

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



How to Get What You Want and Want What You Have

John Gray

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ABOUT BOOK

Millions of readers have experienced John Gray's healing advice through his *Mars and Venus* series. Now this master therapist takes therapy to the next level with a brilliant new personal success programme. He presents an innovative and proven five-step method to make you happy, confident and at peace, enabling you to recognise and achieve your soul's desire and live a rich and fulfilling life.

This inspirational book shows you how to:

- Identify and take responsibility for the blocks to your personal success
- Understand your soul's desire
- Release negative emotions
- Identify needs and take action
- Decide what you want each day and put your life together in order to achieve it

John Gray is a psychologist and bestselling author of the *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* series. He features regularly as part of Oprah's 'Change Your Life TV' team

JOHN GRAY

How to Get What You Want *and Want What You Have*

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
PERSONAL SUCCESS

Vermilion
LONDON

This book is dedicated with greatest love and affection to my wife, Bonnie Gray. Her love, joy, wisdom, and light have not only graced my life but shine in every line of this book

INTRODUCTION

THE REAL CHALLENGE in life is not just getting what you want, but continuing to want what you have. Many people have learned how to get what they want, but then they no longer enjoy it. Whatever they get is never enough; they always feel as if they are missing something. They are not happy with themselves, their relationships, their health, or their work. There is always one more thing to disturb their peace of mind.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are those who are much more content with who they are, what they do, and how much they have, though they do not know how to get more of what they want. Their hearts are open to life, yet they are still not making their dreams come true. They do their best, but wonder why others have more. Most people fit somewhere between these two extremes.

Personal success is the middle ground, the place from which you get what you want and continue to want what you have. Personal success is not measured by who you are, how much you possess, or what you have accomplished. Instead, personal success is measured by how good you *feel* about who you are, what you have done, and what you have. Personal success is within our grasp, but we must clearly know what it is and set our intention to have it.

**Personal success is getting what you want and
continuing to want what you have.**

Personal success, however, is not just about feeling good or happy with your life. It also involves feeling confident

that you can get what you want and motivated to do what it takes. Personal success requires a clear understanding of how to create the life you want. For some, finding personal success is learning how to get more; for others, it's understanding how to be happier; and for many, it is learning both of these important skills.

Achieving personal success does not have to be left to chance, destiny, luck, or good fortune. Although some people are born with the ability, for most, the skills must be learned and practiced before personal success can be achieved. The good news is that you *can* learn how to achieve personal success, and you are probably much closer to it than you could ever imagine. For most people, it is just a matter of making a few small but significant changes in the way they think, feel, or act to create the fulfilling life they want.

A few small but significant changes in the way we think can pave the way to greater personal success.

Applying one or two new insights to your life can literally change everything overnight. Although circumstances may temporarily be the same, the way you look at your life can change in an instant. When the glare of life is too much, putting on dark glasses enables you to begin to relax and to see clearly again in an instant. Likewise, by making a few adjustments you will suddenly not only be happier with what you have, but also be confident that you are on the road to getting what you want.

Four Steps to Personal Success

There are four steps to achieving greater success in your life. Throughout *How to Get What You Want and Want What You Have*, we will explore each of these steps in greater detail. They are:

Step One: Set your intention. Recognize where you are now and clearly see where you need to go to achieve the right balance of inner and outer success for you. No matter how hard you try, if you are going in the wrong direction, all you will meet in life is resistance, and you will never reach where you want to go. By acting in harmony with your soul's desire, and not just the desires of your mind, heart, and senses, you will be well prepared for both inner and outer successes.

Step Two: Get what you need. Learn how to get what you need to be true to yourself. It is not enough to say, "I want to be me." To know yourself and be true to yourself, you must understand the ten different kinds of love and support that every person needs. With an understanding of what you are missing and how to get it, you will begin automatically to experience inner success. A car may work fine, but if you don't fill it up with gas it won't run. Likewise, if you are not getting certain love needs fulfilled, you cannot find your true self.

