

“The biggest adventure you can take is to live the  
life of your dreams.” – Oprah Winfrey

# YOU CAN

21 SECRETS TO GETTING THE

# HAVE A

LIFE YOU DESIRE – FULL OF

# BETTER

SIGNIFICANCE, JOY AND PURPOSE

# LIFE

DAWNA STONE

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The book provides advice but does not guarantee any specific outcomes or results.

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*To Dad, With Love*

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## *Introduction:*

# A Wake-Up Call

I thought about calling this book *My Dying Dad*, because that's how the idea was sparked. It took my dad's deteriorating health to awaken and remind me that I wasn't living in the here and now. I wasn't living the life I desired.

So I thought it fitting to title the book *My Dying Dad: What a Dying Man Taught Me About Living*, but my agent wasn't as keen on the idea as me. That's how *You Can Have a Better Life: 21 Secrets to Getting the Life You Desire—Full of Significance, Joy and Purpose* came to be. Call the book whatever you want; that's of little importance. For me, it served as a wake-up call, and I hope it will for you, too.

It's never too late to change your life for the better. *You Can Have a Better Life* inspires you to live the existence you desire and deserve. The book encourages you to

stop waiting for success, love and purpose to find you. It prompts you to take action and to live your best life now.

In truth, watching my dad's health rapidly deteriorate pushed me to rethink how to live. But why, I wondered, did it take his looming death to finally wake me up and prompt me to take action? Don't wait another second to make your remaining time worth living. *You Can Have a Better Life* shows how even small shifts in your lifestyle and thinking patterns can welcome in more abundance.

*You Can Have a Better Life* provides easy-to-follow tips and tools for making your best life attainable. You have a choice. You can continue going through the motions and living a mediocre existence, or you can choose to live passionately with purpose and joy. Simply harnessing the power of free will and taking action can dramatically improve your life and the lives of those around you—allowing you to lead a successful and more fulfilling existence.

You have the power to catapult your success, enhance your relationships, strengthen your love and grow your faith. You'll see the huge impact of incredibly simple changes (that you can start making immediately).

*You Can Have a Better Life* is divided into five sections. Sections one through four cover “Life,” “Success,” “Faith”

and “Family & Friends.” Each section serves as a motivational force to help you live fully—right now!

The fifth section, “It’s Not Too Late,” reinforces the fragility of life and encourages you to live fully, to stop awaiting the arrival of positive change and to proactively make decisions that create these desired shifts.

Within each section, we will cover the simple secrets to getting the life you desire. You will learn to:

- 1) Believe in yourself
- 2) Go after success rather than waiting for it to find you
- 3) Visualize your success
- 4) Be “all in”
- 5) Slow down to speed up
- 6) Never give up
- 7) See life as a gift
- 8) Practice self-acceptance
- 9) Be your real self
- 10) Do what matters most
- 11) Forgive others
- 12) Forgive yourself
- 13) Learn from others



- 14) Have faith
- 15) Let go of fear and worry
- 16) Give thanks for what you have
- 17) Put family first
- 18) Surround yourself with positive people
- 19) Become a passionate teacher
- 20) Take care of yourself
- 21) Live every day like it's your last

*You Can Have a Better Life* ultimately teaches you how to willingly receive the goodness that comes your way. Too often we close ourselves off, believing that prosperity is not ours to have. When we block ourselves from those gifts, we miss out on unbelievable opportunities. This book shows you how to create your own change, while at the same time welcoming infinite blessings from the world around you.

The step-by-step guidance will help you remove obstacles and lead you along the right path. Use the exercises at the end of each chapter to ensure you follow all 21 steps designed to create the desired shift.

At the end of the book, you'll find a heartfelt letter I wrote to my dying dad. If you have ever lost someone dear to you, whether or not a father figure, I assume you

will, in some way, relate to this sincere outpouring of love. I hope it will motivate you to move toward your desired life before it's too late. It's time to wake up and live passionately with purpose and joy!

## ***Free Gift:***

As a special thank you for purchasing *You Can Have A Better Life*, I want to give you two chapters of my next book: *Succeed With Purpose: Unleash Your Potential, Boost Your Career and Increase Your Income*.

**To claim your free chapters, go to:**

**[DawnaStone.com/SWPchapters](http://DawnaStone.com/SWPchapters)**

Although there is no obligation, if you *do* have a chance to read these free chapters, I would be delighted to hear your feedback. You can connect with me at [Dawna@DawnaStone.com](mailto:Dawna@DawnaStone.com).

**SUCCESS**

*Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers, you cannot be successful or happy.*

**- Norman Vincent Peale**

## *Chapter 1:*

# **Believe in Yourself**

*A*re your current beliefs—those you keep hidden deep inside for only you to hear—holding you back? Do you think you're worthy of a better life, with more success, more happiness, more money, a more fulfilling job and more meaningful relationships? You may want these things, but desire on its own isn't enough. You have to believe that you're worthy, and you must also put aside all your fears, all negative thoughts and any beliefs of unworthiness.

