

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

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GREGOR JASCH

With a foreword by Francesc Miralles
—bestselling author of Ikigai—

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TEXT BOOK COVER:

Life has different seasons, each one with a different quality. And so does success. If you follow every stage and do whatever is needed, you will become a designer of reality and of your life and have a good harvest in what you want to achieve.

Winter is the perfect time for reflection and planning. Spring is the season of rebirth and the time for talent to grow. In Summer we reach the peak of what we began. During Autumn we let go what we no longer need and prepare for the next cycle of success.

No matter what time of the year it is, these four seasons are already inside you. Gregor Jasch reveals how to manage the four seasons of success in a practical way, to master your destiny and pick the best fruits of life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Since a very young age, **Gregor Jasch** has transformed ideas into reality. He started out in the music & seminar business and, after that, he worked for various marketing and film companies, which led him to working on all continents, and developing a special love for Japan.

He has become a book author, motivational speaker and personal sparring partner for entrepreneurs and public brand personalities. The 4 Seasons of Success is the fruit of half a lifetime guiding people, ideas, and corporations on their way to success.

More about him: www.gregorjasch.com

How to harvest success

PROLOGUE BY FRANCESC MIRALLES

Although, in general, human beings aspire to a catastrophe-free life, we learn with time that some accidents can be very fortunate. One of these occurred a year ago in Barcelona.

Every week, I receive numerous emails from readers. The majority only want to tell me about a book of mine that they have read, and I try to reply to each one with the kindness it deserves. The message from Gregor Jasch was different because there was a synchronicity about it.

With great candor, he told me that he had traveled from Vienna to Barcelona for a business meeting, which had finally been cancelled. So, here he was, enjoying walking around the city while he read the book that a friend had given him: Ikigai.

When he finished the German edition of this book, written with Héctor García, he was surprised to see in my biographical information that I lived in Barcelona, where he happened to be for no apparent reason.

Convinced that this was a sign, he looked for my email address on my website and wrote me, asking if we could meet for tea as, on reading the book, he had realized that we had a lot in common, like our love for Japan.

I always decline this kind of invitation because of a lack of time if it is not someone who has been recommended to me by a good friend, and because I do not like meeting with people I do not know. In the case of Gregor, however, I appreciated that he had come from Vienna and the tone of his message seemed to me very discreet and respectful. Also, it happened at a time when I was not

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overwhelmed by work and my partner was traveling, so I suggested we have a glass of wine in a bar in my neighborhood.

I talked for about an hour with this erudite man, whose white hair reminded me of Beethoven. I like to listen rather than talk so while we had a Rioja, I asked him about his life. So, I learned that he spoke at conferences, had owned a marketing agency and that he from time to time he has even even been a musician and a band manager.

At some point in the conversation, we started to talk about creativity and Gregor pointed out the different stages that occur in the process of writing, composing songs, or even falling in love or forming a business. He had devoted the last few years to teaching people how to go from vision to success in his workshops and seminars.

This was the first time that he spoke to me about the thing that would come to embody The Four Seasons of Success, which contains the wisdom of half a life spent turning projects into reality for brands, entrepreneurs, and artists.

'Why don't you write about these lessons for everyone?' I asked him at the end of our chat.

'What do you mean by everyone?'

'It's all very well creating strategies so that businesses and artists succeed but normal people also need to be successful in their daily lives. And not just in their career or with money. We all want success in our relationships, to be more creative, to manage our time better... Do you think that what you teach is useful for anyone's life?'

'Of course, I've proved it in my workshops!' he assured me.

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'And how would you define your approach to achieving success in the areas that we are discussing?' I asked him, adopting the role of editor.

Gregor finished his glass of wine before answering:

'I compare the different phases of success to the four seasons of the year for a farmer. If you are conscious of the moment you find yourself in, and you do whatever is necessary in each phase, you will have a good harvest in whatever you have proposed to do.'

'If you can explain that in detail, there is a book in it,' I challenged him. Although I had promised myself not to go back to working as a literary Sherpa, a task I gave ten years of my life to, I decided I would make an exception.

Shortly after, I arrived at his apartment in Vienna where three very friendly cats assisted in the official birth of the literary project which – a year later – has borne the fruit that you hold in your hands.

I will not talk about the contents so that there are no spoilers, because in the pages that follow you will learn all that you need to know to bring your ideas down to earth and make them a reality in full blossom, with a fresh and highly inspirational approach.

I wish you a happy and illuminating read!

FRANCESC MIRALLES

Dedicated to Christin und Christine for
your loving and unconditional support

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The seasons of our life

The message of the seasons of life, in short, is that if you live each stage in awareness (aware) of where you are, you will flow with nature and always be in the best moment of your life, like a perfect symphony where there is no single part that is unnecessary or becomes boring. Like Vivaldi's The Four Seasons.

The music of change

My first memories of mornings at my parents' house has baroque music as its soundtrack. My sister and I did not use an alarm clock but started the day with the suggestive and exhilarating music of Bach, Händel, Vivaldi and their contemporaries. With the first rays of sunshine, the family apartment was not only filled with light but also with music and emotion. We tuned in to the new day in all senses of the word, thanks to that happy and empowering music.

Apart from baroque music, in my youth I was very familiar with classical works and romanticism. Born in the music capital of the world, Vienna, most of the great composers had lived near my home: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and many others. In fact, Antonio Vivaldi died in a Vienna hospital very close to the primary school that I went to.

The work The Four Seasons is a good musical metaphor for what we are going to learn in this book.

The natural cycles of winter, spring, summer, and autumn determine our lives, just as in the agricultural world. Each season has its own virtues and characteristics and requires different actions and attitudes of us. Nature advances with a constantly changing rhythm: the rotation between resting, growing, flowering, ripening and enduring, continually reinventing itself to renew its strengths year after year.

The score of success

In the same way that your story as a human being passes through distinct seasons, so success develops through different stages and if, up to now, things

have not turned out as you hoped, perhaps it is because you were missing a piece of the musical score.

As you will see throughout this book, success in any aspect of our lives – intellectual, emotional, social, economic – goes through four phases that have great parallels with the seasons of a year. And, like the farmer who gives his vegetable plot what it needs at each stage, we must take care of different tasks in order to pick the best fruits of life.

When I was very young, I studied 'New Music', choosing 'Electroacoustic Composition' as a specialism. It consisted of composing through noises and that led me to discover the concept of Re-Componere. The Latin term to compose means 'to reorganize things, to give a new order to something'. And that is what you will be able to do with your life when you pick the fruits of your personal development with this natural strategy, adapting to changing circumstances and giving the best of yourself in each season of success.

Do you want to change when it is necessary for your goals, dear reader? Do you have the will to adapt and to progress in order to complete the priorities of your life? Do you want to plant the seeds of your next harvest in the field you promised yourself? If your answer is yes, keep reading.

In the chapters that follow, organized in accordance with the four seasons of success, you will be able to give a 'new order' to your life – if that is what you want – which will allow you to realize, step-by-step, what up to now were only ideas and aspirations.



Winter

A time for reflection

«In the midst of winter,
I found there was, within me, an invincible summer.

And that makes me happy.
For it says that no matter
how hard the world pushes against me,
within me,
there's something stronger – something better,
pushing right back.»

Albert Camus

Hello, Winter

We have started the stages of life with summer. However, this book on personal success starts in winter. And there is nothing strange in that as in this season preparations for the harvest begin, no matter how inclement the weather and even if the cold penetrates to the furthest depths of our soul. There are different personal circumstances that can make us feel like we are going through the winter of our lives:

- A sudden break up after a period of sharing our life with another person.
- Financial ruin, or a laying-off that forces us to reinvent our life, as for example after the coronavirus shutdown in 2020.
- An existential crisis, when what we have been happy with up to now no longer makes sense to us and we need to find new motivation.

'Winter is coming', they said in the Game of Thrones series, and sometimes we view the onset of winter as a kind of journey through the desert.

The journey through nowhere

This metaphor for the emptiness which is created when we leave our comfort zone in order to find our 'promised land', whether by force or through our own initiative, comes from the Bible in western culture. To be exact, the Deuteronomy (the fifth book in the Jewish as well as the Christian Bible canon) tells how the Israelites wandered for forty years in 'a great and inspiring desert of fear, with venomous serpents and scorpions'.

Many readers of the scriptures, particularly those who have a more critical eye, ask themselves why the God of the Old Testament is so cruel, to the point of making his people go through such harsh tests. Theologians answer that crossing the desert showed men how to love Jehovah and trust in Him, as it did not seem possible to survive in such a barren landscape so full of dangers, where jackals howled at night, increasing the feeling of isolation and abandonment.

If we bring this lesson into a strictly human sphere, the value of the journey through the desert is that it teaches us to trust in ourselves and, therefore, to love ourselves. It takes us beyond our frontiers, our comfort zone, and makes us grow as we overcome obstacles.

Each person's journey through the desert is the stadium where the personal Olympics of change take place.

When you need a personal 'Plan B'

At some point in our lives, we realize that we cannot resist change any more. It could be because of a twist of fate or circumstances beyond our control, and most likely the crisis will take us by surprise.

Personally, when I lost what was my means of living, I was not at all prepared. At that time, I had had a marketing agency for 15 years and my main client was in Los Angeles. Until one day, overnight, that company's entire management team was dismissed, and they informed me that the brand would disappear from the market. I had almost 20 employees at that time and my first reaction was to declare: 'I can't believe it!' Afterwards, as absurd as it sounds, I kept saying to myself: 'I don't want to know anything about this. I won't let this news defeat me now. I'll keep moving forward as if nothing had happened.'

As founder and CEO of my agency, PlanB, I had spent years living for my business, working more hours than were on a clock. In reality, I was exhausted, almost burned out and, ironically, I did not have 'a plan B' of my own.

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I found myself on the edge of an abyss and staring directly at my biggest fear: the bankruptcy of my company, which would mean my own financial ruin and the loss of everything I had achieved in 15 years of hard work.

I was facing my own journey through the desert.

That American client, which I depended on for my living, and with whom I had signed a contract that they had now breached, calmly told me: 'You will stop working on our behalf with immediate effect. Our jurisdiction is in Los Angeles and we have more money than you. So, I advise you not to try to take us to court because you will lose. We are dispensing with your services, period.'

Austrian social security and the laws of my country do not consider any exceptions to the situation I found myself in. I had to dismiss and indemnify all my employees, which cost a fortune that I did not have, and the abyss that opened up beneath my feet became ever deeper.

'I need to re-invent myself', I repeated frantically while I looked for money wherever I could find it, but I did not know how to do that. I faced the strain that I was suffering from with a poor attitude. I felt guilty for a situation I had not created, and I hated myself and my life. I was a prisoner in a freezing mental and emotional desert. Buried under that avalanche, I decided to shake off the snow to find a clear vision again and gain perspective, at least for the moment. But the icy wind and storm kept battering me, leaving me lost in the snow.

I had only two options: admit defeat and die right there or find new strengths inside me which would allow me to get out of this desert.

I chose the second option, and that was how my great adventure in personal growth began, which allowed me to transform my life into what it is today. Gaining a new perspective and a new attitude toward myself and the world, I started to travel and walk through dense forests.

I found myself in a Re-componere phase. That winter, I found a new arrangement for my life which, now, swings so much better. This is the essential

lesson that I took from it: If you journey through the desert with a positive attitude, you will see positive changes along the journey. And they will take you to places you would never have dreamed of reaching.

What do you need to be happy?

We greet winter as a time for contemplation, for reviewing our own lives and sorting good decisions from mistakes. It is a season that invites you to decide what you want to do with your life and, in order to do that, you must turn to a new, blank page to write down what you want.

The best thing about wandering across unknown landscapes is that you are totally free to decide where to go.

Of course, it is good to do a bit of investigation before starting the journey, and winter is the perfect season for this.

In this inner exploration, you will not only discover what you have, but also what you need. At this point, it is important to bear in mind that, on the path to personal development, in order to achieve a successful and happy life all human beings have to fulfill three important desires:

- The desire for security. This involves both money and health. If your bank account and your body are in good condition, you will feel ready for any adventure that life brings you. Winter is a good time to be at home and look after both aspects.
- The desire for love. Many people who failed in the field of love did not receive enough care and attention in their childhood. This creates a void inside them and, from then on, they search desperately for someone to fill it. Precisely because of this, their relationships do not work. No one wants to exist to fill the void for other people. When we have self-esteem and respect for ourselves, then true love becomes possible.
- The desire for appreciation. Perhaps you do not aspire to fame, but everyone needs to be appreciated – in the workplace, among a group of friends, within

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the family, in society – to obtain feedback about their contribution to the world. It is natural and positive, so long as it does not become an obsession. The only approval you need is your own. If you are happy with who you are and what you do, the world will also benefit from it.

By understanding these three basic desires, you can free yourself from them and focus on yourself. To achieve this, all you need is to accept responsibility for three principles, which are as simple as they are magic:

1. I am responsible for my security. I do not depend on other people, the situation in the country, the luck of having been born strong or weak, rich, or poor. I do everything necessary to be healthy (physically and financially) and feel secure.
2. I am responsible for feeling love. Because I have decided to love myself and love other people in order to share the adventure of life with them. It is not because I need someone to walk life's path with me.
3. I am responsible for my own appreciation. Given that I appreciate myself, I am conscious of my weaknesses but, even more so, of my strengths. I know what I am capable of and what I can offer.

If you practice these assertions in the winter of your life, you will be ready for a new spring.

You will free yourself from old ideas and stop those obsolete movies that you have played so many times in your mind. You will let go of those emotional barriers that have been holding you back.

When you change your desires and responsibilities, your fate moves into your hands. As well as the relief you will feel when you are no longer depending on others, you will feel a sudden sense of freedom that will bring you new perspectives.

In answer to the question of this section: What do you need to be happy?
Nothing, except yourself.

A time of contemplation

Winter is the first season of success because it is when the whole year is planned. In agriculture, a lot is sown in winter and cultivated in advance in the greenhouse until the plants are put into the ground in spring. However, before that, it is essential to know what we want to cultivate. And to decide this, we have to consider what did and did not pan out of what we sowed in the previous year.

This review exercise will allow you to find out what works in your life and what could work better. That is, what you have to stop doing, what is worth continuing to do, and what you want to start to do.

The year on one page

Before preparing for a new harvest, reviewing the previous year will allow you to know where you are and, with that knowledge, to decide where you want to go and how you are going to get there.

There are different ways of reviewing the year, if you navigate by calendar months, and most people carry out this exercise before the New Year. Not long ago, I read that the Spanish editor, Jordi Nadal, uses a piece of paper to sum up the important things that have happened to him in the year, which, for him, means filling in the following categories:

- Arrivals (new, important people) and departures of friends (as a result of death, moving to another country, disagreements, growing apart, etc.)
- Reading, films, and other artistic and intellectual events that left their mark on you.
- Revealing journeys.
- Successes and failures in different areas that are important to you.
- Conclusions and discoveries about yourself and about your own life.
- Map of your current situation: where you are now.

This exercise in summarizing will be extremely useful to you in planning your new life goals. The Latin philosopher Seneca said, 'If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favourable.' However, I would add that, if you do not know where you are now, a navigational map will be of no use to you either.

The art of reflection

If you have had the good luck to grow up in Austria, like me, you could count on the gift of nature right from the start. If you live in harmony with it, you will experience the passage of the seasons as a magnificent and changing setting for your plans because they stimulate your perception of the outside world, just as happens within you.

From a young age, I liked to spend time in a small wooden cabin in the middle of the woods. Although it had no heating in the winter, I enjoyed the dense countryside around me during this season as well.

In one of these periods of seclusion, it snowed continuously for several days until I was completely snowed in. Great white walls prevented me from leaving the cabin to get to the road.

At that time, there were no mobile phones or internet, so my sudden isolation ended up being a true gift of nature: I had several days for myself without distractions or hassle from the outside world.

When a thick blanket of snow covers everything, your perception changes. An absolute silence reigns and whatever noise you make sounds muffled. Suddenly, you feel as if time goes by much more slowly. It is the perfect moment to hide with a cup of tea and examine your own life with the exercise we saw previously.