Step Three: Get what you want. Understand the secrets of creating outer success without having to give up being true to yourself, and you will begin to get everything you want in the outer world. Realize the importance of strong desires, positive beliefs, and passionate feelings in creating and attracting what you want. Learn how to strengthen the power of your desires by acknowledging and transforming negative feelings and emotions.

Step Four: Remove the blocks to personal success.

Become aware of the twelve common blocks that could be holding you back from having what you want, and begin to clear the way for both inner and outer success. Learn to release any of the twelve blocks that may be holding you back: blame, depression, anxiety, indifference, judgment, indecision, procrastination, perfectionism, resentment, self-pity, confusion, and guilt. With this new ability, you will begin to experience that nothing outside yourself is holding you back.

Deborah Finds a Husband

When Deborah first started learning personal success, she was struggling to achieve greater outer success and desperate to get married. By resetting her intention toward finding peace and happiness within, she was able to let go of struggle. To make this shift, she realized she wasn't getting the support she needed. She wasn't giving herself the support to relax and do what she wanted to do. As she started to feel better about herself and her life, she was able to start attracting and creating what she wanted.

Not only did she find a great job, but she finally met the man of her dreams and got married. To move on into her new life and get married, she had to remove three of the blocks to personal success. In the past, when it came to making a commitment, she would become confused, judgmental, and indecisive. By removing these blocks, she was able to continue to want the man who loved her. By following the four steps to personal success, Deborah started making her dreams come true.

Tom Starts a Bakery

Tom had always wanted to have his own bakery, but had settled for working at a television station. He didn't want to be doing his job and occasionally resented and judged the people with whom he worked. The first step for Tom to begin achieving personal success was to set his intention to be happy regardless of his circumstances. He began practicing meditation and experienced as a result increased inner fulfillment and happiness.

His job was no longer a major source of dissatisfaction for him. By getting the support he needed in meditation, he began visualizing what he wanted. He started getting little things right away. It seemed his life was filled with little miracles. He would want a travel assignment and get it. Or he would want to be praised and acknowledged, and it would happen. His confidence that he could attract and create what he wanted grew.

This confidence freed him to follow his dreams. He left his job and started a bakery. To make this shift, he first had to let go of his blocks. At his job, he often had to deal with resentment and judgments. Gradually, as these blocks dropped off, he let go of his procrastination and indecision and made the move toward starting his new business, which is now a great success.

Robert Reconnects with His Children

Robert was already a multimillionaire when we began applying the principles and practices of personal success. He had achieved outer success, but he was miserable. He had been divorced three times, and he wasn't on speaking terms with his children. From the outside, he had it all, and no one except his counselor and his ex-wives knew how unhappy he was. People who don't have a lot of money often can't imagine that with millions of dollars a person might have difficulty being happy. Yet it is very common.

Robert learned to look within to find his happiness. He wanted to attract someone in his life to share his great wealth, but first he had to enjoy it himself. He always had to have a beautiful woman by his side to feel good. He learned to be happy without a partner for one year. He took time off to travel the world.

As he finally learned that he could be happy on his own, he took time to heal his relationships with his children. As he started giving and receiving the love he needed, his dependence on outer success decreased. He was glad he had it, but realized how it had kept him from finding real peace and happiness.

To resolve issues with his children and to find a partner to share his life, he had to move through many blocks. He had to let go of his blame, judgments, and indifference toward his ex-wives, and understand why his children resented him. By releasing these blocks, he was grateful to reconnect with his kids and feel peace and joy in his life.

Facing Life's Challenges

As you achieve personal success, life ceases to be a struggle; what was difficult becomes easier. Life will still have its problems, but you will be more successful in solving them. Doors that seemed locked before will begin to open. You will feel relieved and free to be yourself and to do what you are here to do. You will be better equipped to meet life head on. Life's inevitable challenges will become opportunities to make you more powerful.

In whatever way you don't already experience your inner goodness and greatness, the radiant light of your true self will begin to shine and light your way. With the dawning of this inner light, your journey through darkness will be over. Not only will you begin to clearly sense what you are here in this world to do, but you will realize that

you are not alone. The truth that you are loved and supported in this world will become a living, tangible experience.

With the dawning of the inner light of self-love, your journey through darkness will be over.

