Stage One:

See The

Completed Vision

Workbook

by

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Emergineering: Stage One
See the Completed Vision

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” -- Proverbs 29:18

Within you is a destiny waiting to be born. You’re here to make a unique and valuable contribution to the evolution of humanity, if even in a small way. You may not believe that right now, but I assure you it’s true. Look at nature. Everything serves a purpose. Everything is connected to a larger system that allows the whole to operate in harmony. Everything is, in some way, a response to a need -- including the chair you’re sitting on (or whatever is supporting your body right now). You’re no different. You came into this world as an answer to a prayer, a solution to a problem. If there was no need for you, you never would’ve shown up. The fact that you were born is the guarantee that you have a reason for being here, a gift to give, a message to deliver. The world needs you to be you.

In order to realize this purpose, however, you must tap into the vision for your life.

But what is a vision? Where does it come from? And how do you access it? We often think of a vision as something that foretells the future. But that’s prophecy or prediction and, because it’s based on the cause-and-effect outcome of your dominant thought trend, it can always be changed. In most success and self-help teachings, a vision is thought of as something we willfully create based on what we believe will fulfill us. But that’s imagination and is inherently limited, since imagination is rooted in what’s already known. True vision can neither be created nor changed, because it’s part of the changeless fabric of Ultimate Reality, the realm of perfect prototypes or ‘ideal forms’ as Plato put it. And true vision is not a product of the imagination; it comes from a place beyond the mind, beyond experience, and reveals something that has never quite happened before. It may be temporarily obscured the way the sun is on a cloudy day -- but
like the sun, true vision is always shining, waiting for you to pierce the weather of your mind and let its warmth and vitalizing power into your life.

**A Vision Is Never In The Future**

A true vision is not a picture of *what will be* in the future; it’s a realization of *what is* in the timeless dimension of your consciousness. Your tomorrow is just an extension of God’s today. Think of it like standing above an ant as it travels across the ground toward some food, which it can’t see because it’s obscured by a hill. From the ant’s point of view, the vision of lunch is in its future – but from yours, it’s in the present. The ant, the journey, and the potato chip are all here now. The same is true for your vision; from a larger perspective, it’s already happening. So the real work of activating your emerging vision is about expanding your awareness. What’s more, the vision is not static, it’s transformational. As you allow it to infuse you with its energy and substance, it changes you from the inside out, stretching and re-shaping you, accelerating your growth and expansion.

As you begin to see that everything you’re waiting, working, or hoping for in the future is already here now, within you, it challenges and changes the way you think, feel, and act in virtually every area of your life. You begin to break your dependence on external conditions, and rely more on inner ones -- which you have control over. You move from *getting* things to fill yourself up to *letting* more of your infinite Self out. You stop trying to make it happen and instead *make it welcome* -- through developing a deeper connection to this inner seed of potential and cultivating the soil of your soul for new growth. This is the foundational condition for real vision -- and establishing it activates the first stage of the Law of Emergence.

**Visualization vs. Vision**

Many people who embark on a path of living their best life, particularly in the self-help and success arena, turn to a well-known form of creative imagination called visualization, a process of holding in mind the image of some desired outcome until, through the law of
attraction, you bring it into form. This can be a useful tool for many short-term goals. If you focus on an image long enough, with enough feeling, you can manifest some version of it, whether it’s an improved golf swing, a parking space, or a family vacation. But attempts to use visualization on your larger life vision often result in manifesting only an improved version of your limited self-image – a shinier acorn, never an oak. Even when you manifest some benefit, your deeper beliefs remain and sooner or later emerge to wreak havoc in other aspects of your life. Like trying to hold a beach ball under water, it takes a lot of energy to keep these counter-forces in check -- eventually they pop up again, when you least expect it and in unwelcome ways.

I’ve struggled with this dilemma on my journey, going back and forth between answering the deeper call of vision, to becoming impatient and using visualization to manifest what I wanted -- only to run into the same problems, just at a higher level. Years ago when I was feeling stuck financially, wanting to create a life of greater wealth and success, I worked intensely with many of the traditional tools of manifestation to bring in a new level of income and lifestyle – complete with bigger cars, a bigger house, and a bigger monthly budget. It worked and I felt great. For about a moment. Underneath it all I hadn’t realized a true vision for my life -- I was just attracting more stuff based on my limited self-image – so my unresolved issues soon came out, bringing the same stress and financial worries, just at a higher income level! In fact, it was more stressful, because now I had more money, relationships, and responsibilities to deal with. The inner structures hadn’t become stronger and couldn’t handle the heavier load. I had changed the superficial picture of my world, but I, myself, remained fundamentally the same.

As I became still in the midst of this crisis, I discovered a deeper impulse, a more authentic dimension of me trying to emerge – which I had suppressed as my fear of lack and sense of inadequacy drove me to artificially manifest what I thought I needed to be secure. It took a degree of faith and a willingness to let my life fall apart in order to fall together at a higher level, but when I finally answered the call of true vision, I became more congruent with my authentic self -- bringing with it not only greater abundance, but a greater sense of purpose and
peace. I wish I could say that was the last time I put myself through this cycle of artificial manifestation -- and the pain and disillusionment it produces until I surrender to that emerging impulse – but, alas, I’m still human. Mercifully, each time I remember and practice, my life is taken to a new level. As the mystical statement goes, “The pain pushes until the vision pulls.”