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If you review your last year from a distance, you can formulate simple questions that deal with everyday successes, such as:

Have I improved my financial situation?

Have I nurtured good personal relationships?

Have I known how to resolve the challenges of my day-to-day life?

How have I helped other people?

What do I feel proud of?

What am I grateful for?

In this review process, you can ask yourself more questions, although it is also likely that the answers you give might lead you to new questions.

What is your current purpose?

The singer and composer Patti Smith once confessed in an interview: 'One important reason that held me back from thinking of suicide was that I really wanted to listen to the Rolling Stones' new release.'

What would you say in that respect?

It could seem radical, but it can be revealing to write a list of reasons why you would not want to die today. This was an exercise that Viktor Frankl carried out in his consulting room in Vienna, after the Second World War, where he saw patients who had lived through extremely shocking events. The neurologist and psychotherapist, who lost his whole family in the concentration camps, developed logotherapy, which is aimed at finding meaning in a person's life. We can summarize it in two questions that we can ask ourselves:

What gives meaning to your life right now?

What is your ikigai, your actual purpose?

No one has been known to complain on their death bed: 'I have not worked hard enough in my life', as we will see later on in the book. However, in their final moments, many people regret that their desires and most personal goals did not govern their lives.

This leads me to suggest two more questions:

If today were my last day, what would I regret?

What have you invested too little time and energy in to achieve your dreams and meet your needs?

So, let us return to the present and prepare the next harvest as of now:

Starting today, what is truly important to you?

How would your life be in an ideal world?

What actions would you have to take to achieve that ideal?

Ask yourself these questions and take your time to write down the answers. If necessary, go down into the depths of your consciousness, where your deepest desires and inspirations lie.

Often, the best ideas arrive during a state of flow: when you are falling asleep, or waking up, while you are exercising, in the shower, or during the course of a journey. Carry a notebook with you to write down these thoughts. Practicing this exercise of introspection on a regular basis will allow you to clarify changes

and plans, as regards the immediate future, and fill you with energy and enthusiasm.

At the same time, other things will no longer be so important to you. And that is fine!

To let new things into your life, you need to free up space, which means leaving the old stuff behind. This not only applies to the outside world where you live, but also to your inner world, filled with your thoughts and emotions. Winter is the season in which you can become conscious of what is relevant, and of what is no longer needed.

Practical example: In order for something new to enter your life, it is necessary to make space and let go of the old

Every now and then I am invited on a cruise and I get to talk to many people on board. All the passengers are well off and many couples told me anecdotes from their lives. The most interesting thing for me was the introduction, which often began as follows: "In our second life, we finally had the courage to turn our idea into reality - and then we were so successful with it within a few years that we can now treat ourselves to such trips, for example." This "second life" meant retirement - and the really successful career was only launched at that late stage when others were actually dedicating themselves to retirement.

Why do you think it took so many years for these couples to allow something new into their lives?

Truth and Dare: a winter game

Perhaps you played this game when you were a teenager. A group of boys and girls at a party would enjoy playing 'Truth or Dare?'. When your turn came, if you chose 'truth', another player asked you a very compromising question that would reveal

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something about you. If you chose 'dare', they asked you to kiss someone at the party, to take all your clothes off or some other thing that the others chose.

As a winter game for adults, you can play this game with yourself in another way, changing the 'or' for 'and': Truth **and** Dare.

The process is simple: ask yourself an important question about your life and, immediately after, begin the action that it has inspired in you.

Tim Ferriss, the author of *The 4-hour Workweek*, says, 'A person's success in life can usually be measured by the number of uncomfortable conversations he or she is willing to have.'

These uncomfortable conversations include those that you have with yourself. How long has it been since you arranged a coffee break with yourself? The winter of success is a season that invites you to stay at home, put the kettle on and play Truth and Dare. Find your motivations and innermost aspirations, dare to ask what you expect from life and, immediately after, get on with it.

Nothing is lost

There is a very popular fable in which a poor, old farmer who lives with his son finds that the only horse he has for working on the land and carrying the harvests has escaped. When a neighbour sympathizes with him, the man takes him by the shoulders and says: 'Who knows if it is good luck or bad luck?'

He says the same thing when the horse returns with ten wild horses, making the farmer and his son the richest people in the village.

The following day, as the son tries to tame one of the horses, he falls to the ground and breaks his leg. The neighbour returns to sympathize with him and the farmer says again: 'Who knows if it is good luck or bad luck?' Shortly afterwards, war begins with the neighbouring country and the army arrives in the village to conscript all the young men except the farmer's son, who is not able to walk. The old man repeats the same question.

From this very well-known tale, we can draw the following conclusions:

- When something important happens in our lives, radically changing it, at the time we cannot tell if it will benefit us or do exactly the opposite.
- There are things in life that we only understand with the passage of time.
- Luck is on the side of those who trust in life, as that attitude turns any failure into a success.

Connecting the dots

The second conclusion was explained marvellously by Steve Jobs in his famous Commencement Speech at the University of Stanford in 2005. He used a children's game where you have to connect the dots on a sheet of paper following the numbers with a pencil until they form an image. Only when it is completed do you understand what it means; the same happens along the path of life.

In the words of the founder of Apple:

'You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down and it has made all the difference in my life.'

And now, dear reader, I have a few questions for you:

Do you trust that the events and changes that you are living through are for the best?

Do you tend to rush into things or, on the contrary, do you look forward with the serenity of the farmer, knowing that you will eventually connect the dots?

Are you one of those people who thinks that everything happens for a reason?

Life's turning points

Every challenge we face makes us grow, whether we like it or not; that is what makes life such an exciting adventure.

Now I want to tell you about what I would say was, without a doubt, the most important change in my life.

My son was born at home and his mother was completely exhausted after the birth, so she could not look after the baby in his first moments of life. As a result, I spent the first 45 minutes of my son's life alone with him. It is this very first time in which a lifelong imprint is created. Accepting this blessing in life, I welcomed him with love, care and responsibility.

That start was a sign of things to come when three years later the child's mother stood in front of me at the biggest turning point in my life and said: 'I'm going to leave this family. I need to go back to living without any commitments or responsibilities.'

'If that's what you really want,' I replied, 'we'll get a divorce and you'll have to give me custody of the child.'

Her reply was:

'If that's what you want, I'm happy to accept.'

Three weeks later, we were divorced, and I was the single father of a three-and-a-half-year-old child.

This situation took me completely by surprise, not having had time to prepare myself. Because of the separation, I had to leave the countryside to return to the city and I started to reorganize my life completely.

It was one of the most intense and fascinating times of my life. Taking care of my son on my own allowed me to discover the happiness of looking after someone, as well as to transform my relationship with him into an extremely strong and significant bond.

Today, now that my son is grown up and looks after himself, thanks to this experience I realize that the most important thing is to trust in life and let yourself go with the flow.

The message of the fallen leaves

We are talking about changes and twists of fate, but we are still in winter, when the trees have lost their leaves and the cold makes us snuggle up in our homes, fondly remembering the generosity of summer.

We have all suffered accidents and losses, but what differentiates a successful person from a victim is his or her attitude to these difficulties.

There are people who use their time complaining about...

- What they have lost (money, a partner, health, dreams, hope...)
- How hard and unfair life is.

- What others should be doing for them and don't do (in return for what they did for those ungrateful people).

Regarding this negative attitude toward loss, a beautiful zen proverb tells us:

'Now the barn has burned down, I can see the moon'.

One of the most important lessons to learn from experience is that each loss goes hand in hand with an unexpected gain. In the case of Steve Jobs, of whom we spoke earlier, losing the company he had founded was a blessing as, thanks to that, he became a millionaire with Pixar and, on returning to save Apple, the company entered a golden age.

From a very young age, we are taught to win – in sport, in our studies, in our professional careers – but if you want to have success in any area of your life, you will have to learn to take advantage of the losses and understand the message of the fallen leaves.

Losing our leaves and becoming naked brings us three vital benefits:

1. Loss creates reflection. After bankruptcy or a breakup, we suddenly see our mistakes and adopt new strategies that allow us to evolve.
2. Loss creates free space. In order to rethink our lives, to invent, to imagine the impossible, or to surprise ourselves.
3. Loss creates new beginnings. Like the Israelites crossing the desert, to find our 'starting point' we have to move, and that brings discovery.

As the Argentinian writer Julio Cortázar said:

'Nothing is lost if one has the courage to proclaim that all is lost and that we must begin again.'

The magic of dreaming

If you were a tree that thinks like a human, you would have two ways of living through winter. When you are naked, having lost your leaves, you could think that only death awaits you; or instead, you could think that you find yourself in a cycle of change, cleansing your skin for young, green leaves that will fill you with fresh energy.

Richard Bach, the author of the fable Jonathan Livingston Seagull, explains it like this:

‘What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the master calls a butterfly.’

This second and higher way of living belongs to the dreamer, who does not think about his funeral but about his rebirth.

In the winter of success, you can think about everything you have lost, remaining trapped in the spiral of negative thoughts, or instead start to dream about the butterfly that you are, of the new worlds you will conquer when you come out of the cocoon of sadness and unfurl your wings.

For that, once those wings have grown and your dream shows you your new course, you will need to have the courage to leave your old skin behind. Or even set fire to it, so that there is no opportunity to go back.

Burn the ships

This expression is usually attributed to Hernán Cortés, the Spanish conquistador, who, after a mutiny among his men when they reached America, gave the order to sink – not burn – the majority of the ships they had arrived in, so that no one felt

tempted to return when faced with the challenges that awaited them in the New World.

However, some historians maintain that the expression 'burn the ships' is much older, from as far back as the third century A.D., and its author is none other than Alexander the Great himself. It seems that, on arriving at the Phoenician coast, the king of Macedonia saw that the enemy's army was three times the size of his, which made his men feel defeated even before they prepared themselves for battle.

After disembarking, Alexander the Great immediately ordered his men to 'burn the ships' and, while they were on fire, called his men together to rally the troops. According to Manuel Campuzano, in his book *Alexander the Great: Excellence from Leadership*, the words of this warrior and dreamer were:

'See how the ships burn... This is the only way we can defeat them, so if we do not win, we will not be able to return to our homes and none of us will be reunited with our families again, nor can we leave this land which, today, we despise. We must be victorious in this battle, as there is only one way to return and that is by sea. Friends, when we turn home, we will do so in the only way possible: in our enemy's ships.'

In our daily life, we are not conquering an unknown Mexico, nor are we facing the Phoenician army; the battlefield is within us, in our own lives. If in our personal winter we dare to 'burn the ships' of what has failed to serve us in our lives, of our attitudes that led us up a dead-end, we will no longer return to our 'old world' and we will become conquerors of our own life. Then you can say that you are living your zero hour, where everything starts now.

Practical example: Buy a ticket for your success - without a return ticket

In his book "A Writer by Profession", Japanese author Haruki Murakami tells the story of how he opened a small jazz bar in Kokubunji near Tokyo because he didn't want to live the life of a salaryman after graduating from Waseda

University. He later moved the bar to the more centrally located Sendagaya until he finally decided to sell it. His motive for doing so and his willpower were unusual: he wanted to free himself from his economic safety net by selling his bar in order to "have to" become a truly successful and internationally recognized writer. And with the subsequent novel "Naoko's Smile", he did indeed achieve his major international breakthrough a few years later.

The regrets of the dying

Many people die with the regret that they never burned the ships after a life going nowhere.

On this subject, there are some very interesting experiences that Australian nurse Bronnie Ware relates in her book *Regrets of the Dying*. After many years working with patients with terminal illnesses, she collected together the last words of patients and, very specifically, the things they regretted not having done.

The author mentions the five most common:

1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me. According to Bronnie Ware, this was the most common regret. As they ran out of time, looking at their lives in retrospect they noticed how many dreams they had left unfulfilled.
2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard. On their death bed, no one is proud of having used up their days in the office or wherever their work was. Looking back with sadness, they would want to spend more time with their partner, their children, and their friends.
3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings. It is sad to realize too late that we did not show our loved ones – whether relatives or others – how much we loved them. In fact, the author of the book concludes that

many illnesses have their origin in – or are at the very least aggravated by – a life of bitterness and resentment.

4. I wish I'd stayed in touch with my friends. We do not usually give our friends the importance they deserve, as they will always be there. Until we lose them or we leave this life, thereby losing the opportunity to enjoy their company. 'Everyone misses their friends when they are dying,' asserts Bonnie Ware.
5. I wish I'd let myself be happier. In theory, the intention of every human being is to be happy, but many do not realize until the end that they have lived in haste, using up their lives on obligations and commitments. Then they sigh and utter the fateful phrase: 'If I were born...'

On this last point, there is a very inspiring text that, for years, was attributed to the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges. Scholars conclude that it is not his but, although the author is anonymous, it is worth reading because it captures perfectly what we should not regret at the end of our journey:

'If I could live my life again, next time I would try to make more mistakes. I would try not to be so perfect; I would relax more. I would be sillier than I have been; in fact, I would take very few things seriously. I would be less careful. I would run more risks, I would travel more, I would watch more sunsets, I would climb more mountains, and I would swim in more rivers. I would go to more places where I have never been before, I would eat more ice cream and fewer beans, I would have more real problems and fewer imaginary ones.

I was one of those people who lived sensibly and worked hard every minute of his life; of course, I had moments of happiness. But if I could go back, I would try to have only good moments; don't lose the present moment. I was one of those who never went anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, an umbrella, and a parachute; if I could live again, I would travel lighter.

If I could live again, I would begin walking barefoot from the start of spring and I would remain barefoot until the end of autumn. I would take more turns on a carousel, I would watch more sunrises, and I would play with more children as if I had more life ahead of me.

But now, you see, I am 85 years old... and I know I'm dying.'

Three reasons why plans fail

Winter invites us to take a break, to stop running inside the hamster's wheel to balance our lives, as we have seen in previous chapters. Then comes the formulation of wishes and plans, the majority of which remain as mere ideas, seeds that never manage to grow.

Why is this?

I see three main reasons why the best plans fail:

1. The collapse of too many plans. A common error is wanting to start several changes at the same time, with the result that energy is scattered, and the plan remains a hodgepodge of good intentions.
2. A lack of realism. If you have not been to the gym for years, to think that suddenly you are going to go every day - or three times a week - without fail, is to be too optimistic. You must set more modest goals that allow you to gain the confidence to increase the challenge.
3. A lack of motivation. Another reason why change is not implemented is because we do not want it enough, or we are not convinced we can do it. The energy to achieve it is not strong enough.

On this third point, it is important to consider these questions:

- Am I sure that it is this, and not something else, that I want?
- How much commitment am I ready to give to achieve it?

- What am I willing to give up in order to find the time and resources to pull me in this direction?

In the depths of winter, when you are planning your next life, it is essential to clarify how far you are prepared to go to achieve your goals. In order to know that, it is important to understand why you want to do it.

The importance of why

When the speaker Simon Sinek presented his concept of the Golden Circle for the first time in 2008, it was not just people, but companies as well, who realized the importance of having a why in life.

Up till then, many of them were focusing on communicating WHAT they do. To emphasize their quality and excellence, others even showed HOW they do it.

However, the key to standing out from the rest is in the WHY they do it. As an example of this last point, the first advertisement for Apple during the Superbowl communicated that the why of the brand was that Apple believes in challenging the status quo in everything they do. What if, we could imagine a personal computer which was totally different to all the existing others?

So, working with the three levels of Sinek's Golden Circle means answering three questions:

Why do you do it?

How do you do it?

What do you do?

Without a doubt, the first question is the most important. The WHY defines your values and attitudes; it is the fuel that drives your life and your projects.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

In your winter refuge, when you know why you want your new life, you are much closer to achieving it.

Unlock your mind

Winter is the season for ideas. Our steps trace a new path across a field of pristine snow. We do not know what is waiting for us at the end of the road, when the sun warms up again and life returns to every corner of the world, but it is the time to create new possibilities.

The colours of spring lay within and announce new adventures and projects - even when you think you have none. You are your own treasure island, but this treasure can only be unearthed by you.

