



DEAD MAN WALKING

A Short but Difficult Journey from Mindset to Soulset

Philip McKernan

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BY PHILIP MCKERNAN

"Success is manufactured in the mind
while happiness is cultivated in the soul."
- Philip McKernan

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*This book is dedicated to my high school teacher Trevor Garrett.
In my 13 years in the education system in Ireland he was the only one who
believed in me. While other teachers called me a failure,
ignored me or predicted the path of failure that lay ahead for me,
Trevor inspired me with poetry, stories, imagination and an inner belief in me
that gave me hope. I will never forget what you did for me Trev.*

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I

Trappings of Success

In the year 2006, I was living in my home country of Ireland. I was a young hotshot (or so I thought) of a coffee industry insider. My family's coffee company (Java Republic) was the second largest coffee supplier in Ireland. I was earning good money, building equity, driving a nice car, and had the social cache that successful young entrepreneurs do.

We'd staked out our reputation by sourcing only the finest coffee beans from around the world, and our clients included many of the finest restaurants, cafes, hotels, and bars in Ireland. In many ways, I was on top of the world. The money, nice car, and social cache were great. In addition, my position in the company had me travelling all over the world, something I already had a great passion for.

I had immense pride in knowing what my brother and I were building. In many ways, it was the great entrepreneur success story; using only our passion and hard work, and very little capital, we were able to build a service business, customer by customer, café by café, and cup of coffee by cup of coffee into a highly successful and profitable business.

We worked our butts off, pounded the pavement hard, and made thousands upon thousands of sales calls. It was tough but rewarding

work; building the business from the ground up, but we were making it happen. We reached the place we were so desperately working towards, a place in the sun amongst the other successful entrepreneurs of the new Irish economy which was known worldwide as the Celtic Tiger, a phenomenon marked by 15 years of unimaginable growth, predictable excess, and ultimately, an equally as stunning collapse.

That last part had not yet happened while I was still with Java Republic. Ireland was in a full blown boom, and Java Republic and myself were riding the wave of growth, expansion, and success. In addition, the Java Republic success had allowed me to start investing in property. The loose lending practices made it easy for a young man with a mix of drive and ego to start buying real estate domestically and internationally.

With all of this money, success, and status, you might find it illogical and strange that this was exactly the moment when I decided to walk away from it all and make some enormous changes in my life.

At the time, I did not know where I would end up and how I was going to go about reaching the place that I knew I needed to go, but I did make the change, and the journey since then has been the most rewarding and an incredible period of my life.

Leaving Java Republic was a turning point in the broader context of my life, but it was also the beginning of my own personal journey from *mindset to soulset*, a journey that has been both a) the most seminal and rewarding of my life, and b) one of the pillars of my work today (group and individual mentoring).

Gut Feelings

When I was at my personal pinnacle of outward success and happiness, I was also harbouring an inner feeling of turmoil. Every morning I woke up with a knot in my stomach that would not go away. I tried to eliminate it with hard work, no matter how many deals I did, and no matter how much money I made, the knot clung to the walls of my stomach. I was experiencing the trappings of success, but was not experiencing deep-seeded contentment, fulfillment, or peace of mind. I was like a 'Dead

Man Walking’ and spent most of my time stuck inside my own head. My identity had become *what* I did and *owned* rather than *who* I was. It’s true that I was not the only one in Ireland who fell into this trap, but that information did not bring much comfort.

My gut was talking to me, but for years I ignored it, until that day when I could not ignore it any longer, the day when I made a change. Finally, I listened to that feeling in my gut, and while I may have walked away from money and social prestige, I stepped into my authentic journey. I truly started being the person that I needed to be. I began stepping away from *fakeality*¹ and into reality, the core of who I was as a person, what I really wanted to give to life, and what I wanted to get from life. I started to become Philip McKernan again, a boy who knew exactly *who* he was while roaming around Ireland’s wild west coast as a boy, but who could have been any number of people represented by the masks he put on as he entered his private school classroom. I started taking the journey back towards myself.

Now, God forbid I give you the impression that this change happened overnight or that it was easy. Quite the opposite, the years that followed my decision to leave Java Republic were some of the most difficult and tumultuous years of my life, and I continue to be challenged every day.

I take the time to point this out because too often people will read a book, or listen to an audio series, or watch a video and think that the person they’re reading, listening to, or watching is somehow better than them, or that they have superpowers. The watcher often doesn’t believe that they themselves could muster up such courage or strength. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have struggled to the core in life. I’ve struggled with feelings of worthlessness, stupidity, and inability. If I can make the difficult journey to my center, so can you. It’s an ongoing practice in my life, I haven’t ‘arrived’ any more than you.

¹ Yes, I do invent words from time to time. Fakeality is defined as “The state of living inauthentically.” Fakeality is a term that arose from one of my Everest mentoring programs to describe the feeling that one has after leaving a space of openness, vulnerability, authenticity, and honesty and is then deposited back into ‘normal’ life where discussions are often flat, people fail to tell the truth about their feelings, and one has a general feeling of malaise.

