

COURAGEOUS INVITATIONS



HOW TO BE YOUR BEST AND SUCCEED
THROUGH SELF-DISRUPTION

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Preface

Courageous invitations was borne out of life experiences and the self-mastery journey that we have been on. Through our professional and personal engagements we came to realise that most people have similar reflections on where they are at personally and professionally and often re-count how stuck they feel (on the hamster wheel of life). So putting together our knowledge of business, leadership and self-mastery we developed this book to assist you to navigate self-disruption and to re-imagine, re-calibrate and activate your best self.

Let's be honest: This desire to improve ourselves, to learn, grow and develop is not a modern-day phenomenon. Self-mastery as a concept has been around for thousands of years, and over that time it has been received with both enthusiasm and scepticism.

The earliest ancestor of self-help books is an Ancient Egyptian genre called 'Sebayt'. The word means 'teaching' and certainly that's what these tomes offered: instructional literature on how to live your best life.¹ They also served to pass down essential wisdom from generation to generation, starting with the man who served as vizier (or prime minister) to Pharaoh Djedkare Isesi, the penultimate ruler of the Fifth Dynasty of Egypt.

According to scholars, Ptahhotep – who held the post of vizier from during the late 25th and early 24th centuries BC – wrote *The Maxims of Ptahhotep* (otherwise known as Instruction of Ptahhotep) for his son

Akhethotep, in which he passed down all the wisdom he had gathered over the decades so that² Akhethotep could establish himself as an influential vizier and successor to his father. It all started with a self-help book born out of a father's love.

Some of the gems contained in the *Maxims of Ptahhotep* still ring true today including: "Silence is more profitable unto thee than abundance of speech" and "take advice from the ignorant as well as from the wise, since there is no single person who embodies perfection nor any craftsman who has reached the limits of excellence."³

Another enduring favourite is this classic: "Follow your desire as long as you live and do not perform more than is ordered; do not lessen the time of following desire, for the wasting of time is an abomination to the spirit."⁴

In today's lingo: Follow your passion.

Now we know why Ptahhotep put pen to papyrus all those decades ago. The aim was to help secure his son's future and to accelerate the younger man's personal growth and development. In that respect, self-help books of today continue that tradition seeking to assist readers in solving personal problems and making meaningful resolutions.

The art and science of resolve

A New Year's resolution is the overt act of declaring an intention to change. Change leads to growth. The question is, whether human beings are really as terrible at committing and following through on change as we assume.

In an empirical study published in the April 2002 *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, John Norcross and his collaborators uncovered a few interesting insights about New Year's resolutions. They gathered a total of 282 participants to take part in the study, and randomly assigned these participants into two groups – 159 of whom made New Year's resolutions and

123 who were simply planning to make changes about certain aspects of their lives. Six months into the study and the researchers found that 46% of the individuals (all having similar demographics and behavioural goals) from the ‘clear New Year’s resolutions’ group continued to follow through with their resolve. How about the group that did not? Well, apparently only a dismal 4% of them were still actively keeping their promises.⁵

Similarly, Martin Oscarsson and his colleagues investigated what resolutions people make when they are free to formulate them, whether different resolutions achieve differing success rates, and whether it is possible to increase the likelihood of a resolution’s success by administering information and exercises on effective goal setting. During the one-year follow-up as part of a solid empirical investigation that divided 1,066 research participants into three groups based on the amount of support given to attain their goals, 55% of the participants considered themselves successful in achieving their resolutions. Participants who adopted approach-oriented goals were significantly more successful than those with avoidance-oriented goals (58.9% vs 47.1%).

Approach orientation kicks in when individuals are positively motivated to look good and receive favourable feedback from others. Avoidance oriented goals occur when individuals are negatively motivated to try to avoid failures and looking incompetent in the eyes of others. The important takeaway from this study is that New Year’s resolutions can have lasting effects and that self-motivation and a desire to change have a greater role to play than we realise.

Another interesting study found that individuals who set goals, irrespective of whether these were ultimately fully attained or not, demonstrated signs of increased psychological well-being when the researchers interviewed them after three years.⁶ Though we do not encourage you to set goals without making the effort to attain them, it is important to acknowledge the possible unexpected benefits of goal-setting and how this allows us to challenge our intentions.

The power of goal-setting

Bearing this in mind, let's now take a look at the process of goal-setting.

Clinical psychologist and professor Dr Gail Matthews conducted a seminal study into goals and goal achievement in the workplace. Her intention was to explore how the attainment of goals at work influenced how these goals were formalised by the individuals. Were they, for instance, written down? Or was a commitment made to achieving goal-directed actions? Was a level of accountability built in to ensure commitment to these actions? The participants were broken down into five groups and each was asked to identify their goals.⁷

Each group was then asked to rate their goals according to the following factors: importance, difficulty, having the requisite skills and resources to achieve the goal, as well as commitment and motivation. They were also asked to indicate if this was a goal they'd tried to achieve previously and how successful they'd been at that attempt.

Those in group one were asked to think about the goals they hoped to achieve in the next four weeks. Then they had to rate the goal based on the factors outlined above.

Participants in groups two to five were asked to write down their goals, using an online survey format, and then rate their goals on the same factors. Groups three, four and five were also given an additional dimension:

- Group three was also asked to formulate action commitments, or a plan of action.
- Group four was asked to formulate action commitments and then to send their goals and associated action commitments to a supportive friend.
- Group five was asked to formulate action commitments and send their goals, action commitments and weekly progress reports to a supportive friend. Participants in this group were

also sent weekly reminders to email their friend a quick progress report.

So, what happened?

Matthews and her collaborators determined the following success rate per each group:

- Group 1 = 42.8%
- Group 2 = 60.8%
- Group 3 = 50.8%
- Group 4 = 64.1%
- Group 5 = 76.0%.

These outcomes confirm that in order to achieve a desired result, the highest chance of success is accompanied by a commitment to action, by being accountable to peers and through delivering regular updates about the goals and the progress being made to achieve them.

How does this book provide a bridge between goal and action?

It is our intention to equip you with the inspirations and information necessary to shift your thinking about your own life, the vision you have for your best self, and the boldness you may need to attain your goals.

As we embark on this journey, we will ask you to commit to your action plan, to share your accountability with peers, to regularly benchmark your goals and update them. In doing so we hope that you will become courageous.

We recognise that the process of self-discovery and change is both fluid and, at times, challenging.

