

# **Creating a life you love**

**By Kathryn Hodgson**

**Part 3**

**Whatever you can do, or dream you can,  
begin it.  
Boldness has genius, power and magic to it.**

Part 3 is about developing an action plan and staying motivated..

By now you should have a lot of information and ideas about what you want in your life, and have incorporated some of the smaller stuff already. How's it going? Are there any bits of the course you have not done, or have given up on? E-mail me so we can find the block that is holding you back. Is there really anything more important than this? You need to commit to doing this, invest in yourself. At the end of your life will you be glad you spent your time as you are doing now? And chose OK instead of the best when it was there for the taking?

***Use everything you have to run towards your best.***

Can you honestly say you are living your best life? Being the best friend, partner, parent, employee that you can be? And more importantly being the best *you* you can be, reaching your potential in all areas? Or is there something you wonder 'what if'? Maybe you are now saying to yourself – ah but if you had my debt/ illness/ partner/ childhood you would see I cannot change things. Yes you can. I can give you examples of people in the same situation, or worse, that have turned things around. You are doing the best you know how to today – learn better for tomorrow.

### **Task 1**

***The more roses you plant, the less weeds can grow.***

At the end of each day sit down and look back on how the day went. Where could you have done better? Did you snap at someone, or waste time watching bad TV? Or maybe binge ate or gossiped? If that day were played on a cinema screen would you be happy for people to watch? As a director of that film, what would you change? Also notice the times you felt bad, and what triggered it.

This is not about beating yourself up, it's about learning and improving. If you don't, you will keep repeating the same destructive patterns over and over again. Remember what we said about habits? Most of what we do, even the way we react to certain people, is an unconscious act. You need to make them conscious so you can change them. Pick one at a time to work on, maybe something small to start with. Then build on it.

Doing this kind of thing, and working towards your dream, enables you to be more content right now too. You have a future to look forward to, and you can be proud of yourself for taking control of your life. And you are doing more of what makes you happy.

### ***Action plan.***

I'm sure you have all heard of goal setting, and how it has to be specific, realistic, and have a target date. Life coaching focuses on this with regular check-ins to see if you are on target. This doesn't work for everyone though. It may suit you better to have a list of things to do and commit to spending half an hour a day doing something on the list. That can be your action plan. This allows you freedom to choose what you want to do each day, rather than you feeling like you have to do a certain thing. Some days you may feel like just reading or researching, others going out and being active. As long as you are committed to doing something everyday then you will achieve your dream. A part of creating a life you love is opening up space in your life to let things happen, for ideas to appear, and opportunities to arise. If you are looking the other way you may miss an important opportunity.

Think of a time when you set a goal and achieved it, did you need to give yourself a deadline to ensure you achieved it? Or just a vision of where you were going and a commitment to do something everyday to keep moving forward?

Think of a goal and imagine setting a date to achieve it by, does that make you feel more or less motivated? Use the method that feels right for you. Another clue is to look at what holidays you enjoy – do you like to have a set plan or be flexible to decide as you go along? Or somewhere in between?

## **Task 2**

Write down the following areas of your life on different pieces of paper and then under each write down what you want to achieve in that category:

physical health, finance, where you live, immediate family/relationships, the person you are/emotional health, what you do to earn a living, things for fun and any other dreams..

Now brainstorm what you need to do to start each – is it researching for information, getting professional advice, booking on a course, doing 10 mins a day or a one off session? Are there any immediate goals that need to be worked on, eg. building self-belief, healing pain, getting finances organised, etc. These are first.

What things can you quickly get in place or start, eg. exercising or doing more of what you love etc. This may take a bit of research to find out where and with whom. Do these next. The more small things you achieve now will keep you motivated to do the bigger stuff. It is better to have small steps and take more than to set yourself big steps and do less. That is demotivating.