One of the greatest understandings that I've gained along this journey, which has never failed me is this simple rule: "My gut never lies to me." When I have an intuitive feeling that something is right or wrong, I heed that message, and I listen to my *inner guidance system*.

Through my own experiences, and from the experiences of my mentoring clients, I've seen first-hand how the *mind* lies to us, how it leads us astray, and how, in some cases, it totally deludes us. Through those same experiences, I've seen how the gut (intuition) is always valid. We don't always *interpret* our intuitions perfectly, but our gut cannot be wrong, has never been wrong and will never be wrong. The challenge we face is how to listen to it and trust it.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not suggesting that the mind is useless and that we should ignore it. Of course, the intellectual faculties of the mind have allowed humans many of our greatest advancements, and when used correctly in our own lives, can be one of our greatest gifts. But, what I am suggesting is that we live in an era and a society where the intellect has totally taken over from any intuitive thought. Many, if not most people, don't even know how to *sense* their intuition, let alone act upon it. Yet, our intuitive feelings still exist, and in many cases (as with the knot in my stomach) they haunt us, without us knowing why.

They often exist within us as very negative feelings. Feelings we label 'anxiety', 'stress', 'anger', and many others. I believe that our emotions are a system of signs that we, as people don't heed as often as we should.

We still have the faculty of intuition. We have gut feelings all the time. Our souls are screaming at us, but we don't listen. We live in a society where the majority of people *think* success rather than *feel* contentment. We live in a time and place where intuition is beaten down and not trusted. In place of intuition, we've put total trust in our minds and when our minds can't find the answer, we go to Google for the answer rather than trusting the oldest and wisest built-in faculty we possess, our intuition.

I typically dislike acronyms, but I did come up with one about GUT.

Guidance from within

U have the answers

Trust yourself

In spite of the commonly received wisdom of reliance on the mind and the dominance of intellect, my experience has shown me a different way. I've seen that making the shift from mindset to soulset can bring about the most profound changes that a human being can experience. I've seen people literally transform their relationships, their health, and their financial situations by moving from their minds to their souls.

“The people in the Indian countryside don't use their intellect like we do, they use their intuition instead, and their intuition is far more developed than in the rest of the world. Intuition is a very powerful thing, more powerful than intellect, in my opinion. That's had a big impact on my work. In the villages of India, they never learned it. They learned something else...That is the power of intuition and experiential wisdom... If you just sit and observe, you will see how restless your mind is. If you try to calm it, it will only make it worse. But over time it does calm, and when it does, there's room to hear more subtle things - that's when your intuition starts to blossom.”

Steve Jobs, Apple

The Standard Model of Success is Broken

Through the years of learning to listen to my inner guidance system and from teaching what I've learned to others (and urging them to use their own inner guidance system), I can say with certainty that the standard model of success is broken. There is no doubt left in my mind about this fact.

I meet people all the time who 'think' they need more information in order to be successful in an area of their lives, but if information was the answer then the world would be perfect. Never before have we had such information and accessibility to it, yet more people feel lost or unclear than ever before.

All it takes is a quick look around at the people you interact with on a daily basis. If you really look, you will probably find:

- a) Someone who hates their job
- b) Someone who has a flat, lifeless marriage
- c) Someone who is out of touch with his/her children
- d) Someone who have given up forms of recreation for work

- e) Someone who is suffering from debilitating (but preventable) pain
- f) Someone who is unhealthily overweight
- g) Someone who is overcome by anxiety

The truth is that I could make the above list twice or three times as long, and if you're sensitive enough to notice, you would be able to see people fitting every one of those descriptions within your daily circle.

Most of the people suffering from the above listed afflictions (and others like them) are (at least partially) suffering due to an unhealthy attachment to the *standard model of success*. They believe that if they can't achieve the success which is continually stuffed down their throats by the media, the success industry, and daily conversation, that they aren't worth much. Therefore they focus all of their energies on achieving that model of success.

You know what I mean by the standard model of success, don't you? It's things like enormous riches, perfect bodies, social status, fancy cars, and perfect looks.

The problem is this: often these things don't actually resonate with them at the core of their being, and they're ultimately *acting* a role in life rather than living the life their soul is craving. They're putting on masks, just as I was when working with Java Republic. The standard model of success pushes people to pursue unauthentic goals and therefore they ultimately achieve an unauthentic life. Then people wonder why (after achieving their goals) they feel empty.

Financial Freedom — A perfect example of the situation I described above is the obsession with financial freedom. In theory, this is a wonderful idea. The theory goes like this. You work hard and put aside whatever you love in your life now in order to create wealth and/or 'passive income'.

Once you have the wealth or the passive income, or both, then and only then you can start doing what you really love, or spend time with people you really love, or start helping people you really want to help, or start creating the art you really want to create, or go on that trip that you really want to go on. The theory states that: whatever it is that you really love is the thing that you will be able to do *later*.