Believe it or not, one of the worst things that can happen when using these kinds of ego-driven mind techniques is to actually get what we want. When we attain superficial success, without aligning with our deeper core, it becomes more difficult to change course and start living an authentically empowered life. The pressure we feel to 'keep up with the Joneses' and the complex facades we build to support this pseudo-success become so much a part of our identity, it feels like our whole world would have to collapse to get back on track. Faced with the choice of risking everything we’ve built our life on, to live the life we were born for, many people don’t have the ‘soul stamina’ to make the shift (something we’ll talk about in Stage 6: Embrace What Appears Broken). Instead they choose to stay busy, addicted, and unconscious. You know how this often ends: on their death bed, lamenting that they could've, should've, would've, if only.

So visualization, and other manifestation techniques (vision boards, affirmations, etc.), aren’t enough. With them alone you can only fulfill your ego’s desire, not your soul’s destiny, nor, for that matter, the highest purpose of a project, relationship, or business. This approach keeps you stuck on a hamster wheel of visualization-manifestation-visualization-manifestation, round and round, never finding peace or satisfaction. In order to go beyond that, you must move from visualization to vision, from mind-projected images based on limited self-concepts, to the ideas planted in your soul.

**From Imagination to Emergination**

Imagination is often hailed as one of the greatest engines of progress. Even Einstein said “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” And I would agree. But imagination can only build on what’s already known, and Einstein’s discoveries were, at least in part, totally unprecedented. He may have used imagination as a springboard, but he ultimately went beyond
the mind and tapped into something deeper – true vision. In every area where humanity has taken a major leap forward, this has been the case.

I’m not knocking imagination; it’s a powerful faculty that allows us to take charge of our thoughts and gain some control over our experience. Mastering this level of consciousness helps us realize that our environment doesn’t determine our destiny, and permits us to move from victim to creator. But because imagination is limited to experience and self-concept, it can take you only so far -- and where you must ultimately go to fulfill your purpose is “beyond the known self.” If the caterpillar could imagine its perfect life, it might visualize being the most beautiful caterpillar, with the greatest caterpillar body, the highest paying caterpillar job, and an expensive caterpillar home – and through the law of attraction, get some version of that. Other caterpillars might even look on with envy, but this “successful caterpillar life” would fall far short of its true destiny -- to become a butterfly and soar high above its terrestrial limitations. This is what many people do; they use their imagination to magnify, then manifest, a false or limited self, then wonder why they’re unhappy, unfulfilled, or in crisis no matter how much they have. The ultimate vision for your life can’t be realized with your mind, but must be accessed with your soul faculties, which open up when the mind stops weaving its stories of neediness, greediness, and conflict -- and becomes an avenue of awareness for a deeper reality.

So what is this inner faculty that allows you to tap into true vision? It’s been called many things -- soul, intuition, Higher Wisdom. But for our purposes, I want to suggest a new term -- Emergination. Whereas imagination allows you to select from your database of stored knowledge and experience to create new expressions, emergination allows you to tap into the field of unprecedented ideas seeking to emerge; ideas beyond your experience, beyond all experience -- the perfect prototypes unique to you. If it’s a better relationship your soul yearns for, activating your emergination will make you receptive to that part of you already in love, making you a magnet for a mate that matches your soul’s highest needs. If it’s a project you’re working on, you can call on your emergination to reveal its true essence and greater potential, as well as the means to achieve these -- often in ways that surprise you, stretch you, and exceed
what you could have imagined. If it’s a business you’re trying to grow, following your emergination will not only help you discern its next stage of evolution but help you position it to be an evolutionary force in its industry. And unlike basic manifestation techniques that have you change the world but remain fundamentally the same – setting you up for what I call the ‘crisis of incongruity’ – emergination is an inside-out process that transforms you into the person you must be to handle the next phase of growth with ease, grace, and dignity.

This soul faculty of emergination is a natural part of us, an ability anyone can develop and something nearly everyone has experienced at one time or another. It has a greater tendency to be activated in moments when you’re relaxed and receptive, feeling a sense of love, gratitude, or awe – or when a crisis has forced you to your knees in surrender. The mind suddenly stops, something else opens up, and you have an ‘ah-ha’ flash of insight, an inspiration that seems to come ‘out of nowhere,’ a solution to a problem that ‘drops in’ without a process of deliberation, or an inner ‘pull’ that your life needs to move in a new direction. But it’s not necessary to wait until you hit rock bottom or have a mountain-top moment; through active practice, you can consciously cultivate your emergination.

**Activating Your Emergination: A Meditative Exercise**

There are many ways to access this inner source of inspiration, from meditation and prayer to chanting and automatic writing. One approach I’ve found effective is a practice called *Life Visioning*, taught by Dr. Michael Beckwith. This is a foundational exercise for activating your emergination. Used on a regular basis, whether for your whole life or any aspect of it -- work, family, a creative project -- it will produce lifelong growth and benefits.

This meditation is guided. You can take turns reading this exercise with a partner, or record yourself reading it and play it back. Once you’ve become familiar with it, you can do it from memory. It’s a good idea to set aside at least 15-30 minutes for the practice, as well as some time to journal what came up. You’ll want to get in a quiet place, either indoors or outdoors, free from distraction, and make yourself comfortable, preferably sitting up with your back straight.
Close your eyes and take a few slow, deep inhalations. As you exhale, allow yourself to release all the tension in your body, all the issues of the day and concerns for the future. Let go and sink into this moment. Begin watching your breath as it flows in and out, either by gently focusing your attention on your nostrils or on your rising and falling abdomen. Don’t control it; allow the breath to breathe you.