The pedagogue and writer Gianni Rodari said that any person can become a powerful storyteller if they complete the sentence: What if...? What if I stopped calling what I have not tried yet 'impossible'? What if you turned your ideas into reality?

I suggest that you write two or three personal assumptions that start with 'what if...' to challenge your status quo.

The simple act of writing these down shows that you have imagination. In this chapter, we are going to see how ideas work and how they can ignite a personal revolution.

When do you have your best ideas?

Since I was a child, I remember having listened to my inner voice. At the age of 21, this allowed me to make my debut freelancing, organizing seminars and rock, pop, and jazz workshops.

In that initial phase as an entrepreneur, I remember that my best ideas came to me in the early hours of the morning, just before waking up.

In Psalm 127, the Bible says: 'God gives his beloved sleep', and I can add that, very often, we hatch our most divine ideas while we sleep. A remarkable example of this is what happened to Friedrich August Kekulé von Stradonitz, a German

scientist who established the foundations of modern organic chemistry and discovered the structure of the benzene ring.

Before arriving at this revelation, he spent a great deal of time in the dark, trying in vain to come up with the structure of this hydrocarbon. Then, in a dream, he saw a snake biting its tail and he understood what he had been looking for. He published his paper in 1865 after resolving this problem of organic chemistry, to the astonishment of the scientific world.

The old advice to 'sleep on it' led this German chemist to an extraordinary outcome.

The sleep bureau, which continues working when we close our eyes, is a wealth of inspiration but it is not the only moment of the day when ideas come knocking at our door. In fact, these remarkable assistants are always with us.

Just as a tree without leaves potentially carries the idea of new growth, everything begins with the imagination. That is why it is important to ask ourselves the question: when do you have your best ideas?

Intuition: a stairway to heaven

When I ask this question in my conferences and workshops, some of the most common answers are:

- While I am doing sport
- In the shower
- When I meditate
- When I go out for a walk

Whatever the occasion, we formulate the best ideas in a state of 'flow'. We get into this flow when we stop taking a rigid approach to a problem and listen to our inner voice, also called sixth sense or intuition.

How does this powerful ally work? We must accept from the start that we do not think only with the brain we have in our head. Our feelings, which often

reside in the abdomen, also intervene. In fact, some scientists assert that we have a brain in the gut. This would explain the sensation of having 'butterflies in our stomach' when we fall in love with someone or with an idea. Intuition, our sixth sense, is like a second brain that can manifest itself through dreams, premonitions, or physical feelings, like when we dislike a person we have just met, although there is no logical reason for it.

Here is some advice for enjoying the illuminating help from our sixth sense:

- Spend time alone. To hear these messages from the subconscious, first you need to create space and be relaxed. Being continually on social networks or multitasking is a barrier to intuition.
- Raise your antennas. As well as listening to your own body, pay attention to what is happening around you. Meditating is a way of training yourself in this kind of perception.
- Notice synchronicities. Significant coincidences that happen to us – for example, someone calling you at the precise moment you are thinking about them – are other channels beyond rational consciousness.
- Include arts in your day-to-day life. Draw, play music, write, or use any other form of expression you choose to mobilize your inner resources and allow consciousness to emerge.
- Keep a sleep diary. As in the case of Kekulé, some nocturnal events can contain clues to resolving what is on your mind.

Dreaming aloud: your book of dreams

We have just talked about what happens when we switch off our consciousness. However, the dreams that we have with our eyes open are equally important. And we can reinforce them by means of a personal notebook.

In this book of dreams, write about the life you want to create, all your plans and what steps you have to take to make it reality. It is very helpful to use a visualisation board for this, such as a blank sheet of card on which you draw or stick images to create an emotional impact.

In any form, dreaming aloud is a powerful tool for those situations and things you wish to develop and manifest in your life. Many people do not dare to start to do this because of a fear of change or a lack of confidence - two large obstacles to success.

To break down those walls, start by asking yourself:

- Is my life satisfactory as it is now?
- Do I feel I am developing my full potential?
- Are there plans that I have postponed time and time again? Why?
- Am I willing to change that?

Winter is a fantastic time for dreaming out loud and, immediately after, setting things in motion.

To be the designer of your own life, first you will learn to listen to your inner voice. Express your ideas and you will be on your way to realizing them.

Doing this, you will become the designer of your reality. Your imagination transforms into part of the here and now.

Best of all: every one of us can do it!

Practical example: Develop the script for your success

An acquaintance of mine was driven into bankruptcy at the age of 24 through no fault of his own. He had horrendous debts that he would hardly have been able to repay in this lifetime. But instead of despairing, he spent ten years working on a plan to get rid of his debts. After that, he wanted to start a new life and make some money again. And so he created a "visualization book" in which he illustrated the milestones for his new life - both with photos and collages. New independence in a tax haven with his main residence in Monaco, involvement in social projects, building up an international network, ...

The amazing thing is that his vision actually became reality step by step - and today he commutes with his family between South East Asia and Germany and lives a happy and successful life as a businessman.

Never waste a moment on the yesterdays

In your winter cabin, where you are preparing your next harvest, you have a hotbed of ideas that are worth turning into reality, one after the other as soon as the time is right.

As we will see in the next season, for your walk to success, it will be very useful to seek out the company of other dreamers. As John Lennon sang, 'I'm not the only one'.

Winter, when it seems that nothing is happening, is the best season to dream. Regardless of the month in which you are reading these pages, every time you have a new idea, you find yourself at a mini New Year's Eve of your life. You are preparing yourself to start over.

In fact, every day is a blank check for living.

This season is brimful of possibilities and we finish it with the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American philosopher from the nineteenth century, often considered the father of self-help books:

'Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year. He is rich who owns the day, and no one who owns the day who allows it to be invaded with fret and anxiety.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt crept in. Forget them as soon as you can, tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely, with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense.

This new day is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterdays.'

THE 5 KEYS TO SUCCESS IN WINTER

1. To progress, at some point you'll have to cross a desert.
 2. Your luck depends on the questions you put to yourself.
 3. Every time you lose something, you are gaining something else.
 4. If you know why you do something, the energy will come by itself.
 5. Your ideas are your greatest treasures. Follow them!
-



SPRING

A time for rebirth

'In the spring,
at the end of the day,
you should smell like dirt.'

MARGARET ATWOOD

Hello, Spring

You have come through the winter, a period of reflection and perseverance. You have understood the mistakes and wise decisions of the past. You have clarified your plans – at least in part, since a large part of life is improvisation – and the horizon is now more sharply defined.

It is the end of your retreat. It is time for you to leave your cabin and put yourself to the test. A new world is waiting for you – even more so because you are new. You have changed and a spring of new opportunities is waiting for you – if you dare to come out of your hideout to find them, try them out and get your hands dirty.

After the season that has kept us busy in the first part of this book, let us see what is awaiting us in the spring of success:

- We look at the first seedlings of what we have planted. Ideas start to become facts, although we only see the beginning of what they could be. We see the potential for success.
- We practice patience, as the results of what we have planted are still emerging. Even so, it is normal that nothing much happens (on the road to success, there are no shortcuts). It is normal to have doubts.
- It is normal to be fearful.
- But you are also in an unstable time in which storms appear with surprising speed. The world is reawakening, sometimes with a jolt. There is no need to aim for stability in spring, nor to allow yourself to be overwhelmed by doubts, fear, or confusion.
- We feel we have more energy, connected as we are to the source of wellbeing and creativity in life. We trust ourselves and we feel like taking a risk and evolving.

- It is the season of joy and motivation, which can lead us to rush into something or become distracted. We should be open to everything that surrounds us but focus on our main objective.

As good as spring itself

In his novel *A Moveable Feast*, Ernest Hemingway explains how this season overpowered his senses when he was a bohemian free spirit in the city of lights: 'When spring came, even the false spring, there were no problems except where to be happiest. The only thing that could spoil a day was people and if you could keep from making engagements, each day had no limits. People were always the limiters of happiness except for the very few that were as good as spring itself.'

This is a point to note as we enter the spring of success. Given that this season leads us to open the doors and go out into the world, that is, mixing with people, our fate will depend to a great extent on the quality of the people surrounding us.

Modern psychology talks of 'emotional contagion' to define the effect which people produce in each other. When we move in the same circle as pessimistic, destructive, dependent, or selfish people – among other negative traits –, at the same time we are going to feel powerless and lacking in energy.

Precisely the energy that we need to move our projects forward.

These people are not only 'limiters of happiness', as Hemingway says, but also limiters of success, as they fail to help us move forward. Often unconsciously, they try to stop us making progress with our plans through:

- Negative oracles ('Now isn't a good time', 'that won't work out well', 'you're not ready', etc.)
- Belittling our plans by playing down their importance.
- Draining us of energy, filling our head with negativity about the world, other people, or their own problems.

- Stealing, by whatever means possible, the time that we need to carry our plans forward.

People who are 'like spring itself', on the other hand, are recognizable because they help us to make progress with our plans in several ways:

- They listen to our plans with great interest and ask questions to gain a deep understanding of them.
- Their comments are positive, or at least constructive, aimed at overcoming obstacles in order to achieve what we have decided to do.
- They offer their support in our venture; they are keen to collaborate so that we may succeed.
- On the road toward our target, they celebrate each one of our successes as if they were their own.

As Oscar Wilde said, it is not easy to find these driving forces of spring, but it is worthwhile finding and taking care of these great allies:

'Anybody can sympathize with the sufferings of a friend, but it requires a very fine nature to sympathize with a friend's success.'

A seed is not a tree

Each season of success has different characteristics, and in the case of spring it is not only the moment for action. It shows you how important it is to believe in yourself and also in what you are doing, especially when success is not yet tangible.

This is one of the lessons of spring: once the plan has matured and taken form, it is as small as the seed of a mighty tree. The DNA, the information, the structure

of the tree, is now in the seed. But a seed is not a tree. It has the potential to become a tree and grow magnificently – or perhaps not.

Everything depends on a fertilizer called attitude.

- How many people do you know who always intend to go to the gym?
- How many books they never begin to write or even start?
- How many businesses remain in the project phase, without ever becoming a reality?

We are not just the creators of our ideas – we are also the gardeners. And as a field needs sun and water to grow, every plan requires focus, continual effort, and emotional support.

In other words, as well as focusing on the goal and completing the work schedule, we must maintain a high level of motivation, a positive sense that we are capable of doing it.

This is where a key element comes in: self-confidence.

Every new path is lonely

No matter how much effort you give to something, that work will be in vain if you are not convinced that the plan will be a success, although it may not be at the first attempt. If you do not believe in yourself, you cannot inspire anyone and, given that most plans require collaboration from other people before and afterwards, this is not a trifling consideration.

However, on this point there is something which you need to understand. When creating something new, you will always be on your own at the start. Particularly if what you are trying to do is something unusual, you should be prepared for people to think you are mad or for no one to believe you can make a success of it.

But this should not stop you. If you assume that you will complete the first part of the process alone, up to that tricky point when the shoots break through the crust of the earth for the first time in spring, you will keep your spirits high through thick and thin.

Practical example: Your self-confidence determines your market value

Together with a professional photographer, I produce photo shoots for clients, which I also direct. Once, it was about a designer who took on the role of a little girl in terms of posture and expression. I asked her to abandon this attitude and meet me as an expert at eye level. And so we were able to clearly work out the difference between before and after: The impact of the images as an experienced expert were clearly more professional than the images in the role of the little girl.

The next day, the designer told me: "Until now, I had never seen and thought about this difference so clearly. I was about ten years old when my parents separated and I missed my father very much afterwards. I wanted his closeness and recognition, and when I won second or third place in a sporting competition, I was very proud. But my father would just say: "You could do even better." Since then, my self-confidence has been weakened and when I talk to a customer, I involuntarily slip into the role of the little girl who is looking for her father's approval again. Only now that I have understood this image can I finally free myself from this emotional entanglement!"

The fruits of patience

Just as a child needs nine months to come into the world, every project we want to bring to life needs time.

Along the path, it is very possible that there will be blocks, delays and setbacks. Or perhaps you will bypass obstacles with more difficulty than you thought at the start. You should not expect everything to work 100%. It is better to have 80% clarity and 20% development potential than never to begin at all.

After a long and frustrating search for the filament that would switch on a light bulb, Edison said, 'I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work'. He had to try countless materials until 'light was produced'. And the key to his success was that he did not give up; he continued to believe that his idea was feasible.

If he had given up with his last failed attempt, human technology would not have developed as we know it today. However, he was not discouraged. With each

failure, he learned something new that brought him even closer to an invention that would change the world forever.

Edison's tenacity, his tireless 'trial and error', teaches us, for example, that:

- You can break up with every partner in your life and, overcoming previous mistakes, build a new love that lasts forever.
- Although you may have always lived in financial difficulties, that does not mean you are condemned to be poor; you can change your fortune by doing things in a different way.

In fact, the greatest successes in life do not usually happen at the first attempt, and they hardly ever happen immediately. They develop from a seedling, growing secretly in the darkness below ground until, one day, they flower decisively to offer the world their fruits.

To switch on our own light bulb, we need to cultivate seeds, get our hands dirty and have patience and hope. As a Canadian proverb says,

'Patience is a tree whose root is bitter, but its fruit is very sweet'.

Being reborn

How many times can we die and be reborn? There is no need to believe in oriental religions, as death and rebirth is something that occurs many times within a single lifetime.

In the same way that everything seems inert until, after winter, the snow-covered fields burst into life and fill with flowers, as we grow as human beings, we will go through many 'resurrections' either in general terms, or in specific areas of our life:

- When a romantic relationship ends and immediately after, or following a period of solitude, a new love flowers that takes you to a new stage in life.
- When we leave our profession, whether through layoff or shutdown, because we decide to change what we do, or due to boredom or reaching retirement.
- When we are obliged to bring in important changes in our everyday life owing to a significant illness.
- When there is a change of city, or even country, to begin a new life in our new home.

These are changes of great importance, but there are also little deaths and rebirths in life every time we give up a habit or take up another.

In fact, every morning of our life we reawaken after a night's sleep and we are given a day that is a blank page for us to write whatever we want. Therefore, I suggest that you ask yourself the following question each day when you get up:

How do I want to invest this blank check that I have been given today?

Why is change so difficult?

Panta Rhei is a saying attributed to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus and indicates the eternal cycle of birth and death in all things. So, if everything constantly changes, why is it so difficult for us to accept it?

All change is risky and one of the most famous Chinese sayings is: 'May you live in interesting times!' Now, more than ever, we should become accustomed to uncertainty, to the hurricane of events that rock our sense of security and direction.

Change can be a curse or a blessing. Everything depends on how you manage it, and what your attitude to these processes of transformation is.

The British naturalist and biologist Charles Darwin made the following discovery in his studies on evolution: 'It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to the change.'

This ability to adapt is comparable to that of an entrepreneur who examines future markets and tendencies in the midst of chaos and invests in them. Every investor who behaves in this way faces risk as he or she either wins or loses; however, it is this kind of 'species' that becomes successful.

More lives than a cat

The USA and Europe have a completely different approach to the subject of failure: in Europe we do not mention our failures in our résumés, but in the USA they do. The CEO of Amazon, Jeff Bezos, is proud of having spent thousands of millions of dollars on 'daring projects', many of which bring no immediate benefits but a valuable 'know-how'.

In this same area, the German author Anja Förster encouraged companies to fail in a speech in Linz: 'The key to efficient innovation is not to fail less, but to fail

faster.' This statement led to her receiving huge criticism on various internet forums.

Ferdinand Porsche, the founder of Porsche in Stuttgart, said this: 'If you do not fail at times, then you have not challenged yourself enough.'

There are investors in Silicon Valley who only invest in start-up entrepreneurs which have failed at least once, because experience has gained them very valuable knowledge for future success.

In many European countries, they say 'a cat has seven lives.' In Englishspeaking countries, they even grant them nine lives. How many lives are human beings allowed to have? How frequently are we allowed to fail?

Probably more than a cat. For any person entering the world of work today, it is likely that they will change job, and even profession, numerous times. We live in a state of permanent recycling and reinvention in which failure often leads to a leap to the next level.