It is our fervent hope that each chapter of this book will trigger some new thinking, affirm some of your existing views, and evoke the emotions

needed to propel you forward in your journey of self-disruption (which includes significant amounts of self-mastery and change).

By the end of this book, we hope that you will have made some productive cognitive-behavioural shifts. These shifts will help you to see the world differently and will enable you to interpret your circumstances more innovatively. With these changes, we are confident that new opportunities to accelerate your personal growth will emerge.

Once you've finished this book, and hopefully made the transformation - however big or small - we invite you to share your joy with others and share your story with us to demonstrate the power of being true to your goals.

We do not see this book as a static one-way conversation, but rather as the first step in forging a meaningful friendship with you. We, therefore, hope you will take the time to write to us and share your insights, lessons, or stories - particularly as they relate to this transformational journey. As you discuss your journey with your friends and peers, ask them to bear witness to your fantastic and significant progress that you have made.

This book cordially invites you to disrupt yourself and, above all, to help others to disrupt themselves.

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Chapter 1

Finding Your Audacious Purpose? An Alternative Reality

Keeping it together is Sara Blakely's business. She is, after all, the founder of the Spanx empire - the well-known American brand of slimming undergarments, body shapers and leggings which have been endorsed, praised or publicly used by big-name celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey, Katy Perry, Gwyneth Paltrow, Mindy Kaling, Tina Fey, Kate Winslet and Brooke Shields. Men wear them too, or so we've been told.

Today, Spanx is a multibillion-dollar enterprise and part of a growing global shapewear industry. But Blakely's story wasn't always so audacious or filled with successes.

Born in Florida in the United States on February 27 1971, Blakely had an eye for a business opportunity from an early age. As a youngster she used to set up a haunted house come Halloween and charge people in her neighbourhood for admission. But a career in entrepreneurship was never really her goal. Blakely's initial dream was to become a trial lawyer, like her father. Although she did reasonably well at school, and graduated from Florida State University with a major in legal communications, Blakely scored poorly on the Law School Admission Test after several attempts.

Despite not being able to achieve her initial dream, Blakely still

regarded her college days as an invaluable phase of her life. “I would say college is very important,” she said during a conference in 2015. “What I got the most out of in college was the experiences, and the people I met. It’s this block in your life when you can learn many subjects and expose yourself to as much as you can. Our life experiences make us more interesting than a resumé or a piece of paper.”⁸ It was only later in her life, when she started her own business, that the value of this time, personal growth and know-how would become clearer to her.

What she seemed to have in large doses, even during her first years in college, was *chutzpah*; that wonderfully evocative word described by Leo Rosten in *The Joys of Yiddish* as ‘gall, brazen nerve, effrontery, incredible guts’.⁹ Here’s an example. Back in the winter of 1989, Blakely was at a shopping mall in Florida when she came across an interesting ring in a jewellery store – a ruby-like droplet hung from a delicate gold bow attached to the ring. It cost US\$120. As a student, she certainly didn’t have that sort of money so she asked for a discount. The salesman quickly rejected her request, declaring that they never negotiated prices. Then, presumably taking in the attractive and effervescent young woman before him, added in hushed tones something along the lines of, “Only if you came in here in nothing but a bikini would I discount the price.” Blakely was not intimidated nor would she be silenced. Instead, she responded to the challenge by querying the value of the discount. Without deliberating much, the salesperson laughed and said ‘half off’. I’ll be back, was Blakely’s retort.

Blakely tells the story herself on her Instagram feed, along with photographic evidence of her wearing a pink bikini and posing with the salesman¹⁰. She recounts how the next day – a balmy 27 degrees below-zero – she headed back to the store dressed in her bikini, a long black coat, a scarf, a hat and jelly shoes. In the mall, Blakely took off her winter wear and walked into the jewellery store wearing nothing but a bikini. As soon as he laid eyes on her, the colour drained out of the salesman’s face. “I’m here for my discount,” she announced. After some deliberation

with his manager, Blakely walked out of the store with her ring – having secured a 50% discount.

Sure, it was a bit of fun and an opportunity to thumb her nose to the arrogance and sexism of the salesman, but this experience stayed with Blakely. It reinforced how overcoming challenges energized her. Far more valuable than the US\$60 discount, the personal affirmation she generated from that courageous stunt followed her throughout her life. That courage and personal growth would come in handy when she started Spanx. As Blakely reminisced on her Instagram page, “I got the ring for \$60. I’m betting the guy never blew off or dismissed another young female customer again. And yup, I still have the ring. Hand is just older now, but I wear it from time to time to remind myself of the courage it took me as a freshman in a new college town to stand up for myself. It was terrifying and my heart was pounding, by the time I bought the ring a crowd had gathered outside the store confused and curious. My friends were in shock that I actually did it, but in the end we laughed uncontrollably, piled back in the car, and headed back to our dorm.”

After college, Blakely worked for the Walt Disney World Resort for three months, then she sold fax machines door-to-door for seven years by day, occasionally performing stand-up comedy at night, before transitioning into running Spanx on a full-time basis.¹¹ The idea for the innovation came to her almost accidentally, when she was dressing for a party and needed an undergarment to go under some cream-coloured pants. She chopped the feet off some control top pantyhose and, Voilà. She was 26.

Even before that lightbulb moment, Blakely had taken the time to visualise her success and the lifestyle she ultimately wanted to achieve. She wrote down her snapshot of success, which you can listen to in a YouTube videoclip posted by Primeau TV in 2013.¹² Instead of focusing on her purpose, Blakely visualised herself becoming self-employed and she imagined herself inventing a product that could be sold to the masses. She also envisaged profiting from being the owner of a business that would continue to thrive, even when she was no longer involved.

It's only in recent years that Blakely has begun to discuss her purpose more publicly.¹³ In the early years of her entrepreneurial pursuit, as she was creating a business and building a brand, she would most often talk about her goals, share stories about how she created values for her business through non-traditional approaches, discuss how she got her products into luxury department chain Neiman Marcus, and how she was energised by inventing and testing her products. When you listen to her speak or read her articles, you get a profound sense of her energy, her boldness and the joy she experiences by approaching life in her distinctive and enthusiastic way.

It would be fair to say that the purpose that drove Blakey during certain stages of her life is quite different to the purpose she advocates today. One can further argue that she stumbled on an opportunity to disrupt herself and be more than just a door-to-door salesperson and sales trainer at the office-supply company. In her celebratory speech in October 2021, after Blackstone valued the shapewear maker at \$1.2 billion and agreed to purchase a major stake in Spanx, Blakey revealed the goal she wrote down on the whiteboard in the early days of Spanx. As she explained to her employees, Blakey simply wanted her company to reach a \$20 million valuation. Her exact words were, "I said this company will one day be worth \$20 million and everybody laughed at me, and you know, I said 'I really believed that.' So to stand here today and think about what we've been able to create, and what we've been able to do while being authentic, and kind, and delivering amazing products to women."