As you settle in, set your intention for this exercise. It doesn’t matter what human goal you’re going after, whether it’s to manifest a job, find a new mate, heal your body, or make more money -- the most effective intention you can choose is a desire for conscious contact with your spirit, a deeper connection to your Self. Despite any limited external conditions, ego-desires, or restless imaginings, when you establish this intention to align with your soul’s truth, you take the first step in cultivating the conditions for your vision to emerge. Feel the energy of your intention. Take a deep breath and allow it to expand, filling your whole body. Then another one, allowing this energy to fill the space you’re in, until you’re completely enveloped in its warm glow.

With your intention firmly established, you can move to the next stage of the exercise where you prompt your higher consciousness with a set of questions. Take another deep breath and, as you exhale, release all of your ideas of what should or shouldn’t be, becoming receptive to something beyond your mind, open to something unprecedented. Then pose the first question:

1. What is the vision of my life? What is the divine (or highest) idea of my life? What does it look like, feel like, what is its essence? For “my life” you can substitute whatever you hope to gain clarity on; “my family,” “my relationship,” “my work.” You can also ask “What is God’s idea of my life?” or “What is trying to emerge through me, and as me?”
Remain alert. Wait, watch, listen. Become aware of whatever images, sounds, or sensations arise. Sometimes what comes up will be literal; you’ll see images that explicitly portray your vision in the world. Other times, your experience may be more symbolic and a connection will be unclear. Some people see images in Technicolor. Others will have a more physical, sensual experience. You might only get a feeling or a vibration. Pay attention, but don’t judge; there’s no better or worse, no right or wrong. Whatever comes up is part of the process. If you find yourself drifting, planning your grocery list, or thinking about what you’re going to eat later, gently bring your attention back to the breath. But don’t be dismissive of anything. In this exercise, even seemingly external distractions might be synchronistic clues from your soul.

You can repeat the questions as many times as you like or feel is necessary in order to elicit a genuine experience. As insights come through, you can open your eyes and take notes or wait until after the meditation. Some people prefer to wait because opening their eyes and writing takes them out of the deep flow. Others find that if they wait, they forget what came through, the same way dreams fade after you get up. Experiment with it both ways. In any case, trust that what you need to receive and remember, you will, and that even if you don’t remember, there’s valuable work being done in consciousness.

There are other questions you can ask to prompt the sometimes unyielding subconscious: “If this vision was fully manifest in the world, what would it look like? What would I look like? How would I act? How would I feel?” These can bring out different shades of the vision and create a cascade of insight. You could also ask, “If this vision were a color, what color would that be?” “If this vision were a song, what would it sound like?” “If this vision were an animal, what would it be?” “If this vision were a symbol, what would it look like?” These help bypass the logical mind and access the subjective realm where real power, substance, and genius reside. Once you’re satisfied with the input you’ve
received, ask the next series of questions:

2. How must I change in order for this vision to emerge through me? How must I be different, what must I become? What must I let go of -- what limiting beliefs, toxic emotions, outdated ideas must I release? What new, larger ideas, beliefs, or positive emotions must I embrace?

This last set of questions are probably the most important. Remember, the thing you want is already within you. Everything you need to fulfill your greatest desire is already part of your being. But it can’t come out until you align with it, let go of the obstructions to it, and raise your vibration to the level at which the vision already exists. Fulfilling your destiny is not about adding anything to you, but about letting go of what no longer serves. If the oak could talk to the acorn, it would tell it to let go of its shell. While that might be scary for the acorn, the fact is that what was once a form of protection – its shell – is ultimately a limitation to its continued growth. (As this question brings up the areas to change or limiting emotions and beliefs you must release, write them down for later use. We’ll be working with them in Stage 6: Embrace What Appears Broken.)

As a closing question, you can ask, “What other questions should I ask to realize this vision in its full potential?” or “Is there anything else I need to see, hear, know, or feel, to allow the highest vision of my life to emerge?” That’s a good one to finish with; it pretty much covers all the bases. This process, as described, is a basic template. As you adopt your own emergination practice, feel free to tweak it according to your changing needs. As long as you maintain the basic purity of intention, put your mind-created ideas aside, and stay open to intuition and inspiration, it will be fruitful. (In Stage 5: Act ‘As If’ You’re It, we’ll add the component of action to this exercise, opening you to divine guidance that will compel you in the direction of your vision)
I’ve seen many lives transformed by this type of process; people guided to re-connect with abandoned relationships and rebuild broken families; businesses and non-profits developed into worldwide organizations; depressed and hopeless clients inspired by profound insights that turned their life around, and others awakened to their “true calling.” My own path has taken many unexpected, but ultimately necessary, turns as I’ve used this or similar practices to tap into the vision. I remember years ago, feeling particularly stuck in my life, when I was shown an image of myself sitting at a piano, singing in front of a large audience. While I had dabbled in piano as a kid, the only singing I had ever done was in the shower, and I couldn’t even read music -- yet here was this inner guidance. It scared me, but was also exciting and felt connected to something real, albeit unfamiliar. So I followed it. As the process unfolded over a few months, I was guided to rent a piano, start practicing, and even write a song. And through a series of unexpected events, I eventually found myself sitting at a piano, singing for a large audience – and it was the exact picture I had originally seen. Out of this, a side-career of singing and songwriting emerged, as well as other opportunities that enriched my life on many levels (financially and otherwise) and pushed my evolution to the next stage.