The first step to finding success involves believing you are capable of having it. Most of us want more success, but few of us actually are convinced we are worthy or have what it takes. Wanting and believing must work in tandem for success to be found.

I was fortunate to have parents who encouraged me to believe in myself. They made me feel like I was capable of doing anything I set my mind to. I realize how extremely lucky I was to receive this unconditional support and encouragement that so many never experience. However, while it's undeniably great to have others believe in you and offer encouragement, true greatness and success only arrive when you first believe in yourself.

The initial step to finding more success in your life: Believe you're truly capable. Initially, that may not sound so difficult. But if we look deep inside ourselves, we often find that we are the ones sabotaging our own greatness. How often do you hold yourself back? How often do you let fear or another person keep you from pushing forward? How often do you quietly think, "I can't," "That's not possible" or "That isn't going to happen to me?"

You have to decide what it is you really want. I mean really decide. Make your desire a focal point in your life. Make all your decisions based on that want. Once you make that determination, you need to focus on that end goal like your life depends on it.

Maybe there's one thing you really want, or maybe you have five, 10 or more ideas in mind. No matter the number, start thinking about these aspirations and, better yet, write them down.

Maybe you want freedom from your boring, unsatisfying job. It's great that you know this, but be more specific. What is it that you hate about your job? Why do you want out? Do you love your boss but hate the long hours that keep you away from your family? Do you make less money than you'd like, do you travel too much, or does your job not sufficiently challenge you?

Now that you know why you want to leave your job, be even more specific. What does your dream job look like? How much will you travel? What type of hours will you work? What kind of commute will you have? What will your boss be like? Imagine your perfect role. This may not be something you can articulate in a few minutes—not if you're being truly honest with yourself (while also being realistic).

Take some time to pinpoint exactly what you're looking for. If you don't know what you want, how are you supposed to get it? Without the specifics, you can't take the necessary steps to move forward and get what you want. I want you to be as detailed as you can when imagining your new situation. Imagine traveling to your job, envision yourself in the position, and picture your new boss and what each day will entail. The more details you can conjure up, the better. In your mind, act as if you<sup>u</sup> have already secured the job.



Once you have a clear picture of what it is you want, start thinking about the steps needed to get there. Again, make sure you're specific. When do you want to leave your current job? How will you leave? How will you find your dream job? Must you have landed your new gig before leaving your current one? When will your new role start? How will you dress on your first day?

Maybe you can't relate to the above example because you love your current situation. Think about something else in your life that you want to change or improve. No matter what it is that you want—a better relationship with your significant other, a promotion or raise, a healthier or thinner body, to start a business or write a book—you need to be specific and deeply consider how you can turn your desire into reality.

And no matter what you seek, you need to assess any limiting beliefs and make them disappear.

I find that a simple exercise can help. I know it may sound kooky and look even crazier, but I promise it works. If you have any thoughts currently holding you back, find a quiet place to sit and close your eyes. Allow those negative and limiting thoughts to surface; when they do, bring your hands to your head and imagine those negative thoughts to be magnetic and your hands the magnets. Now envision pulling all those limiting

thoughts from your mind. Every negative thought flows out of your head and into the palms of your hands; when they've all been removed, pull your hands away and toss those thoughts far from you, letting them dissipate into thin air.

This release of negative thoughts or Meditation Release™ will almost immediately make you feel lighter and freer. It'll give you the fresh starting point you need.

You can take this process one step further. After releasing your limiting thoughts, sit quietly with your palms on your thighs, facing upwards and ready to receive. Think about all the positive thoughts needed to succeed presenting themselves to you. Those thoughts can range from "I am capable" to "I am worthy," or anything that you know will help you move forward. As you sit there quietly with your eyes closed and open palms facing upward, imagine these thoughts materializing in the air around you and falling into your expectant hands. Once all the thoughts have stacked up in your open palms, bring your palms to your head and allow these positive ideas to enter your mind. Imagine these thoughts being pulled into your subconscious and becoming part of who you are.

This simple exercise will get you in the habit of purging negative, limiting thoughts and inviting in the positive thoughts to help catapult your success, ultimately giving

you the life you desire and deserve. It will also help open your mind and allow you to get the most out of the next 20 steps. Give it a try. What do you have to lose?



## **Chapter Exercise:**

Set aside five to 10 minutes, find a quiet spot, and give Meditation Release™ a try. Do both the release exercise and the receiving exercise. Repeat the exercise daily for at least one week, and then determine for yourself whether you benefit from a daily, weekly or monthly practice. I tend to do the exercise once a week unless I feel as though something is holding me back from achieving my goals; in that case, I may practice daily for a short period of time to help break through my negative thoughts and to embrace the positive ones.

If you want to take it one step further, write down how you feel before and after each session. This additional practice can welcome even more clarity around your thoughts, helping you to focus on those that may catapult you forward rather than hold you back.