Clearly what motivated Blakey to keep going during the initial phase of Spanx was not the fulfilment of an audacious purpose; the kind that influencers so frequently talk about. Blakey had established a clear and significant personal goal and then she pursued it relentlessly. It is crystal clear that Blakey approaches her personal goal with zest.¹⁴

Our collective obsession with audacious purpose

Around the world, and aided by the reach of social media, we are seeing increased interest (bordering on obsession in some quarters) in finding one's purpose. Log into any social platform and you'll find countless influencers advocating their views on the necessity of finding one's purpose - and, in parallel, one's passion. Naturally, these power brokers offer a wide range of practical tips, many of which are profound and rich in substance. For those individuals who are lucky enough to have found their purpose, the messages from these influencers provides a sense of comfort. For those who are still seeking their purpose, these tips and messages motivate them to try harder and approach the voyage with a smarter outlook. The importance of these influencers lies in their ability to position themselves as experts, which they do skilfully by delivering exciting and enticing speeches. Yet, the depth of these messages sometimes don't stand up to scrutiny. They often don't provide all the answers that the audience is searching for and who continue to feel deeply frustrated because they haven't yet found an audacious purpose or those who feel that their old purpose no longer serves them.

This current flurry around the importance of passion and purpose has the potential to be a double-edged sword. We certainly believe that it is worthwhile putting in the effort to seek out your purpose and more importantly your audacious purpose, if you wish to do so. If you stumble upon the answers and solve these existential puzzles, we wholeheartedly cheer for you. If you are looking at finding your purpose, try to challenge yourself to explore various audacious possibilities instead.

But equally, if you have not yet found or unsure of your true audacious purpose, we still cheer wholeheartedly for you - maybe a little bit louder this time. It could mean that you are at the pre-activation phase of your self-disruption journey. At least, we suspect that could be one of the reasons why you picked up this book in the first place.

If you have not found your audacious purpose, or if you are uncertain

about what happiness actually means to you, then let us assure you – resoundingly – that you are doing PERFECTLY well. Everything in its own time, as the folk band Indigo Girls once put it.¹⁵

Without dampening the merits attached to finding your purpose, it is important to note that we are living through a moment in time which borders on obsession with this illusive concept. If you do a Google search on the entry of these exact words, ‘find your purpose’, you will find close to 2.1 billion hits. Not millions. But billions.

The mainstream media is, not surprisingly, tapping into this conversation and driving this trend. Instead of following the crowd, our suggestion is to step away from the hype and ask if this makes sense to your individual context. Why not ponder the possibility that an alternative approach might exist, something that is equally – possibly more - powerful than the view we are currently being bombarded with?

In short, our recommendation is simple. Do not focus so heavily on finding your purpose. Keep the desire to find your purpose in your back pocket, just like Sara Blakely did.

Of course, this recommendation doesn’t stop us from briefly wading into the ‘purpose’ debate by taking a longer look at what defines this sense of resolve and why the world is turning motivation into a veritable creed.

Purpose. Useful, but why the buzz?

Even if you’ve never read Greek philosophy you’ll have heard of Aristotle (384-322 BC), one of the most admired scientists and thinkers in history. Aristotle used the term ‘telos’ to describe ‘purpose’. Etymologically speaking ‘telos’ means ‘the end, limit, goal, fulfilment, completion’, it refers to the full potential or inherent purpose of a person, object or thing. So it’s intrinsically part of who we are and why we exist. Aristotle even held that natural phenomena could occur for the sake of something, for a purpose. Consider, for a moment, a horse. You can

describe a horse by the number of hands it measures from the ground to the top of its withers. Or you can add the colour and shininess of its coat, shape of its gaskin and other physical characteristics into your descriptions. For Aristotle, a horse is designated by nature to fulfil specific purposes: pulling a carriage, transporting passengers or goods, helping a soldier in battle, or ploughing a field. That is a horse's telos. Similarly, every human being has a telos. Based on this view, the argument is that we are at our happiest when we can uncover the purpose for which we were made, and fulfil that telos.

However, not everyone agreed with Aristotle's take on the telos concept. Epicurus of Samos (341-270 BC) is one.

For Epicurus, who flourished not long after Aristotle's death, pleasure is the telos. He believed that the telos of a human being lies in 'katastematic pleasure' – a state of being while performing an activity. This can take the form of quiet contentment or outright ecstasy, but it is pleasure nonetheless. Epicurus, who founded a school of philosophy that convened at his home and garden in Athens called 'the Garden', acknowledged that katastematic pleasure often followed kinetic pleasure – such as the satisfied pleasure after finishing a lavish meal. So, for Epicurus, the purpose of life was to seek out the pleasure which leads to happiness.¹⁶

A side step away from this more hedonistic view of purpose, the likes of Confucius (551-479 B), Mencius (372-289 BC), Laozi (around 600 BC) and other classical Chinese philosophers¹⁷ espoused an eminently pragmatic philosophy, based on asking deceptively small questions such as: How are you living your daily life? They focused on the potential to achieve great change if you begin with the mundane and doable, if you stick to getting the fundamentals right.

Similarly, ancient African philosophers focused more on working towards the collective good, as is underscored by the philosophy of *Ubuntu* or working together to achieve common goals. This approach to collective humanity is quite a stark contrast from our modern-day, almost desperate need to define our individual purpose.¹⁸

So just what ignited this fire within us all to find our reason for being? We're not sure we have the exact answer. But if you take a quick glance through countless videoclips on 'finding purpose' on YouTube, it is very likely that you will come across a TED talk from Simon Sinek, an author and inspirational speaker, who spoke eloquently about how leaders can use his 'golden circle' concept to inspire action and create profitability.¹⁹ The TED talk, entitled *How great leaders inspire action*, is well worth listening to as you attempt to get a handle on what purpose means and how some organisations and leaders are able to inspire, while others can't. Sinek tells us that it comes down to the why. The why requires us to interrogate "the purpose, the cause, the belief" which drives people and businesses.