Personal success is not an imaginary state of grace devoid of conflict, disappointment, or frustration. A big part of mastering personal success is learning how to transform negative feelings into positive feelings and negative experiences into lessons learned. Being true to yourself is a growing process involving much change, which includes experiencing life's ups and downs. Achieving personal success means that when you fall down, you will know exactly how to get back up.

Those who take the risk to be themselves and to follow their hearts will occasionally fall down. Mistakes, setbacks, and adjustments are a part of life, an important part of how we learn and grow.

The main difference between those who succeed in life and those who fail is the knowledge of how to get back up.

Personal success is different for everyone. For some, it is a roller-coaster ride, and they love it. For others, it is a gentle ride on a big Ferris wheel. Though there is a lot of starting and stopping, they enjoy a great view with good conversation. Most of the time, they get to enjoy going around without any interruption. Certainly everyone's ride in life is unique, but in every case there will be ups and downs, twists and turns, starts and stops.

As you achieve greater personal success, you will still feel negative emotions, but they will always lead you back to increasing waves of joy, love, confidence, and peace. Once you learn how to move through negative emotions, you will realize how important they are, and you wouldn't want to live your life without them. If you are looking to experience a life without the flow of negative and positive emotions, visit a graveyard and rest in peace.

Being alive means movement. The secret of personal success is staying in touch with your inner peace, joy, love, and confidence. When you feel confident that you know how to begin to get what you want, you are less restless, you accept that life is a process, and you understand that it sometimes takes time to get what you want. When your heart is open and you are being true to yourself, you are able to enjoy and appreciate every step of your unique journey. The expectation for life to be perfect drops away as you discover that what you attract and create in your life is perfect for you.

You hold the power and the key to your future; you can do it, and only you can do it for you. With these new insights, you will gain the ability to find answers to all the questions you may have had about creating success. You will gain a new perspective that will help you make sense of your experiences in life. You will know with confidence how to get to where you want to go. These four steps provide a practical and spiritual road map for you to create the life you are meant to live.

CHAPTER 1

Money Can't Buy Happiness

MANY PEOPLE HAVE achieved a lot in their lives, but they lack peace. The world is filled with unhappy millionaires who cannot sustain loving relationships. Yet they and those who emulate them continue to think that more money or more of “something” will finally help them feel good about themselves and their lives.

As we all know, money does not buy happiness or love. Even though this maxim is familiar, it is still easy to get caught in the web of illusion that outer success can make us happy. The more we think that money is capable of making us happy, the more we give away our power to be happy without it.

As you read this, some part of you is probably thinking, “Yeah, I know that money can’t really make me happy, but it sure can help.” Although this thought is reasonable, it is important to recognize that it is a misconception that robs you of your power. To reset your direction in life, to make sure you are moving in the direction of personal success, you must recognize that money can’t make you happy. The experience that money makes you or others happy is an illusion.

The Nature of Illusion

Let’s explore for a moment the nature of illusion. When you experience the sun moving across the sky each day, another part of you knows that the sun isn’t really moving. Although your senses register the movement, your mind knows that

the sun is not moving. Though you feel stationary, you know the earth is spinning on its axis. Your mind knows that movement of the sun is an illusion, and that in truth you are moving.

Comprehension of this illusion requires abstract thinking. A young child cannot figure it out. Schoolteachers notice a shift from concrete thinking to abstract thinking in a child's development. In most cases, the shift happens practically overnight. One day, the student can't even begin to understand an algebra equation, and then suddenly, when the brain is ready, the student gets it. If the brain is not yet ready, no amount of instruction will help a student understand.

To comprehend or recognize an illusion, the brain must reach a certain level of development.

This shift in children from concrete thinking (the world is what you see) to abstract thinking (concepts are real as well) generally happens around puberty. As a child reaches twelve or thirteen, the brain has developed enough to comprehend concepts adults assume are obvious. Just as a child develops, the brain capacity of mankind develops over time as well. Ideas that challenged the greatest minds in history are now comprehended by fourteen-year-old science students.