Under each heading write down what you need to do in the order it needs doing, eg. do a search on 'google' for courses that are available (or visit a library), get information on each course, talk to people who are already trained, choose which course is most suitable and affordable, book, research ways to use what you learn or how to gain experience now, read up on the topic, go on course, talk to people on course for ideas on where to go next, get involved in something that uses your new skills, look for a new job or set up own business. Along the way

other ideas or directions to go may appear, add these to your list and follow them.

Write a weekly 'to do' list with a few steps from each category on it, or alternatively pick one category to work on first. Which one change would make the biggest difference in your life? Prioritize that.

Either work on your to do list, and when something is crossed off add another, or set yourself a list of goals to achieve in that week. Do what you want to do most rather than making it seem like a chore. As long as you keep doing something to achieve what you want it will happen.

*Your weekly action plan should include:*

- Doing something to keep you motivated and inspired everyday
- Looking back on each day to see what you can improve on
- Looking for ways to add more things that make you happy into your life
- A specific goal to pursue

(I say daily because it needs to be regular and become a habit, but if you miss the odd day that is fine.)

A quick word on researching ideas – the internet is a wonderful resource. Type in the keywords of what you love and see what sites come up then follow the trail, I have found great information by following the links on a website to another, then to another. Type in 'how to have a career in ....', or 'how to learn more about....' and you will be amazed. There may be a book on it, or a message board where people in with the same interests can give advice. Another way is to look in magazines – there are so many magazines for different areas of interest, and they often have how to articles, job adverts and information on courses. Go along to exhibitions that are advertised and gather info. Libraries have career books that list information on different careers too. Get the job vacancies part of a paper

and look for a job you think sounds fascinating, then look at what skills and qualifications you would need to achieve it. There are now how-to books on every area of physical and emotional health, as well as on money management communication skills and going for your dreams. Be open and excited about finding crumbs to follow – you never know where they might lead!

### **Staying motivated**

The most important part of an action plan is being strongly motivated. This is similar to getting fit – it needs regular attention, you wouldn't just exercise once a month and expect to be fit would you? Doing things to keep yourself motivated and inspired should be included in your day if you want to create a life you love. It also feels better to be motivated.

People are either motivated to move towards something, or away from it. Which are you? Think of the reasons you want to change, is it to get rid of what you don't want, or to get more of what you do? You may have a mixture of both, but which gets the strongest reaction when you think of it? The best way to stay motivated is to remind ourselves of the reasons we want to create a better life. If you are someone who moves away from things you need to turn that around, if you do not want X what do you want? The problem with focusing on moving away is that you will lose motivation the further you get away, whereas with moving forward you get more motivated the closer you get.

If you are away from – write a list of all the things you want rid of, then use that to write a list of the opposite – what you want instead.

Visualization is a very powerful way of staying motivated. Without going into too much detail, the brain seeks to create what you focus on. If you focus on negative things you will look out for what reinforces that, if you focus on the positive you will create more of that. (Incidentally – thinking negatively weakens the body quite dramatically so retraining yourself to think positively will benefit

you in many ways. I have many exercises to help you change your thinking if you wish to contact me for more help on that.)

### **Task 3**

Visualization is a guided daydream. If done properly you will also hear and feel the experience you visualize. By daydreaming daily about the life you want you will stay compelled to create it.

Look back at the first task you did on this course about how you would like your life. Imagine you are living that life now, imagine you are there looking around you. The image needs to be life size, in colour and in motion. What can you see? How does it feel? What do you hear? Imagine one specific aspect, how would it be to be waking up in your dream house? Or getting paid to do what you love? Everything you are doing now is taking you closer to that.

Visualization takes practice, and you will soon be able to go there really quickly. (it is also a really good way to change how you feel – if you need confidence imagine being confident, or think of something that makes you feel good if need a pick-me up).

Pick the first thing you want to achieve – maybe confidence, or a car? Whatever you want first – visualize that every day.