*The only place where success comes before  
work is in the dictionary.*

**- Vidal Sassoon**

## *Chapter 2:*

# **Don't Wait for Success to Find You**

*If you've ever thought, "There must be more to life than this," you're not alone. Simply desiring something and believing in yourself isn't enough. Positive change only comes with action. Things begin to happen when you make them happen. It sounds simple, because it is simple. If you push ahead, the effort you put forth will begin the forward motion needed to capture success. You'll notice I said "capture." Success isn't going to find you just because you want it. It's not going to seek you out just because you're a good person. It's going to happen when you desire it, believe you deserve it and, most importantly, act upon it.*

If you're reading this book, chances are you already want to change your life. You're reading this because you're

meant to be hearing these words right now. If you make the choice, this can be the start of your new and better life.

You have the power to succeed because you possess the power of choice and the power of action. It's up to you which direction you want to move; it's up to you to make it happen. You can alter your life by simply moving forward, and I'm not necessarily talking about making a huge shift. Even small, simple actions can make a major difference in your life, finances, relationships, happiness and overall success.

How do you make it happen? We all have the ability of turning something mediocre into something great; we must do only two things—develop a plan and follow it. Creating a plan is the easy part; acting upon it is where most people get stuck.

Early on in my career, I felt so stuck that I not only experienced emotions of despair, but also those of immense hopelessness. I worked at a job that I very much disliked, and I spent four years being miserable. I wanted to do something else and dreamed of finding a job I loved, yet I didn't do anything about it. Every day I would wake up and drag myself to my job. Why? Why would I spend four years of my life doing something I didn't want to do? I look back now and wonder why I wasted all that

time, when all I needed was to implement a plan and act on it. Like most people, I was waiting for positive change to find me rather than creating a proactive strategy to go after it.

When I finally decided I'd had enough, I devised a plan for getting a new job that involved updating my resume, researching industries and companies that interested me, writing a cover letter, putting together a list of contacts, etc. The amazing thing was just how simple it was to make that plan. It took less than a week for me to gather all the pieces so that I could start making calls and arranging interviews. The simple act of moving forward in the right direction landed me my dream job in a completely different industry—in the city where I wanted to live.

Because the plan of looking for a new job and the act of actually reaching out and making meetings proved so easy, I often wonder why I didn't begin sooner. Stop waiting for change to find you. Go out, and make change happen.

Where do you feel stuck in your life? Where would you like to see change take place? Do you want to improve your relationship with you boyfriend or girlfriend, your spouse or your kids? Do you want to build stronger friendships? Do you want a new job, or do you want to start your own company? Do you want to make more

money and have more freedom to do the things you love? No matter what you're looking for and regardless of how stuck you may feel right now, make a plan. Sit down and write out a list of three to five things you could do that would move you in the right direction. Then under each item, write what necessary action can make that happen.

Here's a real example: Last year I wanted to make sure I was maintaining meaningful relationships with my kids. Although they are still young—I have a 9-year-old daughter and an 8-year-old son—I found myself often so busy that time would pass, filled with nothing but typical day-to-day activities—getting ready for school, getting dressed, feeding pets, doing homework, driving to after-school activities and so on. As a full-time working mom, I wanted to make sure my kids felt that, although I worked, I was there for them. So I made a plan.

**Goal:** Have a more meaningful relationship with my kids

**Plan:**

- 1) Spend quality one-on-one time every week with each of them
  - a) Find a chapter book and read every night with Kaelie



- b) Make a game out of putting away Luke's dirty clothes, which came to be known as "dirty clothes basketball" (FYI: this was a big hit!)
- 2) Sit down to dinner together at least three days a week
  - a) Turn off the TV and talk about the day. Ask them about school and when they respond with, "It was fine," ask more questions.
- 3) Say a before-dinner prayer
  - a) Make a family ritual of giving a short prayer of thanks before dinner
- 4) Participate more fully in something they enjoy
  - a) Throw the football or shoot hoops once a week with Luke
  - b) Have Kaelie teach me new poses she learned at after-school yoga class
- 5) Once a year, take each for a "mommy and me" weekend
  - a) Let the kids pick the location (within reason and within driving distance)
  - b) Make it special, and let them help plan the trip/agenda

With the exception of the "mommy and me" weekend, the plan was super simple to develop and act on. I could

even take the plan one level further by writing down which weekday each activity will happen. (For example, every Sunday before dinner, I play hoops with my son.) These small behavioral changes made all the difference in the relationships I currently have with my kids. I realize that teenage years can be much more difficult than the pre-teen years, but hopefully the bond I'm creating now will only strengthen our relationship as the kids get older.

Start right now—no matter where you are in your life at this very moment. No matter how stuck you feel or how dire life feels, decide that you will take some daily action; no matter how big or small, that will move you forward.

Quit expecting or hoping, and start acting!



## **Chapter Exercise:**

Start by writing down one thing you want to change in your life. It could be something about your job, your finances, your relationship, your health, etc. Then take a few minutes to record three to five actions that will move you in the right direction. Then take it one step further: Under each item listed above, write a specific action that needs to take place for you to succeed. Set a timeframe for each action, and then schedule it into your day.