The Making of Common Sense

Just five hundred years ago, everyone thought the earth was flat and the sun moved across the sky. They were not ready to comprehend this simple illusion. Their brains were not yet ready to comprehend the abstract thoughts necessary to recognize that the earth was moving and the

sun was stationary. When Copernicus described the phenomenon in 1543, many could not accept the challenge to their beliefs. He was perceived as a threat by the church and imprisoned in his home for the rest of his life.

After relatively a few years, his discovery became accepted. Mankind had taken a leap. What was impossible for most to comprehend became fact. Right now mankind is taking part in another leap forward to understand the secrets of personal success. All the great teachings and religions have led mankind to this point. Yet as we venture forward, these important traditions will continue to be a strong foundation. The algebra student will always depend on basic “concrete thinking” math skills to progress.

At this exciting time in history, many illusions are being recognized as such—for example, the illusions about relationships between men and women. I am always asked, “Why didn’t someone write *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* before? It is all so obvious. It just seems like common sense.”

An Idea Whose Time Has Come

The simple answer to this question is that it is an idea whose time had come. It would not have been so popular fifty years ago or even twenty years ago. When I started teaching *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* in the early eighties, some people were still getting upset with me, misinterpreting and misunderstanding what I had to say. They just could not comprehend the notion that men and women were different *and* that both were equally good. In their minds, if men and women were different, one had to be superior. Since I am a man, people assumed I was saying men were better than women. Gradually, during the course of fifteen years, the ideas in *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* have been accepted as common

sense not only in America, but around the world. This shift in comprehension is global.

The common sense of one generation was always a new discovery to previous generations. Just fifty years ago, the theme of the women's movement was that we are all equal because we are the same; women are not different from men. To earn equality, women had to prove that they were the same as men. At least society was letting go of the notion that one sex was better than the other. Now, once again, it is common knowledge that men and women are different, but we realize that being different doesn't mean one is "better" than the other.

The common sense of one generation was always a new discovery to previous generations.

We are on the threshold of recognizing the equality of the sexes without mistakenly assuming that one sex is in any way intrinsically better than the other. This same insight is gradually awakening us and preparing us to release racial discrimination as well. In a similar way, more and more people are recognizing and appreciating the value of all religious teachings. It is becoming accepted that God does not discriminate because of one's religion. God's grace is available to all regardless of whether you are agnostic, atheist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, whatever. God loves us regardless of what we believe. As the world becomes a smaller place, we have the opportunity to experience firsthand the goodness in various people of different faiths. This recognition of the goodness in all people regardless of their faith has freed many to release their limited beliefs from the past.

People are beginning to accept as common sense that all major religions can teach the truth and be different. And thank goodness; millions of lives have been lost because

people have been unable to comprehend that spiritual messages could be different but equal. As we enter the new millennium, it is now becoming common sense that “the paths are many, but they all lead to the same place.” We are seeing through the illusions that there is only one way, or one superior people, or one superior teaching or religion, for all people. As we see the wisdom in all religions, we are able to appreciate the truths in our personal paths even better.

A New Door Is Being Opened

With all these advances in common sense, a new door is being opened for mankind. We are now capable of debunking other illusions: the illusion that the outer world is responsible for how we feel; the illusion that outer success has the power to make us happy.

Even though it may seem that the outer world is responsible for how we feel, in truth we are fully responsible. When the outer world gives us more of what we want and “makes us happy,” the happiness is fleeting, because we continue to think that we need more to be happy. As we believe that we are dependent on the outer world, our inner connection becomes weaker. Just as happiness disappears with the belief that we can’t be happy without more, joy begins to last when we believe and regularly experience that our happiness is not dependent on outer circumstances. Let’s take money as an example to explore.

Joy begins to last when we experience that our happiness is not dependent on outer circumstances.

It is not money that makes us happy, but our inner belief, feeling, and desire. When we get more money, we are happy because we believe that we are now able to be ourselves. The permission to be ourselves actually makes us happy and not the money. For a brief moment we believe, "Now I have the power to be me and do what I want."

We have depended on money for this belief because we have been unable to turn within to discover that we have always had that power. Right now you have the power to begin turning inside to experience your inner goodness and greatness. With a little instruction and practice, you can begin to experience the truth of this important insight.