Another way to keep motivated is to create a collage of what your dreams are. Get a big piece of coloured card and stick pictures on that you remind you of a life you want. Have people you admire and aspire to be like, the house you want, a car, symbols of happiness, health and what's important to you. Place this where you see it every day, it will keep you focused and remind you when you feel discouraged. It's also fun to do!

The third way to stay motivated is to set intentions. These are like declarations of where you will put your attention each day. They set the direction of your life. And you can put them somewhere you will be reminded, or carry them round with

you. I suggest you read them every morning so you can start the day focusing on what you want. They are more than just affirmations, they are like a contract with yourself. The word intention makes it more compelling. As I keep saying – you need to be reminded until they become second nature, especially when you are tempted to do the opposite!

Think of what you want in your life. What do you need to do in order to achieve that? Make sure it is positive and about what you want rather than what you do not want. Get specific, eg.

I intend to be healthier and fitter for the future

I intend to be more patient with X

I intend to spend 10 minutes a day focused on my dream

I intend to be kinder to myself.

I suggest no more than 5 or 6 to start with.

The final way to stay motivated is, as I suggested in part 1, to read about people who have achieved their dreams. There are many biographies of people who have horrific set backs that then manage to achieve great success, or people who have lost everything then built it back up. If they can do it then you can too, one baby step at a time.

Here are some stories of people who have achieved their dreams:

1. When Monty Roberts was in high school his teacher gave the class the assignment to write about what they wanted to do when they grew up. Monty wrote that he wanted to own his own 200-acre ranch and raise thoroughbred racehorses. His teacher gave him an F and explained the grade reflected that he deemed the dream unrealistic. No boy who lived in a camper on the back of a truck would ever be able to amass enough money to buy a ranch, let alone the

stock and pay salaries. The teacher gave Monty the chance to re-write his assignment but Monty refused. Today he has a 154-acre ranch, raising thoroughbred racehorses, as well as writing best-seller books and having the film 'The Horse Whisperer' based on him.

2. Having lost his right leg to cancer Terry Fox embarked on a cross-Canada run called the Marathon of Hope in 1980 to raise money for cancer research. His shuffle-and-hop running style covered about 24 miles a day, for 143 days before having to abandon his run after more cancer was found. When asked how he kept himself going he answered 'I just kept running to the next telephone pole.'

3. In 1990 Jim Carrey was still a struggling comic when he wrote himself a cheque for \$10 million, dated Thanksgiving 1995 'for acting services rendered'. He carried it around with him to remind himself of his dream and by 1995 he was being paid \$20 million per film.

4. In 1991 Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hanson wrote 'Chicken Soup for the Soul' and took it round publishers. Time after time they were told collections of short stories don't sell. After over 130 rejections that first book went on to sell 8 million copies, followed by a series of 60 best-selling books translated into 39 languages. They are also in the Guinness Book of Records for having the most books in the New York Times bestsellers list at the same time.

5. Oscar Hammerstein had five flop shows that lasted less than a combined total of 6 weeks before Oklahoma! ran for 269 weeks and grossed \$7 million.

6. Tawni O'Dell had written 6 unpublished novels and collected over 300 rejection slips before 'Back Roads' got published and spent 8 weeks on the New York Times best-seller list.

7. Colonel Harlan Sanders had over 300 rejections before he found someone to believe in his dream – and now there are over 11,000 KFC restaurants in 80 countries around the world.

Notice any 'yeah but' thoughts that popped into your head as you read them, and run through the fear exercise in part 2. These people are no different to you – they just got up and kept going until they made their dreams happen. You can too.

### **Part 3 Summary**

- Reviewing each day so can learn from it
- Creating an action plan that suits you
- How to stay motivated

### **Next Session:**

Patience

More ideas to earn while you follow your dream

Looking after yourself and learning relaxation

### **Recommended reading:**

The Success Principles by Jack Canfield

The Art of Happiness by Dalai Lama

The Power of Intention by Wayne Dyer