Apple's place in the golden circle

Sinek is arguably one of the great influencers of our time. After his insightful TED Talk, he went on to publish a book called *Start With Why*²⁰ which quickly became a bestseller. Make no mistake, Sinek is a smart guy, but his insights don't just come from spending a substantial amount of time conducting research, they lie in his experience. It was working at leading advertising agencies Ogilvy & Mather and Euro RSCG that prepared him for his meteoric rise to fame. Some thought leaders have challenged the legitimacy of his ideas and stated that his actual content is flimsy, Sinek is adept at leveraging advertising principles to structure the tactics that help him to convey key messages and sell these ideas in the form of books, talks, and other engagements are remarkably effective²¹. He is definitely a guy whom aspirant influencers should learn from and, as authors and thinkers ourselves, we certainly take great pleasure in learning from him. But that doesn't mean we agree with everything he says.

In his numerous public engagements, Sinek asserts that finding one's

purpose is the only path to success. We would like to challenge his view on this matter.

In his TED Talk Sinek attempts to attribute credibility to his golden circle model by using technology giant Apple as an example, stressing that Apple's success lies in it being purpose-led. He substantiates this point by suggesting this is the 'inner dialogue' in which Apple conducts its business. Donning his ad man hat he positions Apple's pitch as follows, "Everything we do, we believe in challenging the status quo. We believe in thinking differently. The way we challenge the status quo is by making our products beautifully designed, simple to use and user friendly. We just happen to make great computers. Want to buy one?"

Technically, there is nothing wrong with this pitch (even though some people have suggested that the first generation of Apple products weren't actually that great). Nevertheless, this self-centred version of inner organisational dialogue is not entirely correct when you start to unpack the building blocks which contributed to Apple's success.

We are not saying that having an organisational purpose is not a strategic imperative. In fact, it is highly recommended. In 2018 BlackRock Chairman and CEO Larry Fink wrote in his annual letter to CEOs that a company should have a purpose beyond profit. If it does not, it risks being ousted from BlackRock's investment portfolio. Why? Because organisational purpose is linked to long-term performance.²²

Back to Apple. Today, we are most definitely talking about a company that is remarkable for being purpose driven. The benefits of this organisational purpose are evident in the fact that the company's market cap surpasses US\$1 trillion – a clear indication of delivering on the promise of long-term performance.

But today's Apple is a different company to that just a few decades ago.

Exciting, creative and quirky. That was the Apple computer company founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne (yes, who? He dealt with the paperwork and sold his 10% share back to the

two Steves 12 days after they co-founded Apple for US\$800. He also signed away any right to future claims).

In a 2016 interview with BBC News, Wayne described his most famous co-founder as follows, “Jobs had this focus. Once he got an idea in his head, that was it. And you never wanted to be between him and where he wanted to go, or you’d wind up with footprints on your forehead.”²³

Jobs made Apple what it was, said Wayne, while Wozniak was the engineering expert. The problem was that neither man had experience running a company so, despite Jobs’ aspirations to be CEO, John Sculley was appointed to the role in 1983. But it wasn’t all smooth sailing. In 1985 Jobs resigned – although he consistently claimed he was fired – after being replaced as head of the Macintosh (Mac) division. This followed the release of ‘Lisa’, the first computer with a graphical user interface, which was a sales flop and the promising but less-than-stellar start for Mac as a competitor to rival IBM’s PC stranglehold²⁴. Yes, Jobs would return to the company in 1997 and would rekindle the Apple spark which evaporated when he left. He would, during those intervening years, create a new computer company called NeXT. NeXT didn’t really shoot the lights out, but its operating system became the foundation for the Mac OS X.²⁵

Apple decided to acquire NeXT for US\$429 million in early 1997 and it was this move that brought back Jobs to the company, and sparked the start of a glorious era for Apple. In his first full year back at the company, the company turned a US\$309 million profit after, in Jobs’ words, being “90 days from being insolvent” on his return.²⁶

Jobs’ legacy looms large over the organisation as does his remarkable return, but what actually happened to Apple between 1985 and 1997?

Not long after Jobs’ departure, Apple began to lose focus. They released the Newton MessagePad personal assistant, a handwriting recognition device, which didn’t click with the market. Then they tried a new kind of processor called PowerPC, which cost Apple dearly and (by splitting the design focus) kept Mac prices sky high at a time when PCs were

gaining popularity and coming down in cost. It was this decision which ultimately cost Sculley his job in 1993, as revenue tumbled by 30%.²⁷

Given this synopsis, it is hard to say what exactly Apple's purpose was at the time. The closest incident that fits our discussion is probably the speech Jobs gave in response to an angry audience member during a rare Q&A session at the 1997 Worldwide Developers Conferences. Technology writer Austin Carr revisited the moment in an article for *FastCompany*, when he recorded Jobs' reaction as being, "We've tried to come up with a strategy and vision for Apple - it started with: 'What incredible benefits can we give the customer?' [And did] not start with: 'Let's sit down with the engineers, and figure out what awesome technology we have and then figure out how to market that'."²⁸

What people don't generally focus on is this part of Jobs' speech, which started with the admission that "Apple suffered for several years from lousy engineering management." Jobs continued, "There were people that were going off in 18 different directions... What happened was that you looked at the farm that's been created with all these different animals going in all different directions, and it doesn't add up—the total is less than the sum of the parts. We had to decide: What are the fundamental directions we are going in? What makes sense and what doesn't? And there were a bunch of things that didn't."

Apple's turnaround was, in part, the result of great leadership which was meticulously aligned to everything the company tackled.

In a recent piece for Harvard Business Review, Joel M Podolny and Morten T Hansen, the Dean and faculty member of Apple University respectively, described how quickly Jobs reorganised things after his return to the company in 1997.²⁹ Apple had a conventional structure for a company of its size. General managers ran products, or 'business units', each with their own bottom lines. And, like in many large companies, those general managers often worked against each other, leading Apple to the brink of bankruptcy. "Believing that conventional management had stifled innovation, Jobs, in his first year returning as CEO, laid off

the general managers of all the business units (in a single day), put the entire company under one P&L, and combined the disparate functional departments of the business units into one functional organization,” wrote Podolny and Hansen.

Although some people have argued that this was just a powerplay by Jobs, and one designed to ensure that he would not be ousted again, the real Jobs’ magic was in HOW he did things.