Right now you have the power to begin turning inside to experience your inner goodness and greatness.

In every case, money makes us happy because we believe that money allows us to be, do, have, or experience what we want. We are deficient in our ability to experience that who we are is already happy, loving, peaceful, and confident.

This experience, however, is within the reach of every person. In the past, only a few could attain this realization, and even then it would sometimes take a lifetime to achieve. Now the experience is immediately available by taking a few steps in a new direction. What was once attainable only to the recluse who left society to find inner peace is now available to all without having to give up a normal lifestyle.

When Jim came in for counseling, he was depressed. He was about forty-two, and he was not pleased with how his life had turned out. When he saw people drive by with expensive cars, he would feel bad inside, as if he had failed

somehow. He had not measured up and was not good enough.

He resented that others had more than he. He had done all the right things. He had gone to school. He had worked hard and gone to church. Why was he not getting the fun toys? Why was he missing out? Jim was resentful and judgmental of the wealthy and felt sorry for himself.

After a personal success workshop, his whole attitude about money changed. He realized that he had never really cared that much about money, and that's why he didn't have much. Although he wanted more, he realized that he had actually done okay in life. He also began to see how he was holding himself back by rejecting money.

His new challenge was to continue being happy with less, but to want more. When he would see expensive cars, he would say, "That's for me." As he started letting go of his resentments and judgments about money, he gave himself permission to want more. He forgave himself for his setbacks and mistakes in life and was even grateful for the lessons he learned.

He learned that he had both the power to have more and to be completely happy with what he had. He clearly experienced that he didn't need more to make him happy. As he let go of his attachment to money, he also started to make more. He learned the secret of getting what you want. He was able to want more while also appreciating what he had.

What was once available only to a few who choose to leave the stress of society to find inner peace is now available to all.

When I began teaching many of the principles of personal success more than twenty-five years ago, the results were good, but nothing approaching what they are

today. The principles have certainly worked for me, but it has taken most of my life to achieve. What people can gain from a two-day weekend workshop took me more than twenty years to achieve. The difference between now and then is like night and day, and even then the results were impressive.

Although a teacher likes to take a little credit for the success of his students, I am very aware that the time is right. Mankind is taking a wonderful step. We have all been born at this special time to take this step together. When the student's brain is ready, as in algebra, new insight and understanding becomes attainable with a little instruction and practice.

As a teacher for more than twenty-five years, I have witnessed this shift. The capacity to comprehend how we alone are responsible for our feelings is now within everyone's reach. With this one simple but important insight, the secrets of creating personal success finally can be comprehended and applied by all and not just by a few fortunate ones.

CHAPTER 2

Outer Success Magnifies Our Feelings

MONEY, RECOGNITION, MARRIAGE, children, a great job, terrific clothes, winning a lottery, or any other form of outer success is like a magnifying glass that is turned on your inner feelings. If you are already peaceful, you will feel more peaceful. If you are already happy and loving, you will be happier and more loving. If you are already confident, you will be more confident.

On the other hand, to the degree that you are not happy, the joy, love, confidence, or peace in your life will diminish. Without your first achieving personal success, “having more” will just complicate your life and create more problems. If you are not happy first, getting rich will not make you any happier.

If you are already happy and you know that you are not dependent on more money to be happy, greater wealth can make you happier. There is nothing wrong with wanting more money. The quest for more money limits us only when we forget the real source of happiness is within.

The secret of getting what you want and wanting what you have is first to learn how to be happy, loving, confident, and peaceful regardless of outer conditioning. Then, as you achieve more worldly success, you can become happier. By first learning to be happy with what you already have, material success will follow in an appropriate manner according to what you really want in life.

The Illusion of External Success

The inherent promise of all external success is an illusion. When we are unhappy, we think a new car, a better job, or a loving partner will make us happier. Yet with each acquisition, the opposite effect is achieved.