The same thing happened with writing books. As a screenwriter and story consultant, I never imagined writing books. Frankly, I didn’t like to write non-fiction -- it made me feel like I was back in school doing essays. But after a major setback had me questioning the direction for my life again, I went deeper into this process and the vision unfolded to write a book. I wish I could say I welcomed it with open arms, but I was more like a resistant child who had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the next stage of my growth. It just wasn’t what I wanted -- at least from my ego’s standpoint. It didn’t fit my story, and it seemed impossible at worst and exhausting at best. But as the pain kept pushing, I eventually let the vision pull. And as I followed its guidance, it led to my learning the craft, writing a book, and selling it more easily than I have since discovered it’s supposed to be.

This ultimately led to more books and a teaching, speaking, and consulting business that earned me a sizable income and took me to several countries helping people realize their
potential -- something I never would’ve pictured in a visualization because it was totally outside my personal paradigm. This is the key point: all the traditional visualization and manifestation techniques could never have brought me this, because I would never have imagined it. Even more telling, in all of these cases, as I evolved to the next level, these talents and abilities no longer felt like something outside of me, but like I had discovered parts of me that were there all along. This is a common experience. As the vision emerges and takes you to new places, it doesn’t feel like foreign territory -- it feels like you have finally come home.

**Excavating the Soul: A Vision Workshop**

For some people, the vision of their life isn’t easily coaxed out, and simply asking ‘what’s the vision of my life?’ doesn’t give them the clarity they seek. It’s not because the vision isn’t speaking to them, it’s just been suppressed so long by rational thinking and cultural conditioning that they can’t hear it anymore. This ultimately leads to the common question: “How do I know what my vision or purpose is?” Which is often followed by: “I don’t know what I’m supposed to do,” “I can’t tell if the voice inside is my spirit/intuition or my ego,” “What if I do the wrong thing or make the wrong choice?”

First of all, you can never really make a “wrong choice” if you have the right intention. Even a wrong choice, born of a sincere intention, will lead you to learn and grow — strengthening your ability to listen to inner guidance and make better choices. We’ve been taught that the path to success is in doing all the “right things” -- but how many people have failed by doing all the right things and succeeded by breaking all the rules? I’m not saying that thoughtful action and skill isn’t important -- but intention is the rudder beneath the surface that really steers the ship.

Instead of focusing on why you shouldn’t do something, ask why you should (or why you want to). As you tune into this part of yourself, you not only discover the layers of false motivation — and begin to release them — you eventually hit that soft, glowing core where the *why* turns into the *what*. You discover that the thing you’re striving for, the thing which fuels
your “why” is actually the very thing you’re made of. You’re already it, remember? The word “desire” means “of the sire” or “of the father.” In other words, it’s the Creative Principle of your being. Those strong desires to go out and achieve something are actually the “something” in you seeking to get out. So let’s take some time to dig more deeply, to go on an archeological expedition of your soul and see what’s really buried there.

**Desires & Goals**

We’ll start by looking at your desires and goals. All the things you want to have and achieve are clues to the larger vision trying to emerge. As you bring greater awareness to these desires, you begin to crack open the hard shell of the ego and glimpse what’s inside trying to get out. Are you ready for a breakthrough? Take pen in hand and begin…

Create two columns on a page. On the left side, write down your desire/goal. On the right side, write down why you want it. Be honest. Start with the things you want most and work your way down. If the reason you want something is to get something else materially, add that new object to the desire column and write down why you want it. For instance, if you wrote “I want to make a million dollars,” and in the WHY column you put “to get a house,” put “Get a house” in the desire column, and put why you want the house in the opposite column. Do this until you get a non-material reason in the right column. For example, in terms of the house, you might put ‘to feel secure.’ So the ‘feeling of security’ is the real goal.

Now take a look at those reasons. Why do you want what you want? Do you see a pattern? Did you put the same thing in more than one entry? Are your “whys” based on what you want from others, or are they inner qualities? For example, let’s say you wrote in your goals/desires, “I want to be a successful author.” Then in your why column, you wrote, “So people will love and respect me.” You still haven’t gotten down to the real
why at your core. This entry also belongs in the “goals/desire” column. Take the “whys” that depend on getting something from someone else — even if it’s non-material — and put those in the goals/desire column. Then write down why you want those. Working with the entry, “I want people to love and respect me,” you might put in the why column, “So that I will feel loved and respected” or “So that I’ll love and respect myself.”

Ah-ha! Now that is a real “why.”

But something else important has occurred. You started out thinking that what you wanted was to be a successful author, have fame and fortune, and gain others’ love and respect, but discovered that what you really want is “to feel loved and respected.” And here’s the best part: Feeling loved and respected is an inside job! It has nothing to do with anything outside of you. You, and only you, have the power to generate these feelings. Generating them is your real goal, and the core of your vision. (In Stage 2: Cultivate the Conditions we’ll work more specifically on activating these qualities.)

Another interesting thing begins to occur as you break your goals and desires down like this. As you start to realize your true motivations behind things, they begin to lose their luster, their irresistible pull. It’s like the story of the musk deer who journeys through the forests, trudges across rivers and streams, over hills and mountains, to find the source of its greatest desire: musk. Then, in utter exhaustion, the animal collapses, only to discover that the object of its search, the scent of musk, was in its own hide the whole time!