The resilience lifeboat

We are not the strongest animals in the world – in fact, the human body is weak in comparison to our competitors -, but we do have an enormous capacity for adaptation, in line with Darwin's hypothesis. The proof of this is the incredible transformation that humanity has brought about in its way of life over the last 300 years.

When changes that an individual human being goes through are very traumatic, the key to moving forward is what modern psychology calls resilience. The author who has done the most to spread awareness of the theme is the psychiatrist and neurologist Boris Cyrulnik, who lost his parents in a concentration camp – in fact, as a boy, he managed to escape from one of them – and spent his childhood in refugee centers.

This led him to focusing his medical career on the treatment of traumatized children, although resilience is a human ability which saves us at any point in life.

Cyrulnik defines it like this:

‘Resilience is the art of navigating in the torrent, the art of transforming pain to give it sense; the ability to be happy, even when your soul is wounded.’

Let’s look at some of his key points:

- **Understand.** To be able to rise above suffering, you must understand what happened. In Cyrulnik’s words. ‘Resilience is more than resisting; it is also learning how to live’.
- **Express.** Instead of suffering in silence, an approach which can become deeply embedded inside us, it is important to trust in other people who have a mindset broad enough to understand us.
- **Interact.** A Swedish proverb says that ‘Shared joy is double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow.’ After a trauma, our recovery depends on the support network that we are able to create.
- **Love.** In his books, Cyrulnik stresses that love in whatever form is the great balm for emotional wounds. Turning to a partner or to our family, helping our friends, or even feeding a personal passion can save our lives.

Celebrating your own rebirth

Imagine that you are a wizard who is able to bring a dead person back to life. In fact, this is not a fantasy. Every human being is a phoenix that has the ability to be reborn from its ashes.

Before being reborn, if we have lived in our old world for a long time, we will have to go through a period of mourning, especially if the change we are going through was not caused by us.

Half a century ago, the psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross established that any type of pain has five stages:

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Negotiation
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

In the first stage, the person refuses to accept the new situation. When the fight becomes pointless, he or she moves to anger and blaming others, to the injustice of the world and of the whole universe if necessary. In the negotiation stage, the person recalls what has happened as if it had happened in some other way, which continues to be another form of torture. When we realize that this does not lead anywhere, after a necessary period of time has passed to complete the mourning, we arrive at acceptance.

After this last stage, we are now ready to be reborn. The old world is behind us and the construction of the new lies in your hands. The fundamental question now is this:

Going forward, what do I want to do with my life?

The art of blooming

The whole world associates spring with blooming. But, what does this mean when applied to a human being? Without a doubt, every person carries many seeds and, depending on whether we water them or not, we will see the first shoots bloom in our future garden.

There is not even an age limit to this. There are vocations that bloom from infancy, as in the case of children who already know what they want to do when they grow up while they are still at school. Others change throughout life – the deaths and rebirths we were talking about. And some passions and talents are discovered later on.

These late bloomers – as in people who blossom later in life – are a clear example of how we can bloom at any age, even in the last years of our life, like many successful men and women:

These late bloomers – as in people who blossom later in life – are a clear example of how we can bloom at any age, even in the last years of our life, like many successful men and women:

- Colonel Sanders was 65 years old when he started Kentucky Fried Chicken. Before that, he had lived a life full of failures, having been sacked from a dozen jobs. When he created the restaurant that would be the foundation of his current huge chain, he was on the verge of bankruptcy and, in fact, had invested his last nickel as he was so confident in his special talent for frying chicken.
- Anna Mary Robertson, who would be known in artistic circles as 'Grandma Moses', did not produce her first painting until she was 76. After giving up embroidery because of her arthritis, she decided to paint at that late age and her folklore-style paintings began to sell, some reaching over a million dollars. And the best thing of all: after discovering her art, she continued

painting until she was 101, enjoying 25 years of the passion she had discovered quite belatedly.

- Harry Bernstein started to write his first book at 93 years of age and succeeded in publishing it at 96 with considerable success. His manuscript *The Invisible Wall* would be rejected by many editors in his home city of New York, until an English editor saw value in the book, which told of a life of change, suffering and strength. The work received excellent reviews and gained numerous followers in the United States, Italy and other countries, and the proud author even had time to write three more books before dying at more than 100 years old.

If these admirable people could bloom beyond all expectation and find success, you can find it too.

Two millennia ago, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius summed it up brilliantly: 'Because your strength is unequal to the task, do not assume that it is beyond the powers of man. But if anything is within the powers and province of man, believe that it is within your own compass also.'

In view of this, I suggest that you ask yourself several questions:

- Can you think of something that you have always wanted to do and which, up to today, you thought was impossible?
- How long has it been since you tested whether that 'impossible' was valid?
- What first step would you have to take to explore this new field?
- Would you dare to get started today?

A question of talent

It is not always easy to recognize your talents because, to a greater or lesser extent, we live inside our own world. To recognize our potential, it is necessary to expose ourselves to external reality.

Reality, or the outside world, is a great test bed where we can measure our own value.

In my case, I was able to develop the passion I had at the age of sixteen. At that time, I had the idea of launching a small magazine to advertise concerts - what was called a fanzine at that time. To do this, I worked closely with an artists' agency and I ended up copywriting for them, taking my first steps in the world of publicity.

After this small awakening, I became a journalist for music magazines. Later, I also worked in radio and television, had several marketing companies, and earned my living writing presentations for concepts, strategies and product launches.

Today I write books, courses and seminars as well as storyboards for films or strategies for the development of success of people, ideas or companies.

Whatever your talents are, it does not matter if you develop these later or earlier in life, as long as you look within yourself to extract that treasure that only you can share with the world. In the last point of this chapter, we will see how to do this.

Personal Branding

If you want to achieve success, it is important that you know what makes you different, and what your contribution to the world is.

These days, it is called personal branding, something which becomes even more important in the age of internet and social networks. To communicate what we are and bring our talents to everyone else, we must reveal the best part of ourselves.

These questions will help you to define your personal brand:

- According to other people, what is your best virtue? (If you do not know, ask for feedback from people whose judgment you trust)
- In your view, what is your best virtue?
- In which situations do you feel most comfortable?
- What do you find especially easy to do?
- In which kind of situations are you most useful to others?
- What activities make you feel energetic and happy?
- Which of them give you a sense of flow?
- How can you better help the people around you?
- What can you offer the world to make it a better place to live?

When you answer this questionnaire, you will have a much clearer idea of your personal brand. Once you know what it is, you will also know what you can offer. This will allow you to let your talents bloom and to develop your potential in the spring of success and share it with everyone else.

Practical example: You discover your talent in comparison to others

Even as a young man, I wrote journalistic texts for music magazines, as well as concert announcements. Shortly before a family lunch at the weekend, a concert organizer called me and asked me urgently for help in formulating a few lines of text. I was under pressure because I was due at the table in a few minutes and the meal was about to start. So I wanted to postpone the conversation, but the promoter asked me to simply tell him my initial thoughts. "Just write..." I began to dictate my text proposal and after a few minutes my conversation partner thanked me "Perfect, I knew you would be able to help me straight away. I've been working on the text for three hours without success, now I finally have everything I need!"

I reflected on the situation and realized: Talent is the gift of being able to overcome a challenge much more easily and effortlessly than others. The difficulty is to recognize this!

Ways to grow

Once you have discovered your talents, the next step is to promote them and allow them to flower and develop. We are in the spring of success, meaning that the ideas we have cultivated begin to put out their first shoots if we water and fertilize them with care.

In the event you already know what your plan is – being a good father, creating an artistic project, launching a potential business, growing spiritually (in short, succeeding in whatever you propose) –, the question now is how to grow the seed you have chosen and planted in the fertile soil of your mind. In an orchard, we would talk of fertilizing and watering what has been planted. In the field of personal plans, the fertilizer and water are our habits. We look at how they work and how we can make them our allies in the significant change that leads to success.

The timing of change

In the second half of the twentieth century, the belief spread that to change an unhelpful habit for a better one required an uninterrupted period of practice of 21 days. However, recent studies maintain that the average time to establish a new habit is around 60 days.

The time here is not relevant, given that it would vary depending on the person. Methodical individuals, capable of applying themselves tenaciously to an objective, succeed much earlier in securing new ways of behaving and living, whereas those lacking in focus need much more practice before achieving transformation.

The important thing, in any case, is to remain faithful to our objective and use willpower every day until it becomes an automatic habit that we do without thinking. Only then will you be able to say that it is now integrated into your life.

A practical case: the man who stopped complaining

Let us imagine a middle-aged man who has been in the bad habit of complaining about everything and on behalf of everyone for many years. His group of friends have started to hesitate when he wanted to arrange to meet for dinner or go for a coffee, but he fails to make the connection between this and his behaviour. In the office, several colleagues avoid approaching him at the coffee machine when he makes himself an espresso. They know that any conversation will become a bitter complaint about anything: how insufferable the clients are, the bad state of the country, how the planet is going to crash and burn...

The man does not know he has a problem until his girlfriend decides to leave him and explains why: 'I am fed up with you embittering my life with your complaints. I want to live the rest of my time free of negativity'.

Completely overwhelmed, he talks about what happened with his yoga teacher, who tells him: 'This is a practice, just like the asanas. We have to train you to unlearn this bad habit'. And she suggests the following program:

- Tomorrow, I challenge you to spend the whole day without making a single complaint. At the end of the day, analyze how you feel and write it down on a piece of paper.
- The day after tomorrow, you can go back to complaining as much as you want. Make a note of your emotions before going to bed.
- If on your first day of practice you feel better than before, then broaden your challenge, which will be two days in a row without complaining about anything. Then you can extend it to a week and keep extending it.
- You can reinforce the process by incorporating the positive habit of being grateful to someone; at the end of the day before you go to sleep, make a note of your gratitude for something in your life that makes you happy.

We cannot say how long it will take this man to make a habit of this new way of relating to the world, but his life will certainly take a 180-degree turn.

Furthermore, if, once he has changed, he bumps into his ex, he might have a second chance with that relationship. Although by then it is very likely that he will already have found a new partner.

We have just seen a very specific example, but this process of replacing habits – setting objectives day by day and week by week – can be applied to whatever change we want to achieve in our life.

The spring of the soul is an auspicious season to let new things emerge and, as Marcel Proust said, ‘Even though nothing changes, if I change, everything changes.’

A maze of possibilities

Things are much easier when you have just one area in your life to deal with. If your field is a single crop of potatoes, you only need to focus on what is best for that plant. However, what happens if you have a lot of passions and projects at the same time, like a garden without any order or coherence?

When I was young, so many ideas buzzed away in my head that I did not know which path to take.

I was frightened that if I chose a certain path, I would destroy my other interests. Looking back, I now realize that this fear was unfounded.

Give yourself permission to try a lot of things until you discover your true priority. Up until then, experimenting with different things will bring you continual growth; it will help you to define yourself.

The advice I always give to young people is simple: start now, even if you change path later. In fact, you will only know your true priority if you start.

If something doesn't exist, you will have to create it

The Nobel Laureate in Literature, Toni Morrison, said once: 'If there is a book that you want to read but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it'. This is a sacred principle of creativity for a spring soul: you feel that something is lacking in your world and you push yourself to make it a reality.

It can be a positive habit, whether writing a novel or even creating a car!

Ferdinand Porsche, who we talked about in the previous chapter, became an entrepreneur after one very simple observation: "I looked around and I didn't find the car I dreamed of - a small, lightweight sports car that used power efficiently. So, I decided to build it myself'.

I also became an entrepreneur at the age of 21 for similar reasons: after living in California for a while, I was familiar with the pop music workshops on the West Coast. On my return to Austria, I wanted to participate in those workshops, but nothing like them existed. So, I simply decided to set them up myself in Austria with the support of the best musicians. In the end, I had around 5,000 participants per year.

What is good for the world is good for you

If you have a project in mind, whether it is commercial, artistic, social, or personal, a good fertilizer is to ask yourself questions:

How will I be of benefit to the world? What will my contribution be?

This is one of the first points for those I work with in my Success Academy, where I guide people on their way to self-development, giving them key practices, training and marketing.

During their process of growth in the spring of success, the following questions are asked:

- What skills do I need to achieve this?
- Which ones do I have already?
- And which do I need to acquire?

Once you are clear on this, you can develop an action plan with these three parameters:

- CONTENT – Which project do you want to begin?
- EXTENT – What is the size of what you are proposing? What resources do you need to achieve it?
- TIME – How much time do you estimate you will need to reach your goals?

After responding to each question, think about whether you can join up with someone else who can help you. Can you count on a mentor?

There are people with a lot of experience who will be happy to accompany you on the path toward success.

The key question

When you have responded to all this, there is only one question left to complete this part of the process. However, it is the most important:

Are you enthusiastic about your idea?

If it does not even inspire you, it will not inspire anyone else. However, if an idea inspires you, as well as maintaining your motivation at a high level, you will be able to ignite enthusiasm in everyone else.

Give an honest answer to this key question:

- If it is a 'NO', explore the impulse within you and unfold your inner antenna. You will find the idea - you just need time and a bit of 'research and development'.
- If it is a 'YES' – start now.

If you already have a plan, make it a priority in your life. Anything that is not integrated into your daily activities will not be able to thrive. If you want your idea to grow until it becomes real and visible, you must make it the engine of your life and ignite it now.

All you need is love

When business schools and executive coaches talk about success, they focus on brand, strategy, the conversion funnel, and other aspects of marketing. However, none of these tools will produce a good harvest without the fundamental ingredient: love.

In the past and maybe even today, over and above their scientific knowledge and experience, doctors had a love for the patient because they loved their profession. We find this same dedication in successful people like Oprah Winfrey, the most important communicator in the United States, who describes this basic ingredient to turn a goal into a reality like this: 'Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.'

When you fall in love with an idea, a project, a destiny, it becomes the center of your life and you find the energy to keep ploughing, watering, and fertilizing the field that is now your priority.

It is a kind of love that extends to all aspects of your life, casting light on them without you losing sight of your goal. It makes you dream big and, in turn, makes you grow as a person to adapt to the challenge you have before you.

Nelson Mandela explained it flawlessly: 'There is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.'

Your book of doubts

Even when you are in love with your goal, sometimes you will be seized by doubts. This is completely normal. And there will be days when you question everything. It is both normal and a part of the path toward success, even in the bloom of spring.

Every time you feel like this, you can greet doubt like an old friend, invite it home to have an internal conversation together and then say goodbye.

Why is it so important that we get to know our doubts and begin a friendship with them?

When all is going well, in a simple and fluid way, everything is easy. However, doubts reinforce our mental strength in those moments when we face challenges and difficulties.

For these situations, I rely on my very own notebook of doubts. I open it at a double page and on the left-hand side I write down my specific doubts. On the right-hand side, I write down what I can learn from this doubt, which drives me to broaden my opportunities.

Which new point of view or change of perspective does this doubt offer me? How can I apply its lesson to my everyday life? Let us look at a very simple example.

DOUBT

I am going to open a new personal website and I do not know how I should present myself in my biography. Should I focus on my professional successes or place the focus on a personal level?

LESSON / PROPOSAL

The doubt in question is a mirror which allows me to know what the focus of my life today is. If I do not want to lead with my professional successes, perhaps it means that I do not identify with them completely and I need another focus. If, however, I want to hide my more personal profile, I am probably not happy with it at all and I need to make changes. If I clarify one area or the other, perhaps by joining them together, the doubt ceases to exist, and I will live with greater coherence and harmony.

Every left-hand page in my notebook belongs to doubt and makes me stop and think. The right-hand page is reserved for the lesson and the new opportunities I discover. Thank goodness for doubts!

In this way, I can see my own difficulties and challenges clearly, using these occasionally annoying advisors creatively.

The energy of doubt is the negative flip side of enthusiasm, and both have their place and usefulness in the world. Enthusiasm is a powerful mobilizer, and doubt makes us reflect on our actions and on our situation in life.

Of course, everything is good in moderation.

