a technique that effectively allows you to turn your dream life into a movie, with you in the starring role. The film begins with you as you are and in your current circumstances. It then ends with you living your dream life as the person you want to be. The bit in the middle is all about how you turned your dream into a reality, including how you created a clear image of what you wanted, and the action steps you took to keep moving towards your goal, even when obstacles threatened to block your path. The great thing about visualisation is that you can watch the film in your mind's-eye whenever you like, and you can skip backwards and forwards to whatever scenes you want to focus on. Life doesn't always go to plan, but without a clear plan of where you're aiming to be, you're in danger of drifting. When you can visualise your success, you're sending out positive mental energy into the universe which will be returned to you in the form of the things you need. And, being able to visualise how you will successfully overcome the inevitable obstacles that will get in your way helps to develop a powerful habit of positive thinking, giving your self-belief a boost whenever needed. You could say that through visualisation you have what you need to awaken and inspire your inner lion.

Finding Passion and Purpose

The question now is what to do if you're not sure of your purpose in life. What if you haven't experienced a calling; what if you're drifting through life feeling there's something missing that you just can't put your finger on, or what if you've reached a point in life where you feel stuck in a rut?

There's an inspirational way of thinking that can be traced all the way back to the ancient Norse people. It was their belief that everyone has their own "fire" within them and that those who could keep that fire alive and carry it with them throughout life would achieve most in life. The fire represents a burning passion. As

they saw it, the individuals destined to get most out of life were those that found something they loved to do and continued to do it. Using this as inspiration, you can discover your own “fire” by taking a moment to question what you love to do, and what fills you with enthusiasm? What gets you all fired up just thinking about it? What do you feel passionate about being or doing in life? What do you wish you could devote more time to doing – or wish you could do all the time? Answering these questions will help you find your passion and your purpose.

Of course, if you’re feeling stuck in a rut, you might not feel fired up or inspired by anything and, without realising it, you might be drifting through life waiting for inspiration to come your way. Your inner fire has all but gone out, making it hard to visualise what it is you want out of life. At times like this, an ‘inspiration board’ can be a positive way to actively seek out the things that are going to relight your fire! Gather together images or words that catch your attention, or you feel drawn to in any way. These could be images of places, people, memorable moments in time, possessions, things you admire, or anything at all that sparks your interest. These images can now act as reminders of things you’ve loved to do or things that matter in your life. Is there a connection between them? Are they things you’ve enjoyed in the past, or are they forgotten dreams that were never realised? Remember, it’s your life to live and your path to find, not the path someone else believes is the right one for you. If you’re feeling there’s something missing in your life, could it be that you’ve allowed the things you once loved to do and felt passionate about to fall by the wayside to concentrate on things you felt you *should* do, rather than *wanted* to do?

An inspiration board can help you to rediscover and rekindle your inner fire. All the clues you need to help you find what inspires you will be there, but sometimes it takes a physical visit to a meaningful location or time spent in the company of inspirational people to relight the fire-starting spark. From there, visualisation allows you to *see* yourself being who you want to be and doing what you want to do – fulfilling your true purpose, and realising your true potential. When you find your inspiration, you also find the source of positive energy that makes you a magnet to success.

Successful people don’t always start out with a clear picture of what they will become successful in, but they all start out with a vision of becoming the best they can be, and they all believe in their ability to achieve whatever they put their mind to. The things you put your mind to are the things that inspire and motivate you, so they’re things you feel passionate about and love to do. There are lots of successful individuals out there who have come to understand with the benefit of hindsight that the success they have in doing what they now do has come through always doing what they love to do. They may have dabbled in a variety of career paths and changed direction numerous times, but there will always be something they love to do connecting each choice – something that has allowed them to keep their inner fire alive and carry it with them on their journey. The road to success is rarely straight and smooth. Twists, turns, bumps, and detours are part of life, but when you know in your heart where you want to go, everywhere the route takes you along the way is another step to getting there. The connections are there, and those connections will lead you from where you are to where you want to be.

To begin building a clearer picture of where you want to be, try asking yourself these questions and answering them with total honesty. When you get to where you want to be...

- Who are you?
- Where do you work?
- What do you do?
- Where do you live?

- Who do you have around you in your life?
- What are you most proud of in your life?
- What makes you smile?

Honest answers to these questions, and detailed answers to these questions will give you what you need to visualise yourself being that person and living that life. Use your inspiration board to give you visual reminders of things that matter and things you love to do, and this will help you to build an ever-clearer picture of where it is you're going. The positive mental energy generated through seeing and experiencing what you want becoming yours will keep your inner fire burning bright, and by keeping your focus on what you want, all the positive energy you put out into the universe will be returned to you, and all that you need to succeed will be attracted to you.