The more you realize that what you want is already within you, the less appeal the outer struggle has. As you begin to rest in this awareness, a sense of true peace and freedom emerges. When you realize that what you’re really going for, in all of your striving and struggle, is self-love and acceptance (or whatever quality you’re after), and you realize you can only find this
inside — your journey both ends and finally begins. And as the resistance falls away, you find that an experience of self love and acceptance wafts up from your own hide.

This doesn’t mean you stop doing things in the world. Far from it. As a matter of fact, you become more productive -- because you know where your good really comes, and aren’t blocking it by projecting it onto someone or something else. But there’s something more that happens. All of the false desires based on false motives fall away. And what remains is the true path you’re meant to walk. On this path, there are tasks, goals, and a grand purpose, to be sure, but they’re not motivated by what you can get — but rather by what you’re here to give. From this space, knowing that you already have everything you need within you, your actions unfold from a desire to share what you have and who you are. Not because you need self-expression to feel whole, but because your wholeness cannot help but express itself.

So take a look at that list again. If you’ve gone through the process, you should have a right-hand column filled with qualities that you want to embody within yourself. If you’ve done this thoroughly, however, you’ll probably also discover some goals/desires that aren’t attached to getting something from someone. For example, you may have written as a goal/desire, “I want to give my gifts to the world.” And in the why column, you may have genuinely written, “So people can benefit from them.” This is an effective motivation, it’s not created by your ego -- it’s not created at all. It is your very nature announcing itself — and that nature is always about giving, shining, sharing, pouring forth that imprisoned splendor for no ulterior motive (the only caveat to this is if you do have a hidden agenda. If you look deeper and realize that the reason you want to give is to get approval, validation, or recognition, then giving isn’t the real goal, activating the inner feeling of self-worth is).

This isn’t a judgment on other types of motivation. There’s a place for everything on the ladder of our evolution. But when you have a motive that doesn’t seek to get anything -- a core desire -- it won’t create any new karma. It won’t perpetuate old wounds and keep you and those around you unconscious. It will have a liberating, illuminating, expanding effect on you and all it touches. It will also emerge free of the resistance that normally accompanies our ego’s agendas.
You should now have two sets of goals/desires here. On one hand, you know the material things you’re after: the new business, the new house, the increased wealth, whatever. And that’s all good. But you also have a list of inner goals. And you are becoming increasingly aware that what you really want is primarily an inner experience, a quality of being, such as self-love, confidence, security, abundance. From this perspective, the phrase “living a quality life” takes on a whole new significance.

Laying this inner foundation of your vision is not the end, it’s the beginning. Upon this spiritual foundation you will build a house that the tempest of this turbulent world will not blow down. So let’s move a little further above ground.

**Dreams & Fantasies**

Now that you know what you really want is primarily an inner essence of your own being, a part of your soul that was locked in a prison of materialistic perception, you can get out of jail -- or at least out on parole -- and play with the outer goals of this world again.

In this exercise, you’re going to revisit the realm of your dreams and heart’s desires and write about them passionately. You’ll do this twice — once for the left brain and once for the right. To begin with the left brain there’s no need to prepare. Just take pen in hand (or fingers on keyboard) and begin writing about your vision. Ideally you want to write without thinking. But since you’re exercising your left hemisphere, if thinking arises, allow it to inform what you write. Try to write for at least two pages.

Now take a moment and prepare yourself to write from the right brain. There are several ways to do this. You could pick some music that makes you want to dance, then dance your heart out. If you’re a singer or musician, you can play your instrument or wail out a passionate song. If you’re an athlete, you could do some physical activity that gets you in the zone. Pick something that is pure self-expression and throw yourself into it with
abandon. When you feel you’re sufficiently buzzing with creative juices, sit down and start writing your vision again, this time not allowing any pauses for thought. If you feel yourself slipping into your head, put the pen in your left hand and continue (this taps the right brain). If you’re adventurous, alternate between the right and left hand throughout the process, allowing more of the right-side, subconscious material to surface.

**Your Greatest Passion**

The things that elicit your greatest passion are clues to where your purpose and proclivities lie. It might seem like I’m overstating the obvious, but you’d be amazed at how many people believe that if they’re passionate about something, it couldn’t possibly be connected to their vision or purpose – let alone to profit! It’s like a cognitive blind spot, some strange religious or cultural guilt. They overlook the areas that bring them the greatest joy and fulfillment, because surely our purpose can’t be primarily about having fun. It has to be hard labor -- backbreaking, heart-wrenching work. We have to suffer and sacrifice and martyr ourselves or it doesn’t count!

It’s not just me, is it?

If you’re a writer, are you writing from your deepest passion, or just writing what you think will sell -- even if you don’t like the genre? If you’re a business person, are you developing projects that turn you on and make you spring out of bed in the morning, or just creating something you think people will buy -- even if you wouldn’t buy it yourself? If you’re a doctor, are you working in an arena that makes you hunger for continued growth and fills you with a sense of purpose, or are you just ‘doing a job’ that grates against you so much it could end up putting you in the hospital? If you’re a parent, are you raising your children and building your family from an inspired vision, or just trying to make it through the day? I can hear some of you saying, “Get real, man, I gotta make a living, I have to do the laundry, I can’t just do what I love!” Sure, you need to pay the bills and have clean underwear. The danger arises when you become seduced by the false sense of security a paycheck or peer acceptance brings — and no
longer spend quality and *quantity* time pursuing your deeper purpose. Spend too much time focusing on pleasing others, conforming to the market, or just trying to “get a job,” and you’ll lose that precarious thread to your true passion. Like a fire, if it’s not fanned, it fades. It can never die, because it’s part of your eternal being, but it can diminish to a mere flicker, a pilot light on the back burner of your heart — leaving you feeling cold and in the dark.