It is debatable if Apple actually talked through its purpose during Jobs’ iconic big return that remarkably turned the company around. What is clear is that Jobs had a few clear strategic objectives. Apart from trimming operating costs, which included chopping back Apple’s philanthropy initiatives, the main objectives in Jobs’ mind were to turn the company back to profitability and make Apple a dominant force in the industry. Instead of focusing on shareholder needs (within reasons), Jobs focused strongly on increasing product-market fit by satisfying customers through innovation and attention to detail. Jobs’ ‘purpose’ of “putting a dent in the universe”³⁰ had never left his mind, even during Apple’s most challenging time.

Steve Jobs, as his biographer Walter Isaacson conveys so well, was a complex man, an exhausting man, a perfectionist. As a friend told Isaacson, “He had the uncanny capacity to know exactly what your weak point is, know what will make you feel small, to make you cringe.”³¹ He was a bully, but a brilliant bully. A problem solver who put his customers and their experiences first. This tough, demanding and uncompromising attitude paid off, as did his philosophy of putting customers at the centre of the business – a far cry from the somewhat self-absorbed message of ‘we do this, and we do that’ advocated by Sinek.

Let’s be realistic for a moment, Apple did not become today’s colossus enterprise by obsessing over their why. They succeeded because they focused on their customers’ whys. They did this by interrogating what motivated their customers to do business with them. The iconic Harvard professor in innovation, the late Clayton Christensen, called this the

‘job-to-be-done’ (and no, this theory has nothing to do with Steve Jobs). Jobs-to-be-done is an approach for developing offerings based on understanding all aspects of a customer’s rudimentary and ultimate goals, which Christensen termed as ‘jobs’. We all have many ‘jobs’ in our lives which we need to tackle, some are small (renewing a car licence perhaps) and some are big (finding a meaningful career), others are unplanned (dealing with a family crisis) and others are predictable (getting your kids to school on time). Depending on the nature of the ‘job’, customers seek help by ‘hiring’ a company to help them complete the tasks at hand.³²

In other words: If you understand the ‘jobs’ of your customers, you can tailor your products and services to meet their needs. Jobs understood this, but it was not the only factor that enabled him to turn Apple around. Apart from improving the company’s product line, Jobs made a concerted effort to build up customer sentiment towards his company. He wanted to connect with the emotions of his customers, and not just focus on the products. Even though this approach is a norm of how businesses operate today, it was uncommon in the late 1990s.

Instead of going on and on about the technical specifications of the Apple product line, Jobs launched the iconic ‘Think Different’ campaign. The objective was simple: He wanted his products to resonate deeply with the identities of a sub-set of customers – the creatives, misfits, rebels, dreamers and game-changers – for whom owning a Mac said something about the off-the-wall people they aspired to be.

As a result, many customers did not buy an Apple simply because of the products on offer. They happily, proudly and enthusiastically purchased the products because they felt that their identities had been recognised. Jobs did not, therefore, focus on the ‘why’ of Apple. He began by focusing on a few key strategic objectives which included forging connections with customers by understanding their ‘why’. He did not put Apple’s ‘why’ at the centre. Instead, he put the ‘whys’ of specific segments of customers at the heart of Apple’s approach, and the organisation innovated around this collection of needs.

Some may suggest that we are splitting hairs or using semantics to argue against Sinek's view. However, even though the differences between our take and Sinek's explanation appear to be small, the underlying ethos is profoundly different. Apple's great comeback should be attributed to how the company and its dynamic leader innovated the 'hows', which were anchored in addressing their customers' 'whys'. Sinek retrofitted Apple's success to fit his golden circle, giving particular emphasis to the inner component of the model – the why circle. The truth doesn't fit this model as easily or as simply as the golden circle implies. After all, evolution seldom follows a nice, neat pattern.

To truly understand the shift in Apple's focus we must remember that, until the 1990s, marketing concerned itself with consumer transactions. These were transactional in nature, focused on company profitability and the monetary value of customer relationships. But, over time, this changed and became more about relationship marketing, which highlighted the importance of building close, long-term ties with customers.³³ Almost all major enterprises at the time focused on giving their customers the best products to increase the sales – and their objectives (or, if you wish, their 'purpose') were not too different from that of Apple. The difference was that many of these companies did not focus on creating transformational relationships. They did not create hooks to connect to their customers' aspirations, which in turn build cult-like followers.

What personal lessons can we draw from this? Often your purpose does not lead to any gratifying outcome until you understand the needs of those you wish to contribute to and until you find meaningful ways in which they can contribute to you in turn. Instead of focusing on your purpose, you should rather focus on HOW to create reciprocal contributions; namely approaches which are mutually gratifying for both you and your stakeholders. Steve Jobs contributed to his customers' by satisfying their 'jobs-to-be-done', his customers contributed back to Apple with impressive sales figures which lead to remarkable profitability. Jobs' diversifying strategies – the launch of the iPod in 2001, iPhone in 2007

and iPad in 2010 – complemented this symbiotic relationship by taking an ecosystem view of doing business by creating amazing experiences for the company’s customers. This was not really based on Apple’s purpose, or Jobs’ purpose – unless you argue that his purpose was to understand and satisfy his customers’ purpose. Ultimately, Jobs cultivated and grew a cult-like customer base not only because of Apple’s products and services, but because of their branding and marketing efforts.

Sinek argues that, “A purpose-driven organisation is a simple idea. It’s an organisation of people who show up for the same reason, who work together to achieve something and will sacrifice so that the others may make it. Those are the great organisations, those are the organisations and the people that change the world.”³⁴ Without blowing our own trumpets, the authors of this book are well-travelled global citizens. We have visited numerous stores around the world and have taken the time to ask frontline salespeople what they think Apple’s purpose is. Not surprisingly, the opinions they gave varied from serving customers better, to being innovative, being cooler and making money. Some even suggested (perhaps a bit tongue in cheek) that Apple’s purpose is to continue to outcompete other inferior products and achieve world dominance.

But let’s not be too flippant. Having established a purpose can certainly help an organisation to increase its competitiveness. That is, if this purpose is crafted superbly, fits well with the lifecycle of the organisation, and can be executed effectively. Too often there is a disconnect between the top echelons and the staff at the frontline. But the magic still comes from the HOW.

An organisational purpose also changes as it evolves. In its early days, with a hyper-energetic, big-dreaming, 20-something Jobs as its co-founder, Apple worked according to the principle that “there is something very different that happens with one person, one computer. What we’re trying to do is remove the barrier of having to learn to use a computer.” Jobs aimed to ‘domesticate’ computers into the realm of day-to-day household appliances, like a dishwasher or microwave.³⁵

Similarly, as an individual, uncovering your purpose can definitely add value to your life. However, is it always essential to have a purpose, especially a big hairy audacious one? No. It is perfectly alright, from time to time, not to have a clearly defined purpose. You will evolve towards an appropriate purpose as long as you know what value you are trying to create and have taken the time to strategically set goals to achieve this in an innovative manner.