When we are unhappy, we commonly think “having more” will take away our inner pain. But it doesn’t. There is never enough. As we continue to feel unhappy “because we don’t have more,” the illusion of outer success is reinforced. Increasingly we believe that we can’t be happy unless we have more. These are some common examples:

“I can’t be happy until I have made a million dollars.”

“I can’t be happy until my bills are paid.”

“I can’t be happy unless my wife changes.”

“I can’t be happy unless my husband is more attentive.”

“I can’t be happy unless I have a better job.”

“I can’t be happy unless I lose weight.”

“I can’t be happy unless I win.”

“I can’t be happy unless I am respected or appreciated.”

“I can’t be happy with so much stress in my life.”

“I can’t be happy because there is too much to do.”

“I can’t be happy because there is not enough to do.”

Initially getting what we want appears to work, but after a short period of happiness we are unhappy once again. As before, we mistakenly believe that having more will make us happy and take away our pain. Unfortunately each time we look to outer success for fulfillment, we feel more

emptiness inside. Instead of feeling greater joy and peace in our lives, we feel more turmoil and dissatisfaction.

Without personal success, the more we get, the more unhappy we become. Why is it that the tabloids are full of unhappy stories about the rich and famous? For many celebrities, fame and money bring only misery, drug addiction, divorce, violence, betrayal, and depression.

If we don't learn to create personal success, getting more in life leaves us feeling more dissatisfied and anxious.

Their lives exemplify that external success can bring fulfillment only if we are already in touch with our internal positive feelings. Outer success can be a heaven or a hell, depending on the degree of personal success we have already achieved.

Personal Success Comes from Within

Personal success comes from within and is achieved when you are able not only to be yourself, but also to love yourself. It is feeling confident, happy, and powerful in the process of doing what you want to do. Personal success involves not just achieving goals, but feeling grateful and satisfied with what you have after you get it. Without personal success, no matter who you are or how much you have, it will never be enough to make you happy.

Personal success is achieved when you feel really good about yourself and your past, present, and future.

To achieve personal success, we must first recognize the futility of making material success our highest priority. What good is it to achieve a goal and then feel it is not enough? What good is it to get what you have always wanted and then not want it anymore? What good is it to have millions of dollars and then look in the mirror and feel unlovable? What good is it to sing your song and have others love it, but hate it inside? To find true and lasting happiness, we must make a small but very significant shift in our thinking. We must make achieving personal success and not material success our number one priority.

Experiencing Happiness

Lasting happiness comes from within. Getting what you want can only make you happy to the degree that you are already happy. Doing something well and learning something new can only make you more powerful to the degree that you are already feeling confident. Loving others can only be sustained to the degree that you already love yourself. Peace, harmony, and time to relax in your life can only be found to the degree that you are already relaxed and peaceful. The outer world can only bring us waves of love, joy, power, and peace when we are already feeling it inside.

Material success can only make you happy if you are already happy.

When you are already happy, what you get in life allows you to feel it. It is like lying comfortably in a warm bath. If you lie really still, you won't notice the warmth after a while. If you move around a little and stir things up, you will begin to feel waves of warmth again. To feel the

warmth two conditions must be met: you must be in the warm water and you must experience some movement.

In a similar manner, to experience waves of happiness in life, we must already be happy and then experience the waves generated by getting what we want. If we are already happy, it doesn't take enormous material success to generate delicious and delightful waves of joy.

If you are lying in a bath connected to your inner power and confidence, by just moving around you will experience waves of confidence. When you are lying in a bath of love and peace, your interactions will bring you waves of love and peace.

On the other hand, if you are feeling unhappy, unloving, insecure, or stressed, your daily interactions will bring you waves of unhappiness, disappointment, and distress. No matter how successful you are in getting what you want, it will bring only misery and stress.

The Real Cause of Unhappiness

When outer success leaves us feeling unhappy, we conclude that the cause of our unhappiness is not having the next thing. It is easy to make this mistake. Most of the time, when we are unhappy, we are wanting something. We automatically conclude that we are unhappy because we don't have what we want. This conclusion is incorrect.

We mistakenly conclude that the cause of unhappiness is not getting or having what we want.