The theory of financial freedom is misleading. It makes it seem that those who do have the funds to live life in the so-called fast lane, are only the ones capable of making a positive impact in the world, and it makes it seem as though you can't *live* until you create wealth. The reality is that the only real freedom that is worth pursuing is peace of mind. Incredibly, we can't achieve peace of mind until we stop living in our mind!

If you subscribe to the theory of financial freedom, it makes you feel that you're not as good as those who've (allegedly) created it. The cold hard truth is that the notion of sitting on a beach, picking up your computer every now and again, and tipping back a Mai Tai every time you see your bank balance grow is a dangerous desire.

Often, the people most financially capable of living this life are the same ones who don't have peace of mind, don't sleep well, and can't find the time to read a book to their kids at night. They are often the ones who are not as happy as you might think, and often the people most attached to financial freedom are the ones least living life *right now*. Nothing will ruin your contentment, peace of mind, health, and happiness like living in your head and thinking only about the past or the future. The very nature of setting lot of goals in fact pulls us into the future and ironically prevent us from experiencing life NOW. Excessive goal setting is symptomatic of the success focused, mindset focused approach.

Financial freedom is the pinnacle of the standard received notion of success. I believe we must actually separate ourselves from the notion of success and its offspring financial freedom in order to develop peace of mind and contentment.

A caveat: When I give a speech or make a video on the topics that I've just discussed, many people take it to mean that I'm anti-money. It's as if I'm saying that you have to take a vow of poverty and go hug trees in order to be happy in life. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH! I am someone who enjoys material wealth, and I strive to achieve a degree of it in my life. However, I do not believe that financial wealth should be put before well-being. My experience from my own life and from my clients' lives' has shown me that material wealth is a *by-product* of living life right and making choices from the soul rather than for money-first.

Percy's Story

Material Wealth Through Soulset Based Decisions

Percy (not his real name) was a client of mine who, when I first met him, was the perfect example of an overstressed and overworked entrepreneur. He was excellent at his chosen profession, where he managed multi-million dollar projects in the software industry. His teams designed, created, and managed software for major industry players, and he and his business are integral to these large companies' operations.

As is often the case with this type of driven entrepreneur, Percy was paying a price for the business that he owned. He was working 70 or more hours every single week, and his family life and health were suffering. Percy was the very definition of a stressed out entrepreneur, and he admitted to me and the rest of the *Everest*² participants that he wasn't happy with this working life. He recognized a pattern of behaviour where he'd start a business, build it up to the point where it was busy, and then it would consume him until he was totally fatigued and unable to continue with the business.

Percy's business was earning great money when we met him, but very little of that money was finding its way to him. By the time he paid his bills, there was very little left for him. In total, he was walking away each month with about \$10,000 of profit, a decent amount, but not much considering his business was earning \$100,000 plus per month. Percy had scantily taken time to notice the predicament that he was in - working too hard, for too long, with too much outflow of money.

2 Everest is a year long group mentoring program that I run. We meet quarterly and participants deepen their understanding of and make improvements around their work, personal relationships, and relationships with themselves.

He was exhausted when he started developing a soulset and putting his mindset where it belonged.

Percy recognized that his working life was killing him in many ways. He wasn't the father he wanted to be, or the husband he wanted to be, and he was at least 40 pounds overweight. With no time to develop his own life or his health, he had bigger problems than where the next business deal would come from.

Through an examination of where he was and seeing his situation more clearly than ever, he began taking time for himself even though he was so busy that it made no logical sense. He started exercising, which in itself creates clarity. And he started making an effort to reconnect with his children. He listened to his internal guidance system and made wonderful changes in his life.

They were wonderful changes in their own right, and they made a big difference in Percy's life, but they weren't as massive as the changes he made around his business.

Percy decided that he was going to cut out a middle man who was costing him 20% of his income off the top. He knew he risked losing his main customer when that happened, but he also knew that he had to start putting a value on himself and move forward in spite of the potential loss.

The move away from his big customer meant that he didn't have daily work for the 6 full time programmers he was employing at the time (and who were costing him enormous stress), so he cut them loose too.

Now, you might be sitting there thinking that Percy's decisions were catastrophic. He essentially lost his business in a very short period of time. Please remember that Percy had identified that he did not like any aspect of the business, and above all, he knew he needed to change.

What happened next was remarkable, but entirely unsurprising when you know how the inner guidance system works. He got an offer to work as a consultant to a much larger software company training a team of individuals on a software that he was a specialist on.

Percy was more aware going into this new venture, and he set boundaries from the beginning. This time, he would only work the hours that suited him, and he'd only commit to 6 months at a time. He had priorities that went beyond the continuous and never-ending treadmill of expansion and growth, so he demanded that his new venture fit into his life. Most importantly, Percy demanded an excellent fee for his services.