In my life, I have seen that excessive doubt takes hold of me when I immerse myself too much in my inner world and have little communication with the outside world. Every meeting, every conversation, and every question from other people can be clarifying.

The magic of self-love

In the previous chapter, you asked yourself how much you love your project, your idea, your objective. How much passion do you put into it?

At this point, I need to ask you how much you love yourself, as good progress in your projects depends on the love you have for yourself too. Those who do not love themselves, cannot develop empathy around them, an essential ingredient for success.

If you believe that you do not have enough love for yourself, do not underestimate gentle physical exercise, which releases endorphins, or harmonious disciplines like yoga or meditation. I know many people who practice yoga before making difficult decisions or during crises, and this exercise gives them the strength and focus they need to face challenges and accept the necessary changes.

The difficult path

On this, the rise and fall of Thomas Middelhoff seems very enlightening. One of the most well-known CEOs in Germany, first at Bertelsmann and then at Arcandor, he would fall into the abyss after having reached the top. In 2009, the group he had led, which included the companies Karstadt, Quelle and Thomas Cook, declared itself bankrupt, and in 2014 Thomas Middelhoff was sentenced to three years in prison for breach of confidentiality and tax evasion.

In his book, *Guilty*, he describes a catharsis in this testing life event which he never thought would happen, and how prison gave him a completely different view of life and of his own abilities.

During this period, he connected deep down with God, worked with disabled people and finally found himself. In this way, he could begin to accept his fate, to forgive himself and love himself again.

Today, he gives conferences to teach young people, above all, not to repeat his mistakes.

When we face crises, we gain love for ourselves. This is the first step in giving and receiving love. Thomas Middelhoff only learned to truly open his heart, to be empathetic, when working with disabled people. They showed him how to swim in the flow of life with the energy of his heart. And he ended up loving himself as well. As the Beatles sang, 'All you need is love'!

The mood of Sakura

When the cherry trees start to flower, the whole of Japan goes into a state of euphoria and high spirits. They look forward with such excitement to this proof of the arrival of spring that there is even a Sakura Forecast on all media which shows the day on which flowering is predicted in different parts of the country.

When the moment arrives, office workers hurry to picnic beneath a cherry tree in flower, families walk joyfully through the parks and lovers take selfies in front of

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the white or pink petals of the trees. The mood of the whole nation is brimming with hope, creativity, and the desire to fall in love with life. This springtime spirit allows any dream which has been hibernating too long to emerge and grow. Sakura is more than a moment for flowering; it is a mood that tells us...

1. It is the moment for rebirth.
2. It is the moment to open your eyes to the beauty of the world.
3. It is the moment to share.
4. It is the moment to create, succeed and live.

THE 5 KEYS TO SUCCESS IN SPRING

1. When creating something new, in the beginning you will be alone.
 2. Every morning you are reborn: explore today's You.
 3. It's OK if it doesn't work. Just start again.
 4. Doubts are guests who come to visit, but not to stay.
 5. If you reach for the sky, you will go further than you imagine.
-



SUMMER

A time for realization

„Summertime,
And the livin's easy.
Fish are jumpin',
And the cotton is high.
Your daddy's rich,
And your mama's good lookin'.
So, hush, little baby,
Don't you cry.
One of these mornings
You're gonna rise up singing.
Then you'll spread your wings
And you'll take to the sky.”

GEORGE GERSHWIN (PORGY & BESS)

Hello Summer

Everyone has memories of the summers of their life. The feeling that time stretches out over longer days, free of obligations and full of possibilities. Those first holidays far from home. The discovery of new countries, people, and situations. Perhaps a first kiss, the first story of love...

It is the season of excitement, tranquility and discovery, but also of dreams and ephemera. As George R.R. Martin says in the fourth book of Game of Thrones, whilst Winter friends are friends forever, 'Summer friends will melt away like summer snows.'

This is the danger of the third season of success: thinking that something we have achieved – love, a business success, a personal transformation – is forever and does not need to be cared for.

After the reflection and plans of winter, and then a spring in which buds herald a new world, the summer is the moment of culmination, of picking the ripe fruit and enjoying something done well but being conscious that it is temporary.

If we do not want the summer of success to melt away like August clouds in a blue sky, there are some precautions we should take:

- At the point of harvest, it is important to know which companions will help you gather in what you have worked on. Are they only summer friends or are they in your life for good? It is very important to know the difference so as not to be deceived.
- It is good to celebrate and share the fruit that has matured in our field, while being conscious that this wealth is temporary and that we will need to begin the process again to harvest new successes.
- Succeeding in our goal should be a cause of pride but we should never think that we have arrived, like a king who takes the throne for life. If we

relax too much beneath the summer sun, the autumnal wind can catch us unawares.

The beginner's mind

On this last point, it is important, in the summer of our plans, to keep what in Zen is called 'the beginner's mind'. That is, not thinking that we have achieved anything, but simply that we have taken a step and our future depends on the next step.

In his book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, Shunryu Suzuki explains it like this: 'If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything - it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's mind there are few.'

Thinking that you have 'already arrived' is a reason why there are people who suffer an immediate decline after having known success. Here are some examples:

- The young soccer player who emerges as a star and, after one or two years of success, goes into a rapid decline. It happens because they have let himself be incapacitated by praise; they have stopped looking after themselves and, unconsciously, have left behind the pressure and dedication that took them to the top. After 'dying of success', the fall is very hard. The higher you climb, the further you can fall.
- The person who relaxes immediately after finding their dream partner and stops doing the things that made their partner fall in love with them. He or she forgets that emotional conquest is like a garden that must be watered and fertilized every day so that the plant of love does not die.
- The entrepreneur who adopts a conservative position after achieving success with one product and stops innovating. In time, the competition

will copy and improve the product, even offering it at a cheaper price and taking over the market.

Returning to the teachings of Zen, the sustainable summer of success depends on assuming the temporary nature of everything, knowing that life is a constant work in progress and that we need to keep our creative tension in order to move forward.

As David Bowie sang in Absolute Beginners: 'But we're absolute beginners / With eyes completely open / But nervous all the same.'

A summer initiation

I remember when I made the decision to discover the world by myself, shortly after turning sixteen. I convinced my parents to let me go on my own to a jazz festival in the south of Austria. It was taking place over a weekend at the beginning of July, so I traveled light and with very little money.

That journey would open up unexpected perspectives for me. At the jazz festival, I met a group of young people who suggested that I go with them after the event to the Côte d'Azur by car. I got my family's permission to go with them on that adventure and that was the start of my life 'on the road', like in the novel by Jack Kerouac.

On arriving at the Côte d'Azur, we slept on the beach, unaware that the police patrolled early in the morning to move on everyone who made an openair bed out of the sand.

That same day, we met a professional drifter who had spent more than ten years traveling around the world with hardly any money and who knew how to survive in any situation. Inspired by his advice, we spent the second night in a housing development on the outskirts of Nice. It was cold and it rained a lot, so on finding the door to the communal boiler room open, we slept there cozy and warm.

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The following day, our group split up to go in different directions and I decided that my journey had not yet come to an end – I wanted to continue to Provence. Having decided to hitchhike, I got a ride in a small 2CV delivery truck.

At that time, there was a jukebox in all restaurants and cafes, a music machine capable of playing records, and my driver was in the music publishing industry. His work consisted of regularly visiting places and equipping the machines with the latest records on the market. He was on his way to Avignon, but first he had to make a lot of stops along a country road. It was the best thing that could have happened to me!

In addition to getting to know the wonderful summer countryside of Provence, as a provisional companion of this musical supplier, I was treated like a king in restaurants with the best French cooking.

With a wonderful sense of freedom, I was completely in the here and now, without a plan, without any appointments or obligations, in the flow of a continual journey of discovery where a new experience was waiting for me behind every bend in the road.

Avignon is home to the famous bridge which has inspired so many songs. It connects the old town with the other bank of the river. My arrival coincided with a concert which took place beneath the bridge and, at the end of it, a lot of hitchhikers stayed there to sleep under its shelter. So, that was how I came to know a group of musicians.

I had already played street music in Vienna before, so it was easy to jam with them and later to team up to earn a little money. All we had to do was cross the bridge to the other side of the river and the old town. There was a large market where they sold handicrafts and clothes, and there were even food trucks offering organic versions of traditional French dishes.

In the midst of this hustle and bustle, we started to play. In very little time, we attracted the attention of a few curious people and we got to know a lot of sellers from small market stalls, who invited us to eat and drink.

I spent a week there without needing a single cent. Life provided for me in abundance. All I had to do was to be attentive there, talk to people and get involved in their problems.

In this relaxing and idyllic period, I made an interesting discovery: many crafts people and cooks could not leave their stalls because they did not have anyone to stand in for them. Immediately, I recognized a niche in the market and I started earning money around midday and in the afternoon delivering food to one and all. I also stood in for them on the market stalls when someone needed to go to the bathroom or take a break.

In this way, I was given tips, gifts, food, and drink, as well as playing street music. What more could I ask for? I had no expenses, at night I slept beneath the bridge of Avignon and I spent the day in the market.

With the money I made, I kept traveling through France and Germany, hitchhiking for the whole month of August, and it took me eight weeks to go back home after my departure.

The teachings of the road

I have spoken at length of this summer story in which a young man with little experience managed to entrust himself to life, getting something out of each situation, because it provided me with lessons that have guided the rest of my life and which I want to share with you:

- Empathy and attention to the needs of others always ends up coming back to you as beneficial karma.
- If you have an open mind and take nothing for granted, you will find opportunities everywhere and in every situation.

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- Instead of making predictions, let yourself be surprised by life. Sometimes the most important things are found on unexpected paths.
- Learn from travelers, from people who have lived a lot of lives. They are masters of the road who bring you valuable advice.
- Even when we do not move from place to place, life can be an exciting journey if we open our eyes fully and try to enjoy the moment.

If you travel with these principles in your 'life' rucksack, you will always carry summer in your heart. Now, let us see how to get the most out of the third season of success.

Better together: what we can learn from childhood

As we saw at the beginning of the book, in the Seasons of Life, many people relate Summer to childhood. And not only because of long summers at home, family holidays, going on trips to the mountain, the river or the beach. The warmth of this season also makes us think of playing outside, or in the school yard, or even in the garden of our childhood.

It is a period that is far away but which we look at with a certain melancholy. In childhood, we are always learning, cooperating, building, or finishing something – for example, a sandcastle – to begin something else. We learn very important values and skills to succeed and celebrate with others. The problem is that, at this point in life, it could be that we have forgotten what we learned while we were getting our hands and knees dirty in the sand.

Going back to Kindergarten

In 1988, Robert Fulghum published *All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten*, with the intention of bringing adults back to this old wisdom. After selling 17 million copies in 103 countries, the book is still an inspiration today.

To nourish ourselves in the summer of success, which lessons should we relearn and use in our everyday life?

Of the 16 principles that make up the book, I have selected six that we can apply to our program:

1. **Share everything.** In childhood, we learn to share everything – games, adventures, ideas –, but as we move into adulthood, we begin to isolate ourselves. To complete our projects, it is important to find the best companions, to help each other and to celebrate together.

2. **Clean up your own mess.** A requirement for success in any aspect of life is responsibility. Before criticizing what others do badly, it is better to put our own house in order: in our social relationships, our habits, or in our management of money or time. It is only from this order that we can create and keep something solid.
3. **Say you are sorry when you hurt someone.** Elton John said Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word, and it certainly is. How many important relationships cool off or even break up as a result of not saying sorry in time? Recognizing what we could have done better and asking forgiveness we make ourselves vulnerable and this helps us to stay together with our life companions.
4. **Live a balanced life.** Many adults live with a total imbalance between their work, family, and private lives. They believe they are required to spend the whole day in the office and, if they are freelance, they also work at the weekend. This workaholic state, however, is a barrier to success and requires one essential ingredient, which we will see later in the final part of the book: time. Finding balance between the different facets of our lives – between obligation and pleasure - will lengthen our summer.
5. **Be aware of wonder.** Children are capable of being amazed by anything in the world; their eyes are trained on amazement. Many adults lose this capacity, which is the essential key for people who move the world: seeing reality through the eyes of a child and exchanging fatigue for constant discovery.
6. **Remember the biggest word of all – LOOK.** Everything is potentially around you already - all the possibilities that allow you to be happy and make your projects a reality. The key is in your vision of reality. If you stop being a zombie walking around glued to your cell phone, you will be able to raise your eyes and SEE the world and let new ideas in.

Solitude and community

Many people relate infancy to happiness, but I have to admit that it is not so in my case. After my birth, my chest did not develop correctly and, as a result, my sternum grew inwards and pressed on my heart and lungs. Medical hopes were limited and the likelihood of spending my life in a wheelchair in my twenties was quite high.

My parents had to make their most difficult decision, accepting that I would have to undergo a high-risk operation.

Despite its success, I spent many years recovering from this surgery. As a result, I was not able to participate in many activities that children do at that age like physical play, climbing, or running races. I spent entire days lying in bed so that my wound would heal. From 1968 through 1971, to combat the boredom, the radio became my best friend.

Thanks to that, I got to know the music of the Beatles, the Stones, Deep Purple and Frank Zappa, and I was especially excited by the story of Alice Cooper and his manager, who created the persona and designed the stage shows that brought Cooper so much popularity.

In the 80s, I had access to all kinds of rock and jazz artists for interviews. I shared a rehearsal room with Falco, the only Austrian who had a US number 1 with 'Rock Me Amadeus'. I also became the manager of a band, Drahdwaberl, in which Falco was a bassist and where he began his solo career.

Thanks to that confinement, while other children were playing, I was acquiring knowledge for my future professional career.

Although I had many friends in Vienna, it was of little use to me because when I was fourteen years old, my mother remarried. My stepfather had lived in California for many years so, from then on, I did part of my secondary education to the south of L.A.

That meant that I had to immerse myself in a different culture, which at that time placed a lot of importance on community, in partnership with others. I realized the importance of cooperating, and of managing what others thought of you and your ideas. This meant that you had to use your ability to communicate – something that we do today through social media. Today, more than ever, what happens in the world affects us and we affect the world. And the world also affects our dreams.

The legacy of Randy Pausch

I cannot talk of dreams and of what we learn from infancy without mentioning the moving lecture by Randy Pausch, a professor at the Carnegie Mellon University who, in 2007, discovered that the pancreatic cancer he suffered from was terminal.

Instead of staying at home bemoaning his luck, he decided to give a talk entitled Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams in his university's lecture theater and ended up publishing it in an expanded form in the book *The Last Lecture*.

As well as explaining that he would dedicate the last months of his life to fulfilling his childhood dreams, in his brief summer of success, Pausch talked about the obstacles that we meet when we want to achieve something:

'The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. Because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don't want it badly enough. They're there to stop the other people.'

Practical example: Brick walls are illusions

In his book "Illusions - The Adventures of a Messiah Against His Will", Richard Bach describes his encounters with Don Shimoda, a sightseeing pilot who became his spiritual master for a few weeks. To illustrate the possibility of overcoming one's own beliefs, Don Shimoda suddenly takes a shortcut and walks right through the brick wall of a granary.

Richard Bach then turns to a page in the "Guide for Saviors" manual that Don Shimoda had given him with the following message:

"If you practise for a while living only in the imagination, you will realize that fantasy people are sometimes more real than flesh and blood people."

To succeed in our goals, we will meet with outside obstacles that put us to the test, but also with inner obstacles in the form of fears, doubts, and complaints.

On this, Pausch recommended switching the energy that we put into complaining into resolving the problem that we have before us. With this simple transformation, the impossible becomes possible.

If we act instead of complaining, and are not frightened when faced with outside obstacles, and follow this inspiring man's motto – 'Give yourself permission to dream' –, the summer of our life will be long (for some people, everlasting even) and it will yield a lot of fruit.

How to build confidence

Confidence is the currency that connects all human beings. And it is a fragile coinage. Once it depreciates, it takes a long time to recover its value, if that is even possible. At some time, we have all lived through the painful experience of losing confidence with someone close.

What we are not used to doing is recognizing the moment when we lose confidence in ourselves. Often, that lack was created when we were young with comments like: 'Don't sing so loud or it'll start raining!'