Turn to your trusty journal and, for the next few minutes, free-write about your greatest passion. It doesn’t need to deal with just your work. If you’ve already thought a lot about that, it might be *better* to write about things that seem unrelated. It will break you out of the myopic vision that happens when all you think about is work. The truth is, individuals with a broader, richer perspective on life, whose interests go far beyond their business, bring something unique, less cliché, to their work – and more readily attract raving fans, financial backers, and their special tribe of followers. So exercise all of you. Let your deepest passions pour onto the page: “I want to play in the dirt!” “I want to lie on the beach and read Proust all day!” “I wanna go to New York, and do off-off-off Broadway!” “I love bugs!” Hold nothing back.

**Strengths & Talents**

Here’s your chance to brag about yourself…

For the next few minutes, write about all your strengths, talents, and skills. Not just in your art, craft, or business — but anything. If you’re a good gardener, write it down. Now is not the time for humility. When you start to run out of steam, ask yourself what others would say your strengths and talents are. Don’t think too hard. Trust what comes out. You may even be surprised.

If you already know (or think you know) what your strengths are, and/or you’re already a working professional in the area of your talents, do this exercise anyway. You may be expressing
your authentic self, communicating the ideas you came here for. But I suspect, if you’re reading this book, you’re looking for something more, something deeper. By expanding the boundaries of what you normally contemplate and how you see yourself, you’ll uncover treasures that have been buried for a long time or that you never knew existed. And as the artifacts deep in your soul are excavated, they’ll have a powerful influence on what you do, how you do it, and why.

For example, you may be an entrepreneur trying to build a profitable business. You may even have had some success. But as you practice these processes, you may remember that what you’re most passionate about is nature. Maybe deep down you just want to live in a tree! You might realize that one of your skills is hiking or camping, and that you have a deep reverence for nature and a desire to protect Her. Bam! You’re suddenly inspired by a business idea that embodies all of these elements, ignites your passion like never before and, lo and behold, that becomes the one that gets financed, attracts your raving fans, or becomes a hot acquisition.

At the intersection of your passion and talent stands a sign pointing to your true power. But you must sometimes be willing to take the road less traveled to arrive there.

**Triumphs & Defeats**

Just as our victories give us clues to our inherent potential, there is also great meaning in our defeats. Ironically, just because we succeed at something doesn’t mean we’re meant to do it. And just because we fail at something doesn’t mean we’re not. This is often where we see the difference between “talent” and “skill.” Skill is something you can learn, master, and win awards at — but it doesn’t necessarily mean you should be doing it. Talent, on the other hand, is something you’re born with and can cultivate, and a life lived without expressing it is a life not lived at all. In case you’re wondering if you have talent, if you have a burning desire to do something — not just a casual interest — that’s a clue you have talent in that area. The desire is your talent talking, seeking to get out.

Starting to see a pattern here?
There are many individuals considered successes, held in high esteem by their colleagues, who really aren’t “called” to be there — but have done so out of fear or necessity. I’m not just talking about being a lawyer when you really want to sing, I’m talking about being a trial lawyer when you really want to use your legal talents to fight for a specific cause, or painting landscapes for hotels when you really want to travel the world painting whales. Many of our greatest leaders and innovators took great risks to achieve their dreams and propel society forward.

What are you willing to risk?

Don’t let past failures determine what your future success will be. Walt Disney went bankrupt — twice — before finally gaining lasting momentum. The Beatles were rejected from numerous record labels. Marlon Brando was told he couldn’t act. Colonel Sanders, the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, couldn’t even get anyone to try his chicken recipe after over a thousand attempts. Scores of others in every area of life were (and continue to be) regularly rejected before finally finding some success. Thomas Edison failed at creating the light bulb ten thousand times before getting it right. If he used failure as an indicator of his true path, you might be reading this by candlelight!

Failures serve another purpose — they give us wisdom. Every time Edison failed at creating the lightbulb, he succeeded in eliminating one more way to not do it. He also learned many lessons about the nature of electricity, conductivity, and patience. Your failures are just as valuable and rich with blessings. But you must be willing to contemplate them, ask what lesson they have for you, and apply it the next time around. If you just whine, complain, bemoan your fate, and engage your failures like enemies, you’ll not only fail to retrieve their valuable secrets, you’ll remain a failure. Likewise, if you just ignore the failure, deny it, or look away, you’ll be destined to repeat it. Remember, one definition of insanity is to do the same thing and expect different results. Take a look at your life and career: are you doing the same things that have failed before, but expecting different results?

Have you actually, without realizing it, gone insane?
Let’s do some more writing. Write about your failures and successes, your triumphs and defeats. Write about the lessons you’ve learned and the wisdom you’ve gained (if any) in each case. Looking at a few key experiences, ask yourself these questions:

- Did this success make me happy? If so, why? If not, why not?
- Did this success move my mission forward? If so, how? If not, why?
- What clues to my talent, passion, and purpose did this success/failure reveal?
- What was the lesson in this failure? What did it try to teach me? What did I learn?
- Am I still doing the same thing that I failed at before? If so, why? If not, why not?

Keep writing until you have nothing left to say on this subject. Then write some more.