The end result was that he only worked 40 hours per week on his new venture, yet the portion of his income that was left over for him had *quadrupled* to \$40,000 per month. The shift is incredible if you think of it. He nearly halved his working hours every week, but he increased his income four-fold. Essentially, he went from earning \$35 per hour to \$250 per hour overnight.

The money aspect was great, but I tell you this story to illustrate that greater material wealth is a *result* of adhering to a soulset based approach over a mindset. The mind demands more and more, yet the soul longs for simplicity. In the simplicity of Percy's priorities, he found greater material wealth.

I'm not anti-money, I'm anti-anxiety, anti-depression, and anti-unhealthy lifestyle.

I'm pro-money if health, peace of mind, happiness, and fulfillment are taken care of.

II

What's the Difference between a Mindset and a Soulset?

Mindset

There was a time when I used the term 'mindset' a lot when speaking to audiences or working with my mentoring clients. Through much introspection and seeing people transform their lives, I've realized that mindset is actually a different approach than what I was teaching and what I was living. Now I use the term 'soulset' which places the mind in service of the overall person while using the soul as the main inner guidance system.

The following are a series of 'mindset' notions which many people try to apply in their lives:

- Success is the ultimate
- Success is something that can and must be sought after
- Happiness is created in the mind
- What you create in your mind becomes real in the world
- If you visualize something, you will manifest it
- Work as hard as you can, and you will reach success
- Repeat a mantra, and you will start doing as you repeat
- Write your goals down every day
- Make goals in every area of your life
- Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera....

The thing that most strikes me about the mindset approach is that it's as though you're trying to trick yourself into success. The mindset approach would have us believe that the mind is like a computer, and that you can program your mind to do or achieve anything even at the expense of your well-being and happiness.

Unfortunately for the many thousands of people who subscribe to the reprogrammable mind theory of personal growth, it does not lead to fulfillment and ultimately will not work.

When we accept the received notion of success without question and then we set about trying to achieve it at the cost of our own peace of mind and well-being, then we're ripe for the mindset approach to life – setting goals and programming our minds to live a life without meaning.

Dean is a client of mine with significant talents. He was a big believer in the mindset approach to personal and business growth and treated most aspects of his life with this approach. He often applied his significant talents and his driven mindset approach to achieve various goals. His results varied, sometimes meeting his goals and other times missing the mark, but what stood out most was that he felt unauthentic.

One day, he sat before me and told me about how he was going to apply 'a dream manifesto' of sorts to finding the right lady to bring into his life. So, he started imagining the woman of his dreams and all of her various attributes. He set about creating a description (in some detail) of the perfect women which included

- a) eye color
- b) a certain sized bum
- c) certain sized breasts
- d) certain eating habits
- e) a certain kind of profession
- f) a certain age
- g) etc, etc, etc.

I can't even re-create for you the detail in which he assembled this 'dream' girl. What was more incredible was his belief that the act of beating it into his mind would make the perfect scenario appear.

At the end of his lengthy description of the girl, I said to Dean, "I know where you can find such a girl, Toshiba! Call them up and they will be able to build you a version of 'Girl 1000' complete with all the attachments!"

Forgive me for having been cynical with Dean, but by this time, I'd seen enough success driven people and their standard model of success. I'd seen enough of them use the reprogrammable mind approach, and I was plain sick of it. I wanted to shake Dean up a bit and let him know that this approach cannot lead to fulfillment.

One week after that encounter with Dean, he called to tell me that he had found her. She came into his life and had ALL the attributes that he'd envisioned! He was ecstatic, and he believed that he'd proven me wrong.

However, three weeks later, he called again. This time to tell me that the girl of his dream manifesto had been perfect in all of her attributes as he'd imagined her, but there was just one little problem with the girl - she was completely psychotic!

I was not surprised. When we set out to envision and create the perfect scenario with our mind and don't base our goals on our the desires of our soul, then we'll inevitably end up with a life that doesn't resonate with us at the core. Dean's Toshiba babe is the perfect example of the bigger mindset problem. Dean's dream girl manifesto takes the mindset approach to its extreme.

Millions of people are using the mindset approach every day when they unflinchingly and unquestioningly adopt the traditional received notion of success and then spend all of their mental efforts trying to achieve it. When we do this, we will get the same result as Dean did with his 'Toshiba Girl', however, instead of a psychotic girlfriend, we get stuck with a psychotic life that our soul really didn't choose, and therefore our whole person can never really be happy with.

Soulset

It might seem blatantly obvious, and perhaps our grandparents' generation would laugh at us for even having to state the difference between soulset and mindset, but there truly is a difference.

Living life from a soulset means that you start from a different place. Immediately, you recognize that the standard received definition of success (as defined by possessions, status, and image) is rubbish, and from there you base your life decisions on a completely different frame of reference.

Unlike the mindset approach, the soulset approach doesn't attempt to re-program you. It recognizes that there is validity to the way you feel about any given thing in your life, a soulset heeds and embraces the intuitive feelings you have as well as the emotions you feel.