The Wright brothers vs Langley

In the same TED talk, Simon Sinek also implied that the reason the Wright brothers outcompeted their rival, Samuel Pierpont Langley, during the race to invent the first man-controlled flight was due to the notion of ‘begin with why’. In truth, many other influencers have attributed the edge which Orville and Wilbur brought to this race to self-belief and the ability to regard failure as a learning opportunity. However, these retrospective (and somewhat hero-worshipping) explanations are not entirely correct. We all love a good story, especially one where the underdogs win a competition (think of Kurt Russell in the 2004 real-life inspired ice hockey film *Miracle*³⁶) or where an individual accomplishes a magnificent comeback which allows them to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat (Sylvester Stallone’s *Rocky* film series springs to mind here³⁷).

In many stories, including Sinek’s take on the rivalry, Langley was villainised. Yet we don’t believe this to be a fair and accurate portrait of the man. Langley also did not give up as easily as many influencers have suggested. He launched multiple versions of the Langley Aerodrome between 1892 to 1903. In 1903, the year the Wright brothers made the first man-controlled, sustained flight of a powered, heavier-than-air aircraft with the Wright Flyer on 17 December in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina,³⁸ Langley twice attempted to launch his Aerodrome by catapulting it from the roof of a houseboat on the Potomac River. Both

attempts failed and the aircraft was destroyed after plunging into the Potomac. Langley, who died just three years after the Wright brothers conquered flight, was criticized extensively in the press for his efforts and lambasted by Congress for wasting money. He gave up, as Sinek says, after 1903.³⁹

The majority of commentators on this historical rivalry fail to highlight three important points. Firstly, in 1896, Langley successfully flew an unmanned steam-powered fixed-wing model aircraft – which marked a significant advancement in the chronology of aeronautical technology. The *Smithsonian Magazine*, writing about a man who once held the role of secretary of that august institution, described the achievement thus, “On two fine days, one in May and one in November, the little planes, each about 16 feet long, soared away from their launching pad, a house-boat on the Potomac River. Small steam engines whiffing happily, they held a steady course on an even keel, one covering 3,300 feet, the other reaching 4,200 feet and a speed of 30 miles an hour.”⁴⁰ What is funny is that this impressive achievement is hardly mentioned in the history books. Many other latecomers to the aeronautic innovation race built on Langley’s numerous accomplishments.

Now let’s take a closer look at Wilbur and Orville, who were born on 16 April 1867 and 19 August 1871 respectively. They were more than 30 years younger than Langley, who was born on 22 August 1834. In terms of energy levels, Langley was no match for the brothers. At the senior age of 69, facing mounting pressure from funders and policy-makers due to his failed attempts, Langley reluctantly stepped aside from the race. Less than three years later he died, on 27 February 1906. He was 71.

Let’s put this into context. On 17 December 1903, when 36-year-old Wilbur and 32-year-old Orville succeeded in flying the first manned motor-operated aeroplane, Langley was a frail old man. Yet, none of the influencers and commentators have ever asked how this race might have turned out if these competitors were similar in age.

Thirdly, irrespective of the inspiring traits of the brothers, it is an

innovation which the brothers stumbled upon that made such a difference. Langley was impressed by the light yet powerful engine built by Stephen Marius Balzer, a watchmaker at luxury jewellery retailer Tiffany's. Langley bet on Balzer to deliver the world's first 'aero engine' which, he hoped, would be light and powerful enough to power a manned aeroplane. However, Balzer just couldn't get the idea to work. Eventually Langley enlisted his assistant, Charles Matthews Manly, to deal with the project and when it didn't work Langley and Manly went in search of other alternatives and even travelled to Europe to seek out other options. By then Langley had already spent most of the US\$50 000 grant he had received from Congress, which explains why the policy-makers were so disappointed when the Wright brothers pipped him to the post.

After a series of pivots and improvements, Langley seemed to be on the right track with a rebuilt engine, which was ready by March 1903. In a letter to Langley, Manly expressed his confidence on the performance of the engine and further stated that, "I am prepared to risk myself with it in actual flight."⁴¹ And risk, he did.

On 7 October 1903 Manly climbed on their design and ran the engine full speed for the launch. The frame did not hold up under the windy conditions of the day and Manly plunged into the river. They went back to the drawing board on the design and on 8 December 1903 they tried again. Again Manly ended up in the icy river, almost drowning in the process. Nine days later the Wright brothers cracked it.

In the early stages of the race to fly, Langley took a chance on building a power engine. This would prove to be the wrong decision, and was compounded by the fact that his apparatus was disturbed by winds and the self-created mass of air swirling around the wings that reduced stability. But you can't accuse the man of not trying. Between 1887 and 1891, Langley's staff constructed more than 100 models. It should be noted that the radial engine, which would eventually power Charles Lindbergh's epic non-stop solo flight to Paris in 1927 as well as many

bombers and fighter planes during the Second World War, was based on the engine improvements made by Langley and Manly.

What is important to recognise is that Langley lost the race to the Wright brothers predominantly because he took a different innovation approach. This is a pity, but it is not a shame. Let's think differently about it (pun totally intended) by circling back to the Apple example. Steve Jobs also produced many failed products. Yet few influencers dwell on his disastrous ventures.

Conversely, the Wright brothers focused on control. They designed a flyer with drooping wings, which would be less disrupted by cross winds, and they designed a system which put control in the hands of the pilot by building in the ability to roll the wings, pitch the nose up or down and yaw (or oscillate) the nose of the plane from side to side. These creative differences really set the two teams apart. The path the Wright brothers took, compared to Langley, made all the difference. By uncovering the right innovation, Orville and Wilbur passed into history as Langley passed away, demoralised despite having made significant contributions to the field of aeronautics and astronomy. In 1917 Langley's contributions were posthumously acknowledged when Langley Air Force Base in Virginia was named after him. The base would later become NASA's flight test centre.⁴²

Recounting Langley's achievements in no way downplays the Wright brothers' impressive traits and their tireless work, innovation and world-changing success, notably made without any formal training in the subject. As the underdogs and the latecomers to this aeronautics game, their win was turned into an inspirational story, while Langley was unfairly portrayed as the money changing, hare-brained villain. In truth, Samuel Pierpont Langley was a successful inventor and a serious scholar with a background in mathematics, architecture and astronomy. He was highly scientific in his approach and extremely demanding of his staff, not unlike Steve Jobs. But ultimately, he lost the race because of the 'how' aspects of his innovation approach.