What You Value Most

What do you care about deeply? What would you dedicate your life to if you could? What would you die for? What we feel strongest about, what we tend to argue, defend, or fight for — all of these are indications of our gifts, talents, and the vision trying to emerge. The things that move us to our core -- making us angry, sad, or elated — often contain clues to what we’ll find the most joy, fulfillment, and true success expressing in our work.

Take a moment to turn within and connect with something or someone you deeply value. Perhaps it’s a loved one, a religious figure, a cause. Feel the power in it, the passion. When you’re sufficiently connected, open your eyes and start writing about what you value most. Don’t monitor it. Don’t think. Just write. Fast and furious. Let whatever surfaces be okay. Let whatever emotions bubble up be okay. Let your whole being participate. If it makes you want to shout, shout it out. If it makes you want to cry, cry me a river. If it makes you want to drop to your knees in reverent prayer, rub the carpet raw.

While your talent is your tool and your passion is your fuel — your values are your core. They are the center that doesn’t move, that keeps you anchored, rooted in the ground so that the fickle winds of change may bend you but never break you.
Losing Track of Time

Another strong clue of the vision trying to emerge in you can be found in the activities that cause you to lose all sense of time. When you’re connected to your authentic self, you’re dipping into the timeless dimension of your being. It’s true that “time flies when you’re having fun.” But it’s not the whole truth. In fact, time ceases to exist when you’re truly connected to your joy. The clocks may still be ticking “out there,” but “in here” the ravages of time have slowed to a crawl or stopped altogether. Why do you think you can go hours without taking a break, being hungry, thirsty, fidgety, or needing much sleep? When you’re engaged in your passion, rooted in the “now,” the normal physiological effects of time-boundedness diminish or disappear altogether.

So let’s step into the timeless together…

What activities cause you to lose track of time, to look up and see that hours have flown by in what seemed like minutes? If you have a hard time thinking of peak experiences — if you suffer from the opposite effect where minutes crawl by like hours — you’re not alone. And it’s not a lost cause. Turn the clocks back in your memory, back before you had to act “responsibly.” Think back to those childhood days you didn’t want to end, those mornings that couldn’t come soon enough. What activities did you throw yourself into with abandon, losing yourself for hours at a time? They’re there. Keep looking.

Write about these times. What were you thinking, feeling, what prompted you to engage in the activities? If you no longer participate in them, write about why. If you can’t think of anything in your life that caused you to lose track of time, write about what you think could make you lose track of time. Imagine what you would dive into if you had a stretch of uninterrupted hours and no responsibilities. If you still can’t drudge anything up, imagine a character who does know what their greatest joy is. Write about that character doing something that causes them to lose all sense of time.
If You Could Be Someone Else

We’ve all had (or still have) fantasies about being other people. Historical figures, celebrities. This can be illuminating, because the things we admire in others are actually qualities lying latent in ourselves. So while it’s not healthy to want to be someone else, it’s natural to want to be like them, since we’re actually seeing a dimension of ourselves reflected back to us.

Take that hand of yours — by now probably suffering from writer’s cramp — and begin scribbling about the person (or people) you would like to be – or be more like -- if you could. It doesn’t have to be all of one person. Maybe you would like to have the looks of George Clooney, the vision of Bill Gates, the empire of Oprah, and the heart of Buddha! Don’t think. Don’t monitor. Just free-write about anything and everything it brings up.

If You Were Guaranteed Success

It’s easy to rationalize our way out of following our bliss. As the pressures of daily living crowd in on us, our motives for doing what we’re doing can become convoluted. When you pose this question, however, it immediately strips away the excuses:

“If you were guaranteed success, what would you do with your life?”

Another way to frame it is, “If you already had all the fame, fortune, and power you could ever want, what would you do with your life?” Can you see what these questions do? They rip the costume off our back, giving us nothing to hide behind. They immediately give our ego everything it’s been fighting for, leaving it with no resistance to push back against. And very quickly we see — if we’re willing to look — just how crowded our lives have become with things that really don’t matter in the long run.

Imagine you are guaranteed success. You have everything you want, everything you thought was so important. Now what? Write about what comes next…
I remember an interview with Brad Pitt, where he talked about the inner crisis he faced when he realized he had all the bobbles that so many strive for. He had the fame, the fortune, the material stuff, and what he discovered was that when he finally got everything he thought would make him happy, all he was left with was *himself* — and all the unresolved issues. For some folks, that may not be good news. Many people are doing what they’re doing to *avoid* being with themselves. It might be because they don’t like who they are. But I think there’s something else, something even scarier than low self-esteem. I think many people, even creative types, are *strangers* to themselves. For these individuals, the idea of being alone in a room is as terrifying as meeting a shadowy figure in a dark alley.

**Begin with the End**

This process can bring surprising insights if you surrender to it fully. So make yourself comfortable, preferably sitting up, back straight but not stiff. Close your eyes. Feet firmly on the floor. Hands relaxed in your lap.

Imagine you are highly successful in your arena of life, doing meaningful work, having a powerful, positive impact on people in your business, family, or even around the world. See yourself providing excellent service and impeccable quality. See the faces of your satisfied customers, clients, family as they experience the benefits of your products, services, or just your service. Feel the fulfillment it brings you.