In this case, you would start to hide your voice, and to retreat into your shell because you feel wounded and inept. The problem with a process like this is that our best treasures and talents will remain shut away from the world.

Practical example: When public singing can become a death sentence

During my time in Cambodia, I visited the "Killing Fields" and learned how brutally the population was oppressed during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975 - 1979). Anyone who could read and write was murdered or tortured to death, as were people who wore glasses, artists or intellectuals. Even singing in public could mean a death sentence. The regime's aim was to alienate people from themselves so that they would only follow orders.

When you sing, you connect with your inner voice and meet yourself. You know what feels right or wrong all by yourself and strengthen your self-confidence. History is repeating itself: the Taliban are currently banning public singing and music-making and burning musical instruments, radios and amplifiers.

The key to watering your confidence

Lack of confidence in oneself is one of the principal barriers that separates us from our dreams and projects. As Henry Ford said in his most famous saying: 'Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right.'

On the other hand, confidence is contagious, and a person who is insecure, or has a low opinion of him or herself, will not succeed in gaining the confidence of others, something which is so necessary when we have a great project in hand or even for achieving an emotional success.

For everything that we have to offer the world, confidence is the water that prevents what we have planted being scorched to death in the summer sun.

Let us look at some key points for renewing our confidence:

- Stop giving importance to what other people think. Although it seems contradictory, hanging on other people's opinions devalues us in the eyes of those very people.
- Remember your successes. Everything that turned out well. Something that was difficult but which you managed to resolve in the end. If you did it then, you can do it now too.
- Stay away from the hypercritics. There are people who, often without realizing it, diminish the value of what others do. Distance yourself from these people wherever possible.
- Allow yourself to fail. As we saw in Spring, everything that does not work out first time is training for a bigger success. Nothing important comes immediately.

These key points will allow you to water the field of confidence in most situations. However, what do you do when circumstances turn very hostile?

Practical example: About the happiness of not having to know everything

After I made the decision to organize my first guitar seminar, I trusted my inner voice completely. I let my intuition guide me, made my decisions, took my actions and was even surprised by the huge success of the first event with more than 180 participants from all over Austria.

At the age of 21, I was quite young and had few contacts in the music scene at the time. I continuously expanded my range of seminars and my network. It wasn't until years later that I found out what much older people from the industry, whom I hold in high regard, thought of me and my plans.

It was only then that I realized how lucky I was that all these comments had remained hidden from me; I had no idea what others thought about me. It would have made me extremely insecure if I had heard these statements at the time.

The horse in the well

A traditional tale tells how a farmer who had many problems to overcome, owned a small number of horses for doing the jobs on his small plot.

One day, he was in despair when he discovered that one of the animals had fallen into a very deep well, from which it was impossible to get it out. Although the horse was not injured, the farmer calculated the money that it would cost to get it out of there – he would have to contract four men, get ropes and hoists, etc. – and he concluded that he could not afford the rescue. With a heavy heart, he decided that it was better to sacrifice the horse, throwing earth into the well to bury it.

And that is what he did: he started to fill in the well with earth but as it fell on the horse, the animal shook it off and trampled it into the bottom of the well. This made it possible for the horse to climb slowly to the surface.

In this way, the earth that was thrown on it to bury it in the well, ironically, became the ground that it trampled until it managed to get out of it.

An old adage says: 'With the stones they threw at me, I built my beautiful home'.

The three dimensions of confidence

Confidence and resilience go hand in hand. When we have confidence in our ability to get out of the well into which we have fallen – something that will occasionally happen to us in life – all our resources are mobilized to keep us moving forward.

Like the horse in the tale, obstacles serve to raise us above ourselves.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

Confidence is a very necessary virtue in the Summer of success when there are all the cultivated fields to harvest. It is important to have a team that helps us gather the fruit, to complete our project, but none of this is of any use if, first, we do not have confidence in ourselves.

In the same way that an insecure leader transmits fear and confusion, failing to generate confidence around him, to reach success you must convince your inner self that you can do it.

Here are some examples:

- The lothario (the figure of a seducer) who is sure of being liked and that, even though he will get some negative responses, he will always take a new conquest home from the party.
- The ill person who has confidence in the ability of their body, and of life, to influence their situation and return to health. This person has a much greater chance of success than someone with a fatalistic attitude.
- The mountain climber who has confidence in reaching the summit because he has visualized being up there, and this gives him the energy to overcome all difficulties.

Confidence is not something that you can be half-hearted about; either you have it or you do not, and it unfolds in three dimensions:

1. Confidence in yourself.
2. Confidence in others.
3. Confidence in life.

To secure dimension 1, it is essential to stop comparing yourself with everyone else because this disempowers you and moves the focus away from you. Also, learn to say 'No' when it is necessary, as trying to please everyone is another route to powerlessness.

In dimension 2, it is important to assume that confidence is contagious. According to the Pygmalion effect, others respond depending on the expectations that we have of them. If we treat a child as being incapable, that is how it will behave with us. If you communicate to your partner your constant fear that he or she will be unfaithful to you, it is much more likely that this will happen.

Dimension 3 requires that we convince ourselves that everything happens because of something or, even better, for something. Perhaps you do not know the reason why you find yourself in a given situation, but there will certainly be something you can learn from it – a new direction in which it can take you. What is happening to you, therefore, is good for something specific. It makes you grow; it opens up new routes to you; it brings you a summer adventure from which you will not return as yourself.

As Peter Matthiessen, the author of *The Snow Leopard*, said, 'One man goes off on a journey and it is another who returns.'

The dangers of summer

'Do not fly close to the sun!' We are all reminded of the character of Icarus, from Greek mythology, and we remember his story.

The young Icarus and his father, Daedalus, had been trapped in a labyrinth. They could not find a way out until his father had a brilliant idea: with the feathers of the eagles who were waiting for their future victims, and a bit of candle wax, Daedalus made wings for his son and himself.

However, he warned Icarus very clearly: 'Do not fly close to the sun!' Then they rose up on their wings to freedom, out of the labyrinth that had been their prison. But only one of them returned home.

Young Icarus did not follow his father's advice and rose ever higher into the air until he got so close to the sun that the wax of his wings melted, and he fell into the sea, where he drowned.

This story is a perfect allegory for what can happen in the summer of success when we achieve an important goal. We face the following dangers:

1. Thinking that everything will turn out all right and that we will be able to rise without limits, like Icarus.
2. Forgetting what it cost us to get to where we are, thinking that from now on everything will be easy and that we can achieve what we want without effort.
3. Overlooking the fact that life is made up of successes and failures and, in fact, you learn more from the latter than the former.

Applied to a very commonplace example, this happens when we relax after losing weight; we stop following the nutritionist's advice and suddenly we put on weight again. Or the ex-smoker who decides to light up a cigarette because 'it will be all right' and suddenly becomes addicted to tobacco again.

It is well known that it is more difficult to achieve something than to maintain it because success is not something that belongs to us for life – in the way that power does to royalty –, rather it is an attitude that you have to reestablish every day.

That is why we can never think that we have arrived anywhere. We must continue to do, with humility, whatever has brought us this far.

DSAS: Difficult Second Album Syndrome

Artists in pop-rock know about the difficult second album syndrome – a very common obstacle in this industry.

The cliché says that the second record of any artist or band is usually a bad one. After the success of a first album, in which the musicians include the songs of a whole lifetime, they face the challenge of making a second one in just a year or two.

And in some cases, this cliché is very true, because the second album turns out to be terrible or, at least, a lot worse than the first one.

Why is that?

When the first record has been a triumph, the band is immersed in innumerable gigs, interviews and promotional activities and the artists no longer have time for themselves. In turn, the record company presses – perhaps offering an enticing advance – for the second album and the expectations are that it will be even better and more successful than the first.

Welcome to the dangers of summer!

There is a legion of artists who did not survive to make a second album and, like Icarus, drowned in the sea along with their wonderful talent. Today, these one-hit wonders are completely forgotten.

Practical example: When the pressure to succeed becomes a burden

At the end of March 1986, the song 'Rock Me Amadeus', by the Austrian Mozart-Punk artist Falco, reached the top of the charts in the United States, as we saw in the previous chapter. The first and only song in German to be No. 1 in the US to date.

I was sharing rehearsal space with Falco at that very moment and he did not seem to be very happy about this success.

At first, no one understood Falco's reaction, but he personally took it on himself to explain it:

'My God, now I've reached the height of my musical career because what's clear is that I won't be able to repeat that. I will never have a No. 1 in the USA again. This has been a miracle already.' And, in some ways, he was right.

How to descend from Everest

When we achieve success, this comes with huge expectations and, as the saying from Icarus goes: The higher they rise, the harder they fall.

We have a lot to learn in our day-to-day lives from young athletes and the most successful entrepreneurs who disappeared overnight. They were so bowled over by the first glimmers of success that they burned up shortly afterward.

A dramatic example of this is what happens with expeditions on the highest mountain in the world. Did you know that most deaths on Everest happen during the descent? The mountain climber spends all his energy on the ascent forgetting that, once he has gotten to the top, he or she will need energy to manage the descent while the sun threatens to prevent it. It is a cruel example and metaphor for what can happen when we think we have now made it.

You can be successful and humble at the same time, like the tennis player, Rafa Nadal, reaching the top with effort and enough wisdom to manage a healthy and safe descent. And then, after a rest, reach new heights.

Some benefits of humility in life and in success:

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1. We allow ourselves to rest after continual demand. Assume that everything takes effort and that, even with a lot of work, sometimes things do not turn out as we thought, so we give less importance to things and live more healthfully.
2. We have empathy for others. Not allowing ourselves to feel we are better than everyone else puts us on a par with normal and ordinary people, who are often the real masters of life.
3. The mind becomes more flexible and facilitates learning. Humility brings us a 'beginner's mind', which is a safe way in life to keep growing and progressing. Knowing that you do not know everything is, as the Greek philosophers said, the only route to excellence.
4. It is an invitation to minimalism and to celebration. Humble people focus on the little things, and that is where they find their treasures. At the same time, they do not need huge triumphs to feel fortunate.
5. They are grateful for all the good that life places in their path.

In the end, as we have seen during the latest world pandemic, life is the real success. Because while you are alive, everything is possible, and anything can be done.

Everything is new under the sun

‘There is nothing new under the sun’: I am sure you are familiar with this phrase. Often wrongly attributed to the Greek philosophers, it actually comes from Ecclesiastes, perhaps the most existential part of the Bible. It is thought to have been written by King Solomon at the end of his life. The entire passage is as follows:

‘The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.’

In this part of the Bible, the expression ‘under the sun’ appears thirty times, posing the question of how to confront a life where the only certainties are death and monotony.

‘Meaningless! Meaningless!’, says the Teacher. ‘Everything is meaningless’

There are two important points in Ecclesiastes that relate to the art of living:

1. You must enjoy life from this very moment on because you never know what will happen in the future. The joys of existence are a gift from God.
2. Accept misfortune and adversity with grace since they are as transitory as everything else in a human life.

So perhaps by saying, ‘There is nothing new under the sun’, what it really means is that change is as inevitable as time.

This is something to bear in mind in the summer of your life. You can accomplish many things, but tomorrow you will have to start from scratch again, to renew your plans and sow new seeds in your garden.

From the Known to the Unknown

To create a new version of you, you dared to dig deeper within yourself, to overcome inner barriers and beliefs that affected your thoughts and actions in a negative way.

You allowed yourself to remember what you forgot: we are all part of something beyond words, unlimited, indivisible, and spontaneous.

Plato, the Greek philosopher who lived 400 years before Christ, wrote in Meno, 'There is no such thing as teaching, only remembering. We have learned everything there is to learn, the more we seek to learn, the more we must realize that seeking and learning is all remembrance.'

In storytelling, there is a common template for a narrative about a hero who goes on an adventure and, in a definitive crisis, wins a victory and returns home changed or transformed. This is taken from a book entitled The Hero with a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell, and you can apply the concept to almost every story in mythology such as, for example, the Odyssey, to heroic sagas such as the Ring of the Nibelung, to comic narratives like Asterix or to modern films like The Matrix.



It is a journey of different stages, most of them taking place in the world of the Unknown. As the Spanish priest John of the Cross said in the sixteenth century: 'To come to the knowledge that you have not / You must go by a way in which you know not.'

That is what happens in any Summer adventure we undertake. There will be moments in which we will go from the Known to the Unknown. Life coaches talk about stepping out of our comfort zone. Either way, our opportunity for success will depend on how far we are prepared to go in this Unknown zone. Let us look in more detail at the stages in the adventure of change.

The Hero's Journey

In the beginning, the young hero gets the Call to Adventure. This is the first stage. He or she has to go to war, kill the dragon, or save the world.

In your everyday life, the Call to Adventure comes when you feel you have to leave your Comfort Zone. You know you must try something new, to renounce the old world and go beyond yourself. And, of course, this is frightening.

As a result of this, the second stage of the Hero's Journey is often called the Refusal of the Call.

Any reasonable person doubts that they can really be the chosen one for this task and tries to escape their fate. The reluctant hero tries to avoid dealing with the call until they are ready to accept their fate.

You need help to take a leap into the Unknown, to begin an Adventure. And that is where the third stage, Meeting the Mentor, comes into play.

This is when important elements seem to offer support: in fairytales, it may be a drink based on a secret recipe that gives invincible magical powers or a cloak of invisibility; in our everyday life, this could be the person who gives us guidance in the new field we have entered. We all need allies to enable us to grow and, unfortunately, most people dare not ask someone else for help – one of our biggest obstacles. It could also be training: a course, a workshop, or maybe even this book.

This support brings you to the fourth stage: Crossing the First Threshold.

The action now heightens, and the hero is prepared for the fight by a sequence of events that lead to inner change. Pressure increasingly builds up, just as with carbon which turns into a diamond under the highest pressure. The hero will have to overcome various levels of difficulty – different thresholds. Eventually the adventure is successful, and the hero has grown beyond former limits, passing the quest.

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Let us stop for a moment in this part of the Journey to apply it to your life, to the personal project that you have in mind. You can ask yourself the required question for each of these first three steps:

1. Which adventure are you being called upon to undertake at this point in your life?
2. What stops you from accepting the call? What fears and beliefs do you have to surmount to move into the Unknown? What would you be without these fears and beliefs?
3. Who or what is your mentor for this adventure?

Back home

After crossing the different thresholds to complete our personal mission, the adventure is not yet finished.

Now we come to the part that is often missing, but which is still extremely important: the hero has to return to the old, familiar world after the change and has to take his place there again with everything he or she has learned from the new experiences; this personal transformation needs to find a new harmony with its environment.

After the fall of Troy, Odysseus wandered for another ten years, during which he had to endure numerous adventures, after losing all his companions, before finally returning to Ithaca disguised as a beggar. In his palace were numerous suitors besieging his loyal wife and looting his lands, because they believed he was dead as a result of his long absence. With a crafty plan, he managed to kill all the suitors with his bow and restored order.

We are lucky that we do not have to go to war, but on our trip back as a hero you will find your home changed. And I do not mean home as a physical space, but as your place in life.

Success has side effects and one of them is that some important people who accompanied us will no longer feel comfortable with what we have become. There will be certain reasons for this:

1. They were used to you as you were before, and this adventure has changed you. They do not know how to relate to the new You.
2. Your progress can highlight the fact that they have remained in the same stage.

Practical example: The dragon kills you

The concept of the hero's journey is timeless and therefore also part of this book. The US author and meditation teacher Paul Weinfield writes about this in his blog:

Leonard Cohen once said that his teacher told him that the older you get, the lonelier you become and the more love you need. This is because, as we get older, we tend to identify too much with the role of the hero in our story.

This hero doesn't have much fun: he is pushed around, humiliated and dishonored. But if we can break away from identifying with him, we can find our right place in the universe and a love that is more satisfying than anything we've ever known before.

People throw around the term "hero's journey" all the time without having a clue what it really means. From CEOs to wellness influencers, everyone thinks hero's journey means facing your fears, slaying a dragon and having 25,000 followers on Instagram. But that's not the real hero's journey.