We would argue that Langley's failure had nothing to do with any lack of audacious 'purpose'.

Instead, it seems that influencers are happy to put a captivating spin on a classic underdog story in order to suit their own purposes and arguments. We all love a good story, and many of us wish to tell a captivating yarn through our own journeys, but in real-life it is the 'how' that makes the real difference.

Success springs from joy and intentionality

From Apple, a company that makes beautiful products, to another company that manufactures the most sought-after supercars, the prancing horse logo is definitely a symbol of luxury, edginess and a class-above the rest. It is hard to stop your heart from skipping a beat or two when you drive a Ferrari, ANY Ferrari.

On 5 October 1919, a young Italian car mechanic and engineer named Enzo Ferrari took part in his first car race, a hill climb in Parma, Italy. He finished fourth. Ten years after his first race, Enzo started his Scuderia (which means stable in Italian) Ferrari. It was 1929 and Enzo's initial intention was to produce road cars. He was not driven (at least at that stage) to create the greatest sports car in the world – a moniker that would last centuries. Instead, Enzo chose to make road cars simply because he realised that manufacturing road cars was an expedient way to finance his increasingly costly racing activities.

In the beginning, Scuderia Ferrari didn't even design its own cars. It was a racing team that had no problem using the models produced by other automakers, most notably Alfa Romeo, which outsourced its racing department to Enzo Ferrari in 1933. When, in 1938, Alfa Romeo brought racing under its banner again, creating the Milan-based Alfa Corse, they snatched up Enzo as the manager of their new racing

department. Scuderia Ferrari disbanded.⁴³ But, as you know, that's not the whole story.

A year later, in 1939, Enzo left Alfa Romeo. There was, however, a catch to moving forward with the Ferrari dream: Alfa Romeo stipulated that he could not use the Ferrari name in the world of racing or on racing cars for at least four years. Undaunted, within days Enzo had founded Auto Avio Costruzioni, a company that produced machine tools and aircraft parts. Despite the trade ban, Enzo built his first Ferrari in 1940 but the real rollout would be deferred by the Second World War. It was only after World War II in 1947 that the first-ever Ferrari to carry the prancing horse was produced. It was the birth of an icon.

Enzo's empire was not built out of a larger-than-life purpose (as the influencers out there believe it should be). It took years from the time that Enzo was captivated by his first race at the age of 10 to the launch of the first Ferrari, 39 years in fact. From then on, doing things that involved cars and especially race cars, fuelled Enzo's passion and the zestfulness that comes with it. He made ends meet by working as a sports journalist and a racing driver. Not surprisingly for an Italian, he dreamt of becoming an opera singer and knew and revered the great Luciano Pavarotti.⁴⁴ His intentionality, it seemed, came from seeking joy in simplicity.

Of course, Ferrari isn't the only Italian supercar brand that captured the world's imagination. What about Lamborghini? What inspired the sleek-lines of the charging bull?

If you delve into the purpose that motivated Ferruccio Lamborghini to give up making tractors and start crafting supercars in 1963 you would most definitely hear about the famous disagreement between Ferruccio and Enzo.⁴⁵

Ferruccio lived for cars, he loved them. In 1958, he went to Maranello to buy a Ferrari 250 GT to expand his collection of supercars. Ferruccio owned several Ferraris over the years. As the story goes, Ferruccio was hard on his cars and, as a result, often needed to replace the clutch of his cars at the local Ferrari factory. After yet another fitting, he decided

to replace the part himself at his tractor factory. When they pulled out the Ferrari engine and transmission, he discovered that the clutch was identical to the ones fitted in his own Lamborghini tractors. Ferruccio was furious. He felt that Enzo's cars were equipped with clutches that were too small for use in a high-performance vehicle. Plus he knew he paid 10 lira for a tractor clutch and Ferrari charged him 1000 lira for the same part. When Ferruccio brought his views to the notoriously egotistical Enzo's attention, his concerns were met with mockery. According to Valentino Balboni, Lamborghini's former chief test driver, "Enzo Ferrari told him: 'You are a tractor driver, you are a farmer. You shouldn't complain driving my cars because they're the best cars in the world.'"

Enraged by this exchange, Ferruccio decided to modify his Ferrari 250 GTs. He did such a good job that the modified vehicle outperformed Ferrari's stock models. But that wasn't enough. Ferruccio was determined to create a superior sports car that would outshine Enzo's Ferrari stable. Sure, it was hardly a noble objective, but it proved one that served Ferruccio well. The disrespect that was dished out to Ferruccio fuelled both the intensity and stamina of this intentionality.

The line between a purpose and an objective is blurry, isn't it? If you wish to argue that Ferruccio's intentionality served his ultimate purpose of beating Enzo, then you are also right. But this purpose is not as noble or awe-inspiring as the driving forces which are more often advocated for by the many influencers out there.

Despite the absence of a big hairy audacious purpose, many people continue to thrive in the profession they take on. Just to cement our point, and while not as fast-paced as the story of Ferrari and Lamborghini, here's another example to consider.

Chan Hon Meng, also known as Hawker Chan, started a small eatery stall named Liao Fan Soya Sauce Chicken Rice & Noodle in the Chinatown Complex Food Centre in Singapore in 2009. He would go on to become the first hawker to earn a prestige Michelin star, the hallmark of culinary quality and excellence.⁴⁶ When asked why he started his own

business, Chan once responded that the idea of changing Hainanese-style chicken rice (which was almost regarded as the national dish of Singapore) appealed to him. Traditionally this recipe requires the chicken to be poached and chilled, but he chose to cook his chicken according to the Cantonese style of *siu mei*, where meats are usually roasted in a wood-burning rotisserie oven.⁴⁷ Chan went on to create his own signature dish, a soya sauce chicken rice. What makes this Michelin-starred chef so unique is that he set up his eatery near to his home, in Chinatown, where rentals were cheaper. This decision not only differentiated him from his competition but also created reciprocal benefits for both the food market and his profession.⁴⁸ Despite losing his Michelin Star in September 2021, Chan did not let this stop him from pursuing his passion. He continues upholding his intentionality of making simple, but delicious food that warms the soul.