As you achieve more personal success, you discover that wanting more and not getting it does not cause unhappiness. Instead, wanting more creates positive and happy feelings like passion, confidence, determination,

courage, excitement, enthusiasm, faith, appreciation, gratitude, love—the list goes on. Wanting more is not the cause of unhappiness. When you are already happy and confident inside, wanting more and engaging yourself in the process of getting more creates waves of joy, love, confidence, and peace.

Desire or wanting more is the nature of the soul, mind, heart, and senses. The soul is always willing to be more; the mind is always seeking to do more and know more; the heart is always longing to love more and have more; and the senses are always wanting to enjoy more. If we are true to ourselves, we will always want more.

Wanting more is the nature of our soul, mind, heart, and senses.

It is natural to want more love in our relationships. It is good to want more success in our work. It is normal to enjoy the pleasures of the senses and to want more. Wanting more is our natural state. There is nothing wrong with desire. Abundance, growth, love, pleasure, and the movement toward more is the nature of life.

Wanting more and having less is not the cause of our unhappiness. Unhappiness is simply the lack of inner joy and has nothing to do with our external condition. The real cause of unhappiness is the absence of joy. Unhappiness is similar to darkness. Darkness is the absence of light. The way to remove darkness is simply to turn on the lights. Likewise, our unhappiness lessens as we learn to turn on the light within ourselves.

Darkness cannot be directly removed, but it automatically disappears when you turn on the light.

When we are connected to or are in touch with our true nature, we are automatically happy. Why? Because who we are is already happy. Our true nature is already loving, joyful, confident, and peaceful. To find happiness, we must begin an inner journey to recover and remember who we really are. By looking inside ourselves, we will discover that the joy, love, power, and peace we are looking for is already there. Those qualities are who we already are.

CHAPTER 3

Selling Out to Outer Success

IN LITERATURE AND in the movies, there are often stories of people who achieve success by selling their souls to the devil or to the “dark force.” Although these stories are fictional there is actually a lot of truth to the metaphor. It is much easier to achieve outer success if you give up who you are. Selling your soul or selling out simply means making outer success more important than your soul’s desire to be loving, joyful, and peaceful.

Love, joy, trust, compassion, patience, wisdom, courage, humility, gratitude, generosity, confidence, and kindness, etc., are all human qualities inherent in every person. When you deny the natural process of developing and expressing these qualities, you are selling out. Outer success is then achieved, but it is not truly fulfilling.

When you devote all your attention to outer success, you get there faster but lose yourself in the process. You lose the ability to want what you have. You forfeit the ability to experience peace in your mind and love in your heart. Happiness is either fleeting or always just around the corner, out of reach.

**When you devote all your attention to outer success
you get there faster, but you lose yourself.**

Many people have achieved great worldly success by not being loving. They deny their inner loving selves to become more powerful. It is easier to make decisions and do what

achieves outer success when you do not care about anyone else. This is the dark side of material success. It does not apply to all, but it does explain why some very abusive people have so much power.

Without caring about the needs and feelings of others or about what is fair, they are free to be selfish. Unencumbered by the needs of others, they can ruthlessly move ahead. History abounds with powerful and corrupt people who achieved fame and fortune by abusing, neglecting, and stepping on others. All they cared about was power and not what happened to others. Outer success was more important than being true to themselves. Although their lives may have appeared prosperous and fulfilled on the outside, they were impoverished inside.

Be Happy and Success Will Follow ... but Not Always

On the other hand, some choose to be true to themselves, but often miss out on achieving outer success. They observe the popular idea of following their hearts, following their bliss, or simply going with the flow. "Don't worry, be happy," or "Let go and let God do it" are sometimes their mottoes. They believe that if they focus on being happy, success will happen. Though this sounds great, it is not always true. Being true to yourself can make you happy, but it does not ensure getting you what you want.

The world is full of people who are very happy without having much in external terms. While visiting villages in India, southeast Asia, parts of Africa, and other places around the world, I have observed many people who have tremendous joy and peace in their lives without outer material success. The world is filled with millions of people who are happy but poor. Even in wealthy countries, some of the nicest, most giving people still have difficulty paying their bills and making ends meet. These people have found