In addition, the soulset approach listens to the body. The soulset approach does *not* recommend that you 'push through the pain' or that you 'burn the candle at both ends'. The soulset approach recognizes that if you've lost your peace of mind and/or well-being that you're doing something wrong. The soulset approach respectfully asks you to listen to what your body and intuition are telling you. It is, in many ways, a gentler and healthier approach to living well.

The soulset approach doesn't think there is anything wrong with you. In fact, it assumes you're right just the way you are, and it asks you to come back to yourself, to separate the bullshit stories you tell yourself from the fact of who you are. The soulset approach asks you to listen to the various voices in your head and separate the ones you've received from the ones you've generated yourself.

The soulset approach believes that you have a unique gift, and that your greatest challenge in life is to let your passion manifest itself from within you. It believes that you will be happier, wealthier, and more fulfilled when you're being you and doing what you're meant to do.

The soulset approach does not want you to be the best lawyer in your firm, or the best salesperson in your industry, or the wealthiest person on your block. It asks you to be the best person you can be, to share the fullest expression of yourself, and to share your gifts with the world.

The soulset approach only cares that you derive meaning from and enjoy being a lawyer, a sales person, or the wealthiest person on the block.

The soulset approach believes that you are not broken and you have the answers you need within.

The Difference

Inherent in the concept of mindset is a whole series of corollaries which I believe set people back by miles and years when they try to employ a mindset to achieve success. Here are a few of them:

- If you don't achieve instant success, then by definition you're a failure
- Success is judged from external guidelines
- There will always be someone more successful than you, thus you will never be enough, because you're not the best
- Certain professions are considered more/less successful than others
- Having a spouse that acts/looks a certain way is considered more/less successful

Approaching life with a mindset almost guarantees that you will feel like a failure, not because you are a failure, but because you're playing the wrong game.

Approaching life with a soulset gives you a wonderful shot at winning, because it will allow you to see your own inherent value. When you live from soulset, you are playing the right game, a game in which *you* make the rules, and *you* determine what success looks like. You set goals based on your authentic self, not the received notion of success. You use your inner guidance system, and you take care of yourself.

“ The Mind pursues stuff while the Soul longs for experiences.”

– Philip McKernan

Creating Space

One of the biggest obstacles to a soulset is busyness. When I ask people to dig deep and listen to what their intuition is telling them, they almost invariably have a difficult time doing it. They feel fear that they don't have a passion, that they don't really know what they want, or that they're not good at anything, or good enough to be loved. They feel fear, so they choose the devil they know rather than allow themselves the chance to become the person at the core who is screaming to come out. This inevitably leads to regrets in life.

People often settle in a pattern of busyness because they don't know what's on the other side. If I were to ask you to take a two day trip, on your own, to a quiet place with no distractions from other people, and no distractions from computers or handheld devices, I'll bet it would be more difficult than you think.

I've seen people say they want to make change in their lives, and when I tell them about the incredible power of taking space for themselves, they balk, and they make any excuse in the world to avoid being alone with nothing but their own thoughts and feelings for even a day. Often at my live events I suggest that the participants have lunch on their own and many nod to themselves as though they know it's a good idea. Then, the moment they walk outside the room feel compelled to seek company with other participants or check their Facebook accounts.

But, the people who are able to pass through the fear of being alone and actually create a little bit of space in their lives see enormous benefit. Those who make space in their lives a regular part of their daily, weekly, or monthly routines see even more benefit than those who only intermittently take space for themselves.

A great example of space creation at work is a client of mine named Anthony. He was your classic entrepreneur, overworked, overstressed, high-energy, spoke in rapid fire bursts, and doing not bad in business and life. I say not bad because he had a business that was earning money, and he was still married to the woman he loved. However, his health was lacking, and he was constantly trying to break through in his business. He was getting decent results, but not the excellent results that he

craved, and on top of that, he wanted to shift his business somewhat to include an educational component.

Anthony is an expert in a real estate niche. He had been delivering good results for years in this field and wanted to start teaching others his craft. In addition, he had a simmering notion of helping children and young adults, especially those who suffered low self-esteem.

Anthony had been through a lot in his life. He had a rough upbringing where he didn't feel much love from his parents. He also did not excel in school. As a grown man, and seeing how his supposed weaknesses were actually strengths, he was inspired to help people who might be experiencing similar emotions to what he went through for much of his life. He was a classic case of a person overcoming a perceived handicap and then wanting to give back.

But when I started working with Anthony, he was frustrated by his efforts to understand his vision and make it happen. Luckily, ego is not a major obstacle for Anthony. He was highly receptive to trying a new approach towards his dreams. He knew that he was struggling with making the next step and was ready to take some guidance.

Anthony started taking space every second week for himself. The plan was that he would get on his motorcycle and ride every second week. He'd go somewhere quiet on his motorbike and take a walk, then finish up with lunch or dinner by himself before riding again. The concept is simple, and that simplicity is exactly the point.