The notion of the reciprocal contribution concept is also evident in the early years of Spanx. Blakely has told the world that she wanted to contribute something to women and ultimately, she created a business to contribute towards the lifestyle she had meticulously specified. In 2012, Forbes declared Sara Blakely to be the world's youngest self-made female billionaire, revelling in her inspiring rise from sometimes comic and door-to-door fax machine saleswoman to undergarment empire billionaire.⁴⁹ Although Blakely's purpose was to serve women by making better products, she had many other goals and purposes before that ah-ha moment that led to the inception of Spanx. She shares this type of journey with many successful business leaders, such as Vera Wang, Colonel Sanders and Jack Ma, as well as many other lesser known but equally courageous individuals who have taken the bold step of shifting their career trajectories. The brave transition embedded in these stories is what links them together. And that is something to be celebrated because it takes guts, instinct, self-belief and dogged determination – and above all, intentionality

While the media, in its search for clickbait headlines and content,

could take some of the blame for mystifying and overhyping the ‘finding your purpose’ narrative - oftentimes with an undertone suggesting that purpose must be a larger-than-life audacious vision – the simple truth is that you do not have to follow the popular view or go with the crowd to propel your life to greater heights.

Subjectivity and the evolving nature of ‘purpose’

Another mistake made by influencers who advocate the importance of finding purpose is that they don’t spend enough time exploring how people evolve across different life-stages.

Many of us have no idea what our purpose might be whilst we are at high school. Perhaps we have some idea about what makes us happy at the time, such as sneaking a drink, learning the ropes of dating, skipping classes, playing sports, but not all of these sources of happiness serve us well in the long run.

Some people continue to struggle to find their purpose in their 20s and 30s, and perhaps into their early 40s. They may also be puzzled when it comes to what make them truly happy. For those ‘luckier’ ones, somewhere between their late 20s and early 30s they might have determined their purpose. But it is not to say that life doesn’t play with that certainty by throwing a few major curveballs into the mix from time to time. Often these life-changing moments which have us scrambling to revisit what we once, with conviction, thought our purpose was. Some of life’s curveballs can be devastating, such as the loss of a family member, getting fired, battling illness, dealing with burnout, or going through a divorce. All of these moments can significantly affect how we define our purpose in life. Some of life’s curveballs can also be exhilarating. Consider the impact of a new romance, parenthood, a career change, finding new hobbies, and many other wonderful opportunities out there which enable us to recreate ourselves.

Our inner constructs are always evolving, and on many occasions we are not even fully cognisant that we are changing. We are not always in tune with our inner constructs. For some people the pace of their evolution is faster; and sometimes even more ferocious. Whereas for others evolution takes place in a slower, more gentle fashion. As we evolve, our purpose and happiness often shifts in parallel with these internal changes.

Additionally, we all have multiple social roles which we fulfil in our lives. For example, a loving father of two young toddlers may also have a need to assume other roles such as being a responsible executive who is eager to contribute to his company and a caring son who needs to take time to support of his ageing parents. Sometimes, the purposes of these roles are not always fully aligned, which causes tension.

In short: One cannot simply look at purpose without taking into account the entire, multifaceted context of the situation and the foundation of who we are as a person.

LAGGING AND LEADING INDICATORS

‘Purpose’ can be a vague construct at times. While one can argue that purpose could serve as a precursor that governs what we do and how we behave, it is also possible to argue that having decided on a purpose is not enough. It is the value we create having found a purpose that counts. The value creation aligned to your purpose is a lagging indicator. So the power of having a purpose comes from how each of us shapes these leading indicators.

Let’s back up a bit. What are the differences between a lagging indicator and a leading indicator?

In business, a lagging indicator measures production and performance, in other words, the output, outcome and impact. For example, Spanx will measure the total number of Spanx pantyhose produced in this year. It is, in effect, a record of what has passed.

Leading indicators are more predictive in nature, and they attest to inputs which might impact the results of the lagging indicators. For example, the managers of a factory should be examining how many machines and people are working optimally to produce their items.

So leading indicators provide the basis for business leaders to achieve the lagging indicators they desire.

The Ferrari company we have today clearly outlines its mission (not its purpose) on its corporate website. It goes like this, “We build cars, symbols of Italian excellence the world over, and we do so to win on both road and track. Unique creations that fuel the Prancing Horse legend and generate a ‘World of Dreams and Emotions.’” This is a powerful statement which outlines the group’s strategic objective and how they wish to achieve this objective. In two concise sentences, the company has revealed both its leading and lagging indicators. Oftentimes, people focus so heavily on finding their purpose that they do not elaborate HOW they will act out their purpose.

If you have defined your purpose, are you intentional about setting up and carrying out both your leading and lagging indicators? Do ensure they are fully synchronised as you venture onwards and experience changes along your life’s journey.

If you have found your purpose, have actively aligned your action to it and are hungry for more, then we salute you. But if you are still waiting for your purpose to surface, or if you are in transition between one purpose and a new yet-to-be-defined purpose, then we hope the stories and insights shared in this section give you the assurance and comfort to know that you will be all right. You’ve got this.

We believe that instead of focusing so hard on your purpose, there are other elements you should be thinking of. We call these elements the GPS (Global Positioning System) of enriched navigation and call upon you to formulate your unique GPS system that will work for your pursuit

of an enriched life journey. But we will leave this important discussion to the very last chapter.

In the meantime, we will move on to exploring how to inject action into our audacious purpose in the next chapter.

Don't worry if you like many others, don't have an audacious (or any) purpose yet. Before you finally leave this chapter, we intend to get you started on your very own journey of self-mastery, help you find your motivations and identify what it will take to ignite your passion much like Jobs, Enzo Ferrari and Blakely.

Self-enrichment Exercises

Before you move into the next chapter, think about what motivates you. What are you passionate about? What makes you happy? Jot these down below.

Based on your answers above, now start thinking about your goals, and what kind of reciprocal contributions these goals will create for you and your stakeholders. These goals could be about you advancing your career growth, uplifting your spirituality, improving your health and the like.

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Are these goals meaningful to you? If not, what would you need to change to make them more meaningful?

Now, armed with what you consider to be meaningful goals, how do you feel about your purpose, even if you are still unsure about it? What emotions are you experiencing right now when you think about your purpose?

We would like you to reflect on these emotions and get in touch with how you are really feeling. If you have anxiety or another negative feeling around your purpose or finding one, don't ignore it but reflect on how that is impacting you / your life. We suggest that where discomfort exists, there is value in investing energy in refining your goals so that you can generate reciprocal contributions. The clarity of your purpose will emerge in due course.

Remember we need you to be honest and raw.