In the true hero's journey, the dragon slays YOU: To your great surprise, you were unable to save your marriage. To your great surprise, you turned forty, with no children, no house and no prospects. To your great surprise, the world didn't want the gifts you proudly offered it.

If you are foolish, you will break off the journey at this point and start another and then another, abusing your heart again and again for the brief illusion of a quick win.

But if you are wise, then you let yourself be shattered and return to the village, humiliated, but with the newfound feeling that you don't have to identify with that part of yourself that wants to win, that wants to be recognized, that wants to know. This is where your transcendent life begins.

With each of life's adventure, the first thing that changes is your inner attitude; you connect with a different energy and a different way of thinking. And it is precisely this attitude which will bring you the success you want, as our life is 90 percent determined by our thoughts. We create our future through the way we

think and what we attract with it. It also affects our inner mood and the energy on which we focus our attention.

So, we can say that every journey starts in the mind. And at the end of this journey you will have changed. Some people will continue to walk alongside you, welcoming the new You and learning from your experiences. Other people will leave, unable to accept your progress. To compensate for this, new friends and companions will appear.

So, to return to the ancient belief, when you are traveling from the Known to the Unknown, everything is new under the sun.

THE 5 KEYS TO SUCCESS IN SUMMER

1. Winners are always beginners.
 2. You become like the people you hang around with.
 3. Sometimes the gateway to success is “No”.
 4. Luck is temporary; attitude is permanent.
 5. Returning home after reaching the summit is the real challenge.
-



Autumn

A time for letting go

“Whoever has no house now,
will never have one.
Whoever is alone, will stay alone,
will sit, read, write long letters through the evening,
wander on the boulevards,
up and down,
restlessly,
while dry leaves are blowing.”

RAINER MARIA RILKE

Hello, Autumn

In this golden season, after the heat of Summer, the morning changes and feels different again. There is a certain freshness in the air, the dew in the grass lingers, and the first leaves begin to change colour.

The harbingers of autumn are here. Now is the time to be busy and take action. The school year starts, people start working in a new company and the annual budget planning for the coming year begins. Goals are set.

This season of success is a good time to assess:

- What we have learned during the summer; which efforts were worthwhile, and which were not; the successes that have left their mark and those that were just a flash in the pan.
- The friends that have not melted away in the heat and remain by our side.
- The experience we have that allows us to tackle new projects with a more knowledgeable and calmer perspective.
- The value of our time, because in autumn – and in our life – the days become shorter and every hour lost is an hour that will never be regained.

Autumn is cooler and the days become shorter, but it displays the most colourful side of its abundance before nature retreats into winter hibernation. This is the best time to connect with the power of nature and stroll through forests on long walks. To gain inspiration and focus on my goals, I practice archery.

The three rules of archery

The art of archery is one of Man's oldest forms of hunting. Flint arrowheads were used at least 10,000 years ago in the Neolithic period. In fact, there are images of archers all over the world; for example, around 5,000 archery images are engraved into the stone of the Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia.

I am not a competition archer nor, even less so, an animal hunter. My approach is intuitive archery, which is based around an inner attitude. How you position your body to the target is very important, alongside the inner attitude with which you pursue your goal.

Let us begin our fall season by considering some essential points from archery which can be useful in our personal success:

- **Rule number one:** You will only hit the target if you actually want to hit it. I have been practicing archery for more than 20 years and sometimes I felt I gave it too little attention and lacked concentration when I was doing it. My arrows flew but I missed the target. The same thing happens in life, as we have seen in previous chapters: many people do not hit their targets because they do not want it enough, despite all their effort and focus.
- **Rule number two:** If the first arrow misses the target, change your stance and start again. This rule is really important! If we adopt the same position, it is akin to pressing the same key again and wondering why we get the same result. How do we expect it to be any different? We must change our view to get a different result. A change of perspective is essential in a process of change and transformation.
- **Rule number three:** fix your eyes on the target before you even begin to take aim. Breathe deeply through your whole body, engaging the pelvic floor muscles, as this makes your stance strong. This is the center for your

strength and base. Our vision is a mirror of our inner energy and attitude; everything starts there.

As a small aside, I would add that the archer must wait a moment after the shot until the arrow hits the target. Sometimes we tend to release too early and skew the flight of the arrow at the last moment.

Demanding immediate results and not allowing the arrow enough time to complete its flight, when applied to life, will make us miss the target. Waiting is part of the agricultural process, just as in sowing and harvesting. Those who do not allow the cycle to complete will always fail. And this is as valid for a new business as it is for love or for acquiring a new habit.

Where does your arrow point?

Eugen Herrigel's book *Zen in the Art of Archery* has become a key discovery for many readers, since its first publication in 1948. "Whoever masters the secret of the artless archery art also discovers the art of life", we learn from the publisher's blurb.

The book describes the Japanese art of archery, which is called *Kyudo* and has its own link to philosophy. As with any ritual related to Zen, to master *Kyudo* takes many years, often decades. A friend of mine from Tokyo goes to the Tea School to learn the tea ritual. I asked her how long she had been doing this. "Oh, I'm a beginner. I've been going to the Tea School every Sunday for 20 years," she replied.

In his book, the German professor of philosophy who moved to Japan to study Zen, put himself in the hands of master Awa Kenzo, who provided teachings which went far beyond the scope of archery. Let us take a look at three of them:

1. "You worry yourself unnecessarily. Put any thought of hitting the target out of your mind!" This is a very important piece of advice in anything we set out to do. Worrying about things prevents us dealing with them properly.
2. "The shot will only go smoothly when it takes the archer himself by surprise." On being asked by a journalist how he managed to deliver such surprising blows, it is said that Bruce Lee answered: "You don't know what I'm about to do, and neither do I." With that, he mentioned the art of not-thinking to achieve complete spontaneity. If you are in doubt, you either do not do it or you are already conditioned by doubt and expectation.
3. The archer points at himself. It is believed that this was the essential lesson that Awa Kenzo passed on to Herrigel. At the end, the target, the objective, and the greatest success, is personal progress.

If Autumn is the season for the conquest of time and of oneself, like the archer who finally hits the target, we will live in this phase beneath the golden light of maturity and serenity.

Practical example: Become one with your goal

There are many opportunities to practise archery on an archery course in Austria. As on a golf course, there are between 30 and 40 plastic animals to hit as targets in nature at certain distances. In the winter months, it gets dark early and the targets are often difficult to see in the twilight.

After reading Eugen Herrigel's book, I wanted to see if I could actually hit my target in the darkness of the forest in a safe situation. I concentrated with my inner eye and imagined the target very precisely, then I aligned my inner image with the real landscape and took a shot from medium range.

The result was amazing! Although I couldn't see the target at all when I fired, I managed to hit the target and even scored top marks! It may or may not be a coincidence, but I had a unique experience of overcoming the "impossible"!

The value of experience

Life is a continuous challenge of dealing with people, changes and personal values. When you are young, life is like being on a merry-go-round. You let yourself be swept along by the energy of the moment. You may often be overwhelmed by life and by the wealth of impressions, emotions and opportunities.

Over time, ideas and opportunities start to become clearer and plans for ambitious goals in the outside world are developed: about training, career, family planning or material security.

On reaching midlife, an emptiness could develop within you and questions arise such as “Was that it?”, “Where does this kind of life lead to?”, and “Why am I really here?”

Maturity: a pathway to integration

Children are born as a natural balance of body and soul. That is the reason why we often find children to be so lively and unique. They discover new things in the world every day and are often rushing with enthusiasm more than 200 times per day.

As we grow up, we tend to forget the balance of body and soul, and we have to meet goals at home, at school and in our professional career. This external program determines our life, continually moving us away from ourselves.

When this inner emptiness becomes overwhelming, there are several ways of dealing with it: distraction, anesthesia, depression... or you can become aware of the separation of your body from your soul and start to bring yourself back into harmony.

In Autumn, we reach a point in life where finding yourself again is more important than anything else. For this key moment, you have a very powerful resource that will fill the void and give you the necessary inspiration: your experience.

You become what you decide

Experienced people have a greater understanding of the weight of each decision because they now know the value of their time, energy, and happiness. They are also more experienced at differentiating between what matters and what does not, as well as at recognizing who they want to relate to.

One of the advantages of aging is the ability to make better decisions, thanks to the framework that we gain because of what we have lived through. This was something that the ancient Greeks already knew. On reading *The Iliad* or *The Odyssey*, we see that, in situations of extreme need or great importance, they turned to the town elders.

That one who has seen and lived most and, therefore, knows most, understands best what should be done. This sentence is repeated in various forms throughout all the adventures narrated by Homer. And although the cult of youth in advertising seems to have made us forget this essential source of knowledge, it is clear that experience is the best piece of equipment we have to confront the battles of life with insight.

People with more life experience tend to be emotionally more stable and less impulsive than their younger peers. They make more measured decisions because they know that every cause has an effect, even in themselves. That is the point: you are the fruit of your decisions. No one else is to blame.

The advantages of getting older

Seniors discover life again, like children, with the balancing of body and mind. They know that every day, every moment could be their last. What else do we have to lose? It makes no sense to plan or to be afraid of life.

Actually, many studies have concluded that old age brings happiness, wisdom, and even better sex, because in old age we learn to appreciate the exceptional value of the moment and to open up and indulge in it wholeheartedly.

'Life can only be understood backward, but it has to be lived forward', says the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, but this clearer vision is only one of the benefits of getting older:

- You have less fear, and fewer doubts and worries than a younger person, but this does not mean that you have 'seen it all before'.
- You are better able to accept your mistakes, those of others and those of the world. You have stopped aiming for a perfect world.
- You have greater control of your emotions, and you are able to act rather than react.
- Your priorities are much clearer, and you use your time better because you do not know how long you will have health on your side. • You get on much better with children and you learn from them.
- What other people think is not very important to you (or does not matter at all).

On this last point, there is a legendary song by Alan Parsons that says: 'And oh when I'm old and wise / Bitter words mean little to me / Autumn winds will blow right through me.'

Perhaps this is the greatest success we can harvest as human beings: to grow old with wisdom, not allowing ourselves to be trapped by bitterness and not letting the arrow of fortune pass through us as if we were transparent.

Ichariba choodee

In his book *Ikigai*, written with Héctor García, my friend Francesc Miralles tells of their journey to Ōgimi, a village in the north of Okinawa which holds the Guinness World Record for Longevity.

They returned to the “Village of the Centenarians”, as it is called, at the end of 2019 for a National Geographic documentary and remembered three of the secrets of these wise old people:

1. They follow their *ikigai*, their purpose in life, until the end and are active throughout life.
2. They are on very good terms with friends for their entire lifetime.
3. They always live under the protection of the community.
4. They have the philosophy of forgiving, which is the mindset of the island.

This third point is particularly important. Having suffered 110,000 deaths in Okinawa, many of them civilian, during the Second World War, they maintain excellent relations with the Americans who live on the island and who have married locals, many of them adopting the Japanese language as their own.

This attitude to life is very deeply rooted in the culture of the island, as one of their social maxims is *Ichariba choodee*, which translates as, ‘though we meet but once, even by chance, we are friends for life’.

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Returning to the book, *Ikigai*, translated into almost 60 languages, Héctor García and Francesc Miralles included a poem by the Uruguayan teacher Roberto Abadie Soriano, on the secrets of longevity:

A healthy, peaceful life;
Food in moderation,
A light touch with medication;
Try everything,
Stew on nothing;
Do exercise, have fun,
Don't worry about what's to come;
Get out of the house and into conversations,
And always, always maintain an occupation.

The Autumn of success is understanding that beyond the concrete successes we are able to achieve, the true measure of success is our own life. *Ikigai* means, quite literally, 'live a life that is worthwhile' and, according to the wisdom of the centenarians, that means living a harmonious existence – with your own body and mind, with other people, and with life itself – and not failing to be yourself.

If you get to a certain age, your life is rich in experiences, you know how to enjoy your work and relate to others while always being yourself, you can say that you have been successful.

As Oscar Wilde, famous for his eloquence and extravagant manner, said:
“Be yourself, everyone else is already taken.”

Let it go (and Let it come)

In Autumn, nature unfolds its palette of colours, and fruits reach their maximum sweetness before harvesting. The leaves fall from the branches and the tree prepares itself for the rigors of winter, lightening the load.

If you want to absorb the wisdom of nature in this season, you must learn to 'let go' of what you do not need. And that refers as much to physical possessions as to emotions. Without us realizing it, we tend to accumulate internal wounds in the form of disappointments, resentment, and anger. We cling to our wounded feelings, unable to forgive.

Sometimes, it is hard to admit that something has lost its significance and it is time to let it go.

While we fail to let the dead leaves fall away, we are slowing down our growth in all areas of our life. This includes forgiving others for everything that they did not know how to do better, plus forgiving ourselves for our own faults and imperfections. This is a fundamental step in order to then be able to leap forward.

I like to imagine life as a huge railroad station. There are tracks everywhere on which trains arrive and depart. Each one promises a unique adventure, different meetings, and other opportunities to give shape to your life. Some trains leave every five minutes; some only come along once in a lifetime. Which train do you want to take? What is your next journey? Whatever your decision may be, in order to get to a different place from where you are now, you will have to leave the station.

Theorie U

Otto Scharmer has a background in Anthroposophy, but he carried out his work at Boston's prestigious MIT and at the Tsinghua University in Beijing. Among other

things, he is known for his Theory U, which is very relevant to examining the Autumn of success.

If Winter is the period of incubation, Spring is the period for the first shoots of success, and Summer is the period when they reach maximum growth, success in Autumn will depend on knowing when to let go of things that are no longer of any use to us so that, after Winter, new things begin to arrive.

The so-called Theory U is based precisely on this, and Otto Scharmer summarizes it in two sentences which are as simple as they are important: Let it go & Let it come.

1. Let it go. Just as a tree cannot renew itself if it does not let go of the old leaves, there comes a time when we need to let go of everything that is no longer of any use to us in order to leave space for moving on.
2. Let it come. In the space that has been freed up, things begin to take place that, up to now, were inconceivable because we were living in the past. When we have freed ourselves from everything we do not need, we let the future in.

A practical example: the circular life of Mr K

Using a recurrent character in Kafka's work, Mr K has not been happy in love since his first girlfriend left him for a work colleague. This experience has overshadowed his idea of love in such a way that his three next relationships after this have been cut short for the same reasons:

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- Mr K refused to introduce her to his friends, which was seen by her as an act of mistrust.
- If they met some man he knew in the street, or at one of Mr K's events, he became nervous and took his girlfriend outside 'the danger zone'.
- Any of her meetings with work colleagues or old student friends was viewed with great anxiety by Mr K and gave rise to long interrogations by him.
- Mr K was never relaxed and happy about his relationship, so he always felt a fear of being abandoned again.

This fear in the last point is confirmed in every relationship, like a selffulfilling prophecy, because Mr K has never stopped being with his first girlfriend. He is living in the past with each one of his girlfriends, so the result is always the same and it breaks down time after time.

Only when Mr K applies Let it go, leaving the past behind forever without expecting it to repeat itself, will he experience Let it come with a completely new relationship, which will develop along new paths.

Practical example: Question the value of everything that surrounds you

After reaching the age of sixty, I realized that now would be the right time to completely reassess and reorganize my life.

I thought about what lay behind me and what might lie ahead; which things had lost value over time and which things would gain in importance. So for a while I became a part-time second-hand goods dealer and said goodbye to many things that had been with me for a long time. This gave me a lot of freedom to reorganize and shape my life according to my current and potential future needs.

This process of inner rupture was laborious: I encountered the most diverse versions of myself from the past decades and said goodbye to them - just like throwing ripe fruit into a distiller. At the same time, I developed a new high-proof distillate of myself with a strengthened basic trust to surrender to the flow of life and remain open to new things.

Detachment and love according to Rupi Kaur

In Buddhism, a basic tool for ending suffering is detachment. On letting go of desire and dependency, we manage to relate to the world from a position of freedom.

This is especially so in the field of love. How many people hold on to toxic relationships because of their fear of loneliness?