Now imagine you’ve been invited to a conference or celebration to be honored. You walk down a busy hall, saying hello to colleagues, admirers, friends, family, shaking hands, maybe signing autographs. A host shows you into a ballroom, packed with satisfied clients, colleagues, family, friends. A large poster of your most recent project hangs on the wall. You’re led to the stage and greet the crowd — *who rise to their feet with a standing ovation*. You’re floored by the love and respect coming at you.
Then, one by one, past clients, industry colleagues, friends, and family members stand up and praise your unique qualities and talents, thanking you for how you’ve helped them and added great value to their lives. Don’t monitor their comments. Take a deep breath and let them flow. You might be surprised by what you hear. If you find it difficult to imagine what they’d say, contemplate the following questions to spur your heart:

- What qualities of character would you like them to have seen in you as an artist, professional, parent, or whatever area you express in -- and as a human being?
- What contributions or achievements would you want to be acknowledged for?
- What impact would you want to have made on their lives and work?

Fully experience what it’s like to have your talents, abilities, and contributions honored and affirmed. As each person speaks, you may open your eyes and write down what they said. Then return to the visualization until you have gone through four or five tributes.

A Deeper Look

Because of the principle of Oneness, everything in the world that elicits a response from you – either attraction or aversion – is actually a reflection of some dimension of yourself. In other words, all of life really is a mirror. So by asking questions about the reflections you’re seeing in this mirror, you get to know more about yourself – particularly the parts you are trying to hide from. For this exercise, make two columns; one on the right, one on the left. Write your answers to the questions below in the left column. (Some of this might seem slightly repetitive. I encourage you to do it anyway. The more you ask these questions from different angles, the deeper and clearer the answers become.)
• Who are the top five people you admire, envy, or aspire to be, alive or dead?

• If you could have dinner with 3 people, alive or dead, who would it be?

• If you could go on an adventure with 3 people alive/dead, who would it be?

• What would the adventure be?

• If you could have sex with three people (not at the same time), who would it be?

• What are your three favorite movies

• What are your three favorite books

• What breaks your heart in the world?

• What are you really good at that nobody knows about?

• What would you like to be really good at, if it could be anything?

• What are the 2 or 3 most amazing experiences in your life?

• What would be the most amazing experience you could imagine?

• If you had 6 months to live, what would you do with your life?

• If you had one day to live, what would you do with that day?

• If you had one hour, what would you do & who would you do it with?

Now go back and identify the qualities that each of these people or experiences represent. For example, if you wrote down Einstein as a person you admire, what qualities about him are you attracted to? If you wrote about the world adventure, write down the qualities it represents. In terms of the activities or goals, how do they make you feel to imagine doing them?
Just become aware of the qualities, the feeling-tone behind each thing.

We’ll use this later to activate your visionary vibration in *Stage 2: Cultivate Congruent Conditions*. For now, understand that, while you are articulating some important outer activities and people, what you’re really doing is uncovering the qualities of your True Self trying to emerge. As I’ve stated already, *cultivating these qualities is your real goal*.

**Personal Values**

Based on all material you’ve written in this chapter, list what you believe are your core values. You can choose from the list, or write your own (these are just a few examples):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love</th>
<th>Peace</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Wealth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Accomplishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now go through your list of values and choose the top five.

**Creating Your Emergence Mantra**

A mantra is ‘a sound, word, or group of words considered capable of creating transformation’. That’s the purpose of this next piece – to distill the essence of your vision into a group of words that resonates with the deepest part of you and calls it forth. It can also be thought of as a mission statement or a compass, something against which you can judge everything you do, in order to keep you on course. Without this tool, it’s difficult to know for sure what your destination is, and if the steps you’re taking will lead you there. It’s easy to get caught up in the daily minutiae of life, the “to-do list” mentality, only to discover when the sun goes down that you haven’t accomplished anything of significance.
Without this tool, you might climb the ladder of success only to discover it’s leaning against the wrong wall.

To craft this powerful “call to adventure,” take all the data you’ve collected during this chapter and follow the instructions below.

1. Choose a few VERBS that resonate, inspire, or excite you — and represent your core values. For example: to Play, to Serve, to Build, to Enlighten, to Help, etc.

2. In the context of your work, decide who or what you will be acting upon.

3. What is your ultimate goal for the people or groups you will be serving or helping? What is the value, benefit, or end result you create?

4. Now combine these three elements to create the skeleton of the mission statement, and use all the other work you’ve done to fill in the flesh.

Example

*As a writer, speaker, and teacher, I create projects that hold up a mirror to humanity, inspiring individuals to heal their past, awaken their full potential, and fulfill their destiny — creating a world that works for everyone. By conducting business with honesty, integrity, enthusiasm, and generosity, I provide a safe and productive atmosphere for people to make mistakes, take risks, create and perform in ways that exceed their expectations, and grow in ways they never thought possible!*
Your Emergence Mantra doesn’t have to be long. It can be one sentence if it inspires you and sums up your purpose. Rhonda Byrnes, creator of The Secret, summed hers up as “Joy to Billions.” Don’t worry if it’s not perfect either. It’s not carved in stone. It’s something you “try on,” like a new coat. If, after wearing it a while, it makes you itch or sweat or feel like you showed up to the party overdressed — get a new one.

Tapping into your vision and creating the Emergence Mantra is a major step in the direction of your dreams. But it’s only the beginning. What you need next is a daily practice to activate the visionary vibration (which you’ll develop in Stage 2: Cultivate Congruent Conditions), and a clear plan, reverse-engineered into compelling action steps (something you’ll create in Stage 3: Create the Quantum Plan). Together, this integrates the inner and outer work into a cohesive strategy that takes you from living life on accident…to living on purpose.