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.”

– Leonardo Da Vinci

Creating space eliminates the noise that bombards us every day. When you're on a motorcycle, it's physically impossible to look at a smartphone. It's even difficult to think of the small things that stress you out on a day-to-day basis. When you're on a motorcycle, all of the outside influences and noise are stripped away. You are left with nothing but your Self, your

breath, and your thoughts. A magic broom is swept over you, and all of the external things are swept away.

You don't need to ride a motorcycle to create space. You just need to get away from the noise of day-to-day life. Creating space works stunningly well because it gives you something you may have trouble achieving normally – perspective. Space removes the noise, and what's left is quiet and your own feelings and thoughts. What emerges from the quiet and the space is remarkable - your thoughts and feelings have validity! You're not broken, and you're doing pretty damn well.

When Anthony undertook the space creation ritual, he could not have known how powerful it would be in his life. Yet, he did it, and the results in his life and business speak for themselves. Soon after starting to take space for himself, he had a powerful realization that he was employing some staff members who were not a positive influence in his business. He held a staff meeting outlining where the company was going in the future. The workers who were causing problems practically melted away from his business, they quit almost immediately after Anthony got clarity.

Next, he recognized that his desire to take a turn towards education was being overcomplicated. He simplified what he wanted to do, and created a short document which outlined what he foresaw. Soon after, he met an editor who specialized in real estate books and within a month he had a book contract with the publishing giant, John Wiley and Sons.

In the last year or so Anthony has lost 45 pounds, is making 3 times the income, and is working less than ever before. Some would call it 'luck'. But I would argue that Anthony has something very few others have, which is his true advantage and what sets him apart from most. He knows himself very well, he has worked hard on himself and he takes the time to create the space to get to know himself better continuously. This is true awareness.

Simplicity and Knowing What You Want

“ We create complexity in our lives so we don’t have to succeed at the very thing we truly want to do. Why? Because we fear we cannot do it or that we don’t deserve it.”

– Philip McKernan

Simplicity is an under-respected virtue in today’s world. Most gadgets that we invent, purchase, and own are ostensibly to make our lives easier, but in reality, they often make our lives more complex. With more complexity, we almost invariably experience increased stress and difficulty.

I have a number of clients whose use of handheld devices is a major component of their business. While it’s true that they’re able to do MORE, it’s entirely uncertain that they’re doing more of what’s important. In fact, I’d take that a step further and say that I’m almost certain they’re NOT doing more of what’s important. There’s a simple reason for that, doing what’s important can’t be done on a handheld device. Handheld devices may be able to *augment* what’s important, but for certain they can’t *do* the important things.

The complexity of modern life is playing itself out in a massive case of overstress. Anxiety is higher than it’s ever been, and many people feel absolutely devoid of substance when they end a day. It’s no way to live, in fact, I believe that at the end of a day, you should be feeling inspired and contented by what you’ve done that day rather than completely exhausted by it.

The mindset/soulset contrast is linked to complexity versus simplicity. A mind is like a ravenous beast. It can consume information and never be full. A mind can plan, and plan, and plan, and still have the desire to keep planning. A mind will never be happy with enough money, enough status, enough ‘success’. However, a soul can be content. A soul can know that more money, more status, or more success isn’t the answer to peace of mind and contentment.

Having a soulset means putting the mind where it ought to be, in service of the whole person, rather than placing the whole person in servitude of the mind, as most people have it. The mind is like a bad neighbourhood. You may need to drive through it to get somewhere, but you don't want to be living there. You want to be living in your soul.

A soul craves simplicity, so simplicity in life is a major component of a soulset.

That's why I always try to bring myself and my clients back to the level of total simplicity. One question above all signifies simplicity to me: What do you want?

When working with busy entrepreneurs in a mentoring capacity, I'm often floored by the number and power of justifications they will employ to keep from just doing what they want. Then again, I'm not *that* surprised, because people are masterful at creating complexity.

“ We are masters at two things. Complicating our lives and justifying why we've done it.”

– Philip McKernan

Recently, I was speaking with an entrepreneur named Bob. He'd been through a lot over the course of the last few years. After building up a large investment portfolio, he was under enormous financial strain when the market turned sour during the financial crisis. More importantly though, Bob wasn't fulfilled by what he was doing. From a fulfillment and financial perspective, he needed a change.

Using his past experiences in business and by listening to his heart, Bob knew he wanted to help, train, and inspire people in some capacity. Ultimately, he landed an excellent position as a consultant for a large company. He would be training, hiring, inspiring, and motivating their sales force.

The first three months went very well for Bob. He was fulfilled by the work, and he wanted to continue with a new contract. That's when we started having a conversation about his next move. Bob knew he needed more money if he was going to extend the contract, however, he was unsure of what the company was willing to offer. I remember asking him the simple question "What do you want?" He responded to that question about 5 different times something along these lines, "Well, they need me, but they have a tight business model..."