An author who has explored freedom from a position of sentimental detachment is Rupi Kaur, who started to sell millions of books of her poetry book *Milk and Honey* when 22 years old. Beautifully illustrated by the author herself, among other topics she critiques the view that we have inherited about love. In the following text, Rupi says the following:

i don't want to have you
to fill the empty parts of me
i want to be full on my own
i want to be so complete
i can light a whole city
and then i want to have you
cause the two of us combined
could set it on fire.

Many people hope to save themselves or complete themselves through love, as if their partner were a salve capable of healing all wounds. But this view only leads to dependence and disequilibrium, to a constant fight for power and reproaches such as: '...considering everything I've done for you!', to jealousy, to fear, to loss and to control.

Two halves of an orange which search for each other, an idea that has its origins in Plato's *The Banquet*, will finally go dry and lose all their juice.

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In her poem, Rupi Kaur invites you to fill and complete yourself so that each person's own light 'sets the city on fire'.

The desire to find a powerful love that amplifies us is natural, but the young poet warns: 'you must want to spend the rest of your life with yourself first.'

Master your time

On August 28, 1794, Friedrich Schiller wrote a charming letter to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe on his 45th birthday. And Goethe wrote back to him four days later. With that, an extraordinary written exchange of ideas began, which is currently one of the most beautiful examples of the German language.

The interesting thing is that Goethe and Schiller were both living a stroll away from each other in Weimar at the time. Nevertheless, a letter was delivered every day and the two writers hardly ever met in person. Why?

The answer is incredibly simple. Goethe was a morning person and often felt most lively at dawn, whereas Schiller only really got going in the early evening and worked late, often until dawn. It was simply a matter of individual time management by each genius.

So, are you a day or a night person?

But there is a much more important question, my dear reader: How much of your time really belongs to you?

Perhaps you devote eight or more hours to working because you have to pay the bills, and eight hours to sleeping, with any luck. And if you have a family, that will demand time for care and attention from you. The question is: what are you doing with the time that is left? Even if, in the end, you have barely an hour to yourself, what are you doing with this hour?

Quantity or quality

Without a doubt, something that distinguishes successful people from the rest is the use they make of their time. They realize how scarce it is and, therefore, they try to get the most out of every hour. As a result, a great scientist, artist or entrepreneur will be unlikely to do the following things:

- Spend hours mesmerized by social media for no particular reason.
- Use up the whole weekend watching several seasons of a series.
- Attend social events or spend time with people who, deep down, are of no interest to them.

In the Autumn of success, we are more conscious of the value of time than of any other thing, because we can always sell our time in exchange for money, but the other way around is impossible. The time you have squandered cannot be recouped, even with all the money in the world.

Time works in the same way as a marketing principle that is applied to anyone who wants to sell anything. When it comes to making the product, either you sell it by quantity or by quality. You can offer an inferior product wholesale, which means you have to sell a lot to earn anything. Or you can focus on exclusivity, which makes every sale good business because scarcity creates value.

How do you think you treat your time? Do you treat it like cheap products that can be delivered to everyone at a low price? Or are you aware that every minute is a precious material?

The value of your time – of your life – in the Autumn of success will depend on how you respond to this question.

How Millionaires view their time

In her book *Time Mindfulness*, the economist Cristina Benito puts a question: Why does time go further for some people than for others? To answer it, she turns to entrepreneur Kevin Krose who, after interviewing 200 successful people, came to the conclusion that they consider time as their most valuable asset.

Therefore, these highly productive people manage time in a different way; they have efficient habits to convert it into gold.

Cristina Benito condenses it into these eight points:

1. **Focus on the minutes, not the hours.** Successful people are conscious that every day has 1440 minutes. If we sleep eight hours, as is recommended, we have 960 waking minutes to use as we see fit.
2. **Start with a morning routine.** The guru Vaibhav Shah said: 'Whenever you see a successful person, you only see the public glories, never the private sacrifices to reach them.' The majority get up very early and, after a good breakfast, dedicate their time to resolving the matters of the day.
3. **Prioritize.** Geniuses know to focus on one thing at a time, because they understand very clearly what the goal is. They then get on with the task that will bring them closer to the goal, giving over one or two hours to it every morning, without allowing any interruptions.
4. **Forget To-do lists.** As well as not helping us to complete tasks, a list is a source of stress. In the 1930s, a Russian psychologist, who realized that waiters were primarily recording orders that were not delivered, called this the Zeigarnik Effect: tasks that are not completed remain in your mind until you finish them, taking up space and robbing you of time and energy.
5. **Plan your diary.** Instead of making lists, successful people plan every task in their diary, be it a meeting with a client, a call to Mom or a weekly coaching session. If a task is not in the diary, it does not exist.
6. **Use a notebook to free your mind.** Richard Branson declared that he was able to create Virgin thanks to a simple notebook that he always carried with him to make a note of his plans.
7. **Delegate what you can.** The author of Time Mindfulness points out that instead of asking yourself, 'how can I do this task?', it is more effective to ask, 'How can this task be done?'. If the 'I' in the equation is eliminated as frequently as possible, you will gain time to do something that only you know how to do.

8. **Have supper at home.** Success is not about being in constant movement. To regain their energies, successful people know to go home to their loved ones. For Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer for Facebook, one of her priorities is to have supper at home every day. What is yours?

In 1571, at the age of 38, the philosopher and founder of essay writing, Michel de Montaigne, retired to the second floor of his private library to devote himself entirely to writing, with the words, "Enough lived for others - let us at least live this last part of life for ourselves."

You cannot say you are successful, no matter what you might achieve, if you do not have the freedom to have time for yourself.

The separation of working hours and leisure time was only brought in at the beginning of the industrial age and is about 200 years old. Before that, people lived much more in harmony with nature and were only laced into an apparent time corset by the ringing of the church bell.

Practical example: Busy is the new stupid

A few years ago, I interviewed the Bavarian entrepreneur Christine Walker. She coaches managers in the area of time management and told me: "Successful managers today work with a work-life balance: this involves the seamless integration of work and relaxation, of responsibility and time management in everyday life, both professionally and privately. This requires trust, efficient structures, a good back office and knowing when to let go!"

Classical tools in time management include the Eisenhower Principle, which is often cited in management literature. There is no evidence that the eponymous US President and Allied General practiced this himself or instilled it in others. The reference to Eisenhower goes back to a speech in which he quoted an unnamed former university president in 1954 as follows: "I have two kinds of

problems: the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent."

On this last point, Stephen Covey, author of the classic work *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, hinted at an important difference:

- People who aspire to success run from one emergency to another, postponing whatever is important to them. Urgent is important to others, not to you. Therefore, if you live in a constant state of emergency, you are living only for others.
- Successful people make important things in their diary a priority; they do not postpone them. This means that, rather than looking for success, they live in their personal everyday lives, giving space to what is truly important to them.

How visible are the important things in your diary? We can gain money, recognition, and many other incidental things, but until you are the master of your time, you cannot say that you have been successful.

Decide your future

How do you want to spend the rest of your life? Perhaps this is the most significant question you can ever ask yourself. If you control the seasons of your life, you control your destiny.

In the event that you do not yet know the answer, try doing this exercise:

Imagine that you die at a good age, after a long life and, from the other side, you are able to read an obituary that a journalist has written about you, about what you did in your life, about the people you inspired, and about the changes that your presence brought to this world.

What would you like to read? How would you like to be remembered? Try writing this article yourself, as if you were the journalist who is talking about you, from now until the day you die.

When you finish, read it, and reflect. What do you need to do from now on to build the life you want to live? Everything depends on you. Think of your life as a movie where you are the main actor, the director, and the scriptwriter.

So, I ask you again: How do you want to spend the rest of your life?

The great theater of Life

The American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, who we saw in a previous chapter, said: "The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be."

I thought about this quote for a long time and wondered if this really is the case. Does everybody really have the chance to develop themselves freely - regardless of origin, a stroke of luck or access to resources?

Some months ago, my job took me to a sanatorium where I where I came in contact with parents and their children who suffer from delayed development

as a result of premature birth. Many are in a wheelchair. Every motor movement, creating the connections for motor commands in the synapses of the brain, comes down to continual training and hard work.

My task was to interview the children affected and their parents, and it was very emotional. One mother told me, "I had to find a way to deal with the situation and the first step was to learn to fully accept my life – my child – and life with my child's disability. It was only after I accepted it, that I grew beyond myself; it changed me, and I developed into a different person."

Practical example: Accept yourself as part of life!

In this same institution, a young woman – let us call her Marianne –, who is about 25 years old today, has been in a wheelchair since birth and relies on someone else to help her. "When I first entered rehabilitation as a small child, I realized that I was not the only one in my situation. I met other children who were either better off or worse off than me, and then I realized that I am part of life. So, I set myself a goal: my illness will not determine my life. My goal is to have as autonomous a life as possible, no matter how much perseverance, training and hard work it takes!"

This conversation with Marianne really impressed me. She is now starting to study law and economics and is pursuing her goals with admirable ambition. That is when I realized that life is like a theater, as an old playwright once said. Each of us is assigned a certain role in life, which we present on stage. No matter how favorable or unfavorable the initial situation appears at first glance, the key is how we develop our role afterwards, how well or how badly we deal with it, how ambitiously we pursue our goals, or whether we let ourselves drift. This is really the only decision we make for ourselves of our own free will.

If a girl like Marianne does not lose the courage to live despite her disability and can overcome severe emotional setbacks with perseverance and training, then there is no excuse for you.

What role do you want to play in this life?

What is the person you want to become like?

The 6 secrets of good relationships

In the ancient Mayan culture of South America, they used the greeting, 'In Lak'ech', which means, 'I am another You'. It is the expression of unity among all human beings.

In Hawaii, 'Aloha' is not only a word of greeting, or a farewell, or a salutation, but an attitude to life. 'Aloha' means mutual regard and affection and extends a caring warmth with no obligation to return it. 'Aloha' is the essence of relationships in which each person is important to every other person for collective existence. 'Aloha' means to hear what is not said, to see what cannot be seen and to know the unknowable.

If we want to live in Lak'ech and Aloha, it is very important that we clear our relationships with others of any negativity because whatever anger we hold, as the Buddha reminds us, 'is like grasping a hot coal in your hand ... you are the one who gets burned'.

Let us look at some measures we can take so that our relationships with others are as harmonious as possible. Given that we live together, and our lives and our future depend on the quality of these bonds, these simple rules will help us to build and maintain healthy relationships:

1. For whatever you give, expect nothing in return. The person you are helping will probably not return the favor, but the workings of the Universe are mysterious, and you will receive compensation from somewhere else.

2. Avoid applying your own expectations to everyone else. Phrases like 'In your place, I would have...' are nonsense, because each person is an individual and no one does things in the same way as anyone else.
3. Say thanks. To everyone, at all times, for everything.
4. If someone offends you, do not think that person is wicked. This person simply acted from the place he occupies in his spiritual evolution. No matter how badly he or she does things, conduct yourself in the best way possible.
5. Let go of those who want to leave. Life changes, people change and sometimes our paths are no longer aligned. Do not wish you could hold on to people. Do not wish you could save a friendship which has reached its natural end. Seek clarity in the conversation and find a decision. Sometimes even a break acts like a miracle.
6. Do not unload your problems and complaints onto everyone else. Everyone has their own problems. Unless something very serious has happened to you, share things that are positive and pleasant – discoveries, adventures, anecdotes – and you will have a queue at your door.

Be the change you want to see happen in the world

This famous phrase of Gandhi contains the key point of personal transformation. It is lovely to be surrounded by good friends and knowledgeable mentors, but only you are going to do the work.

So, ask yourself: What do you want to change in the world?

What do you need to change in yourself?

What you have answered probably implies internal and external changes. You will have to give up certain habits and take up others. You will have to do things that you never did before. That will cause a change within you which, in time, will create changes outside of you: in your way of life, in how you spend your free time, and in your friends.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

You will lose some people along the way and gain new ones but remember that everything begins with you.

We have traveled together through the four seasons of success. Before we say goodbye, we will take a look at the harvest.

THE 5 KEYS TO SUCCESS IN AUTUMN

1. You can exchange your time for money, but not the other way around.
 2. Experience is only useful if you connect the dots.
 3. There is no transformation without letting go.
 4. Being busy does not equate to being important.
 5. There is no Future, only small decisions along the way.
-

The Harvest

A few years ago I produced a corporate movie, which saw me travel with a film crew to every continent for several months. When I went to Cambodia, I got to know Elain Younn. A little while later, I received a message from her:

“Did I tell you that I am a medium in close contact with the archangels? They have sent me a message that says that you will come back to Asia, and that together we will carry out a very large and important project in their interests.”

I was confused and not sure what to make of it. According to what she said, I had received a call from higher spirits, but... What was the job that needed to be done?

I was given a brief explanation in a session with Elain working as a medium, which allowed her archangels to speak through her. This was the message: ‘You and Elain – the two of you alone – are very different people. But when you are together, a third person is born – created. The energy of that third being comes from the two of you. It is for you both to understand this and focus on the third person and let the other two go – let the egos of the other two go. What you can achieve when the two of you combine is astronomical. It is like a skyrocket flying into the air. Neither one can do it alone, but when the two of you combine, a miraculous transformation takes place.’

I now remember this message, which left me so perplexed, because a similar thing happened with this book, as both of us are authors. Yes, you have read correctly. Reading this book has been a magical task that concerns us both. I have given you everything I know about the four seasons of success, and you have supplemented it with your own experience, with your feelings and your purpose.

From both comes a third living being – the life that lies before you from now on.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

No two people read the book the same way, as the result depends on the joining of two souls: that of the author and that of the reader.

Of course, there are parts of this book that have resonated with you specifically because they connect with experiences in your life that have been significant, or even with ideas or projects that you aspire to undertake.

That is your harvest.

This book has given you the seeds and the knowledge for cultivation so that you can create your own garden of your dreams. A garden that extends as far into the future as you want to see.

Every person in the world makes their own luck, as the saying says, and now you have developed into a designer of reality for your own life, based on the four seasons of success. If you persevere, respect the seasons, and keep the harvest on your horizon, you will reap what you have sown.

And when you harvest the fruit that will appear in your life after letting go of what is no longer of any use, you will find that you have become someone new and more powerful, because each one of the seasons will have taught you something about yourself.

Albeit in a different order to the one we have followed, Yoko Ono would summarize it in this way:

Winter passes and one remembers one's perseverance.

Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence.

Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance.

Autumn passes and one remembers one's reverence

Perhaps the heart of success resides in this: move through the fields of life taking the fruit of each season, learning from the journey, and knowing that all possibilities are in your hands.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

I wish you the best harvest of your life.

GREGOR JASCH

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The tradition to say thank you for a good harvest in a family or community celebration is a general and widespread cultural rite, often with clear religious references.

Now I ask you, dear reader, how do you feel after reading this book? In any case, I would like to thank you for your time, your interest, your attention and your sympathy in all its forms.

During an interview, I was asked which day was the best day of my life? For me the question was strange, why should there be only one best day in a person's life? So, I replied, "Every day that I am in tune with myself is the most beautiful day of my life!"

Of course, I don't manage to live in a perfectly even balance day, every day, but most of the time I do.

How about you?

Have you recognized what is really important to you today and in the future?

How do you want to live and on what idea do you want to focus your energy and attention now and in the future?

Shortly after the completion of this book, the Corona crisis erupted completely unexpectedly. Many people have lost their bases or are considering breaking new ground. It takes a certain amount of time to find the answers to these questions; it is an open-ended process: work, in progress and in constant change. If you are open-minded, you can keep the focus flexible and let your energy guide you.

People in general find it easier to open up in a community and to recognize new perspectives and gain clarity through the contagious enthusiasm of the participants. The goal is transformation and it's about the most important thing in the world: it's about you!

We offer you support in our online courses and trainings, seminars and workshops. In our academy we develop and support people, ideas and companies on their way to success. Together we discover the best version of yourself and follow the intelligence that comes straight from the heart.

The Four Seasons of Success by Gregor Jasch

We invite you to a new experience for a balanced and fulfilling life.

Gregor Jasch

More information: www.gregorjasch.com