Finally, he stopped justifying why they wouldn't give him what he wanted, and finally he said exactly what *he wanted*. He wanted to continue working 3 days per week for the company as he'd been doing. He wanted to remain working in the same two cities that he was currently working in. He wanted more money, and he wanted a longer contract. He did not want more hours, more travel, and more work days per week. Lo and behold, Bob ended up getting all of that. He *knew* deep down what he wanted, and he valued it, but he had to get past the justifications why it couldn't happen. He had to *simplify* it down to what he wanted.

Getting to a place where he knew what he wanted was a hard-fought battle for Bob. He'd been stripping away layers of false desires for a while, and he was getting down to the truth of what he wanted at the core. He was listening to his inner guidance system and developing a soulset for many months and finally, at that moment was able to put words to what it looked like in practical terms. He was moving forward and making decisions from his soul.

The most important piece of what Bob really wanted wasn't actually the raise in pay, it was keeping to a 3 day per week work schedule. He wanted to continue to spend a lot of time with his 4 children, a completely soul-based decision, and he was able to do so by sticking to his 3 day per week work schedule.

I'm not suggesting that by knowing what you want in your soul that you will *always* get what you want, but for sure you'll *never* get what you want unless you know it in your soul. I do however believe that what you truly have in your soul is 100% attainable. I would not say that for what you *want* in your mind.

It may take minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, or years of work to get what you actually want, but as long as you don't know what you want, and as long as you let others, circumstances, or your past stand between you and what you want, you'll be getting further rather than closer from what you want.

The question, "What do you want?" is perhaps the simplest way to strip away the layers of BS and get down to the truth. Knowing what you really want puts you in a powerful place, but it takes the soulset approach to really understand yourself. It's only through knowing yourself that you can expect to know what you want at the core.

Ask yourself what you want. Take every opportunity to reflect on it. Do NOT brush it aside as though it were unimportant, and don't assume you know what you really want without serious introspection on the matter. Too often, what people really want is unrelated to what they *think* they want. They're walking around with the received definition of success stuck in their heads like a broken record, and they *think* they want the money and the status. That's what happens from a mindset approach.

But the soul wants simplicity, and at the core you and everyone else *knows* that more money, more status, and more complexity won't and can't bring you the very things that every human being craves at the core – peace of mind and contentment.

So, create the space, and while you're there, ask yourself what you really want. It's the beginning of living from soulset and stepping out of the insanity of mindset.

“It's so easy to follow your mind, less easy to follow your heart and so hard to even listen to your soul.”

– Philip McKernan

III

The Rewards of Finding Soulset

Fear does not penetrate the soul

There's a wonderful fable about fear, and its effect upon us: a long time ago, a young man was caught stealing a loaf of bread, and as punishment for his crime, he was put into a dark jail cell at night. As the man was put in the musty cell, the guard – after shouting some obscenities – also put a deadly snake in the corner of the cell.

The man immediately froze with fear and pulled himself to the opposite corner of the cell where he could keep an eye on the snake. The guard didn't even lock the door as he was leaving the cell, but it didn't matter because the man was so full of fear he could not move.

He could see the shadow of the snake in the corner of the cell and he knew that the snake could come across the cell and bite him and kill him at any moment. As he stood against the wall in fear he dripped with sweat and got cramps all over his body from not moving. He urinated on himself, but no matter what happened, he would not move because he thought that if he made any move, the snake would bite and kill him.

Finally in the morning, as the sun came up and slowly lit up the cell, the man was still terribly scared. He thought maybe the snake would be

startled by the sun and finally attack him. The sun eventually made its way around and landed on the snake. The man looked at the snake only to realize that it wasn't a snake, it was a piece of rope.

I often tell this story to audiences to illustrate the power of fear. How often in life are we told there is a snake in the room? The news media makes it seem like all the world is an endless stream of problems, when in fact, there is a lot of good news in the world. We're told that the entire financial system is going to collapse, and we'll be left without anything. If we listened to every fear message and tried to reconcile them all with our minds, then we'd completely freeze out of fear, just like the man in the story.

In the context of the mindset versus soulset discussion, the story shows the power of the *mind* to create and propagate fear. The man in the story was in a difficult and trying situation. Anyone would be scared at being in a jail cell, and no doubt, in that state of mind you would be completely open to suggestion. A snake in the darkness of the jail cell is totally believable when you're in that state of mind. Our minds do this to us, and we're tricked into fear by them all the time.

Fear does not penetrate the soul, but the mind is completely capable of creating fear. When you reside completely in your mind, you are then susceptible to external pressures. Hence why we have so many people unquestioningly accepting the standard version of success.

If fear is a problem in your life (and who doesn't experience fear?) then developing a soulset is important to you. Please note: I don't believe it's possible to eradicate fear entirely, but certainly anyone can lessen fear's ability to control our decision making processes by embracing fear and getting to know it (another conversation for a different day).

Passion

The word passion is overused today. Having a passion is almost becoming like having a fancy car or a big house. What I mean is this: if you ask someone what their passion is, they will often have a ready made response to that question, but often it's not true. It's like having a passion is akin to

having a nice car – it's a status symbol.

A passion is a simple thing. It's something you *feel*. It does not have to be a vision to feed all the starving children in the world. It does not have to be something big and fancy at all. A passion is just a kind of feeling, so you DO NOT have to go out and "find" your passion.

There are millions of people out there saying they want to "find their passion" right now. This assumes that a passion is something that can be found outside of oneself. Passion is within, and when you can start to feel what's within rather than constantly looking for what's outside, then (and only then) will passion show up.

Staying totally in your mind will keep the door closed on passion. It is only when you move closer to your soul that the passion will begin to show itself. Seeking a passion outside of oneself is yet another incarnation of the standard version of success. Staying in the mind ensures that passion will never show up or your mind tricks you into believing that the thing you do is your passion.

About a year ago I did a keynote at a large real estate convention, and I asked the audience "who in here is passionate about real estate." About 90% of the hands went up. It was then I reached for a brick and a piece of wood that I had to hand. I lifted them high in the air and said 'wow, I am so inspired by the number of people that are passionate about a piece of wood and concrete'. This may seem harsh, but my thousands of conversations with real estate entrepreneurs has told me that no one is truly passionate about real estate. They are mixing up excitement and passion. When I press people to describe the passion they have for real estate, it inevitably comes down to a passion for something else, and always that passion comes down to one of three core areas:

1. Relationships
2. Spirituality
3. Contribution

All 3 are based upon relationships with yourself or others. So in the end of the day passion is based solely around and within relationships and it's the vehicle you choose to express this that allows you to live with passion.

If you're wondering whether or not you have passion, then you aren't experiencing a level that is available to you. When you have real passion in your life it's like real love, you just know. If you're wondering if you have passion, then you will want to develop a soulset and watch as passion fills every aspect of your life.

Flow

People often think that the state of flow or 'being in the zone' are the exclusive realm of high performance athletes. I work with Olympic athletes and world champion sports people regularly. There isn't anything in their genes that makes them different from you or I. To get where they've gotten, they've had to focus on their sport for a long time, but with regards to reaching a state of flow, they do not have an exclusive right to it.

Those who have spent time in a state of flow will tell you that it's an exquisite place to be. Creating and achieving come naturally, and at no time do you feel under pressure or stress. Being in flow is about being in process and not worrying about the outcome. Flow is something that is available to all of us, but only if we're able to step out of our mind and inhabit our souls.

I see people all the time who are simply exhausted by the mental push required to try and achieve the standard version of success, but one thing you'd never say about someone who is inhabiting their souls and experiencing a state of flow regularly is that they're exhausted. Quite the opposite, they seem reinvigorated all the time by their life and their journey. People in the state of flow often emanate a kind of energy that is infectious to those around them.

If you've ever experienced it, you will know exactly what I'm talking about. And if you've ever seen anyone in the state of flow, you likely noticed their wonderful energy.

If you want to create something in your life, or even if you just want to experience the wonderful feeling of flow – a powerful feeling that gives us and those around us so much – then you must develop a soulset.

Flow, passion, and fear resistance are three wonderful reasons to step out of mindset and into soulset, but there are so many more. Helping people see the value of soulset and helping them open the door to their souls is my work. It's the most rewarding journey that you will ever take, and it's available to all of us, right now. All it takes is a willingness to engage.

The rewards will not come easy, but they will be lasting. Join me on the journey to soulset and come back to your true self.

“ The soul is where inspiration and imagination live,
go on, knock on the door.”

– Philip McKernan

Pay it Forward

We have decided to make this book available at no cost to people,
and if you see value in it all we ask is you share it with people you know.

Thank you.

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About the Author



Passionate - Real - Bold

I spent most of my life pretending to be someone else. Being dyslexic and not knowing why I was different was painful, but years later I found the gift in that pain and it was then I could use it to drive me internally to do what I do now. I was a fake, an actor, and wore many masks to fit in or stand out. My journey over recent years was to take the masks off, stop acting, and as simple as it may sound (and

it's not), get back to who I am at the core.

Never before have I felt so authentic in who I am, what I do and where I want to go. It's this newly found inner peace and passion that is available to all of us that forms the foundation of the work I do today.

Today I work with individuals and couples to cultivate a Soulset to uncover their own authentic path. Then, and only then, do we create a Mindset to support how best to achieve that. In more recent years, major corporations like Shell and Olympic athletes have engaged me to support their teams and leaders to build deeper self awareness so they can authentically lead. This work is at the core of creating Soulset.

It's taken a lot of work on myself which gave me the courage to get here, but I have found what I will do for the rest of my life. I have dedicated the rest of my life to achieve my mission 'To Inspire Millions of People to Believe in Themselves'.

Believe in YOU,

Philip.

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