

The Life Ladder Exercise



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Life Ladder

I think there can be miracles.

I think miracles happen when ordinary people start doing extraordinary things.

The following exercise is designed to help you to transform your life. You can print it out and use the spaces for your answers to the questions.

Your Vibrant Vision
Worst Case Scenario

1. Your “Vibrant Vision” is at the top of the ladder. If you like, put in a few words or even a picture that represents the key elements of your personal vision. To create your vibrant vision, try the following exercise:

Creating Your Vibrant Vision

Visualize yourself as you would wish to be, sometime in the future when everything is going well. This could involve a miracle but a fairly realistic one (eg it wouldn't depend on travelling to another planet) though it could involve having more money than you currently have.

What would you be doing that would make you wake up feeling full of energy and confidence and eager to get out of bed and go do it?

What would your surroundings be like? Would you be mostly indoors or outdoors?

What sort of people would be with you?

What would other people notice about you?

What would you notice about yourself if you saw yourself in a video being the person you choose to be?

Float into the image of yourself and experience it fully with all your senses. See it, hear it, touch it, smell it, taste it, as clearly as possible, make it big and bright and colourful, warm and exciting and appealing.

Keep it in your mind as much as possible, better still, write it down, draw it, paint it, sing it into existence if you like, or create a collage of images that are in keeping with your vision.

With this powerful vision in mind, it is likely that the universe will begin to shape itself around you in that way.

Your vision might materialize in slightly unexpected ways and you can be ready to act on new opportunities that "feel right" to you.

Now that you have your vision in mind, let's continue to build your own personal life ladder

2. Briefly imagine how bad life could be if everything was absolutely terrible; the worst that things could possibly get. This is the "worst case scenario" at the very bottom of the ladder. Keep the mental image of this fairly vague and misty. The words will suffice without any further embroidery. We don't need to go there.

3. If the worst is at the bottom and the best is at the top, looking at your life now, which rung of the ladder are you on at the moment? Put an X on that rung.

4. What might the next upward step of the ladder be like? What would be different? Visualise it as clearly as possible.

To get to the next step of the ladder:

1. What needs to change?

2. What do you need to do to make it start to happen?

3 What inner resources do you have that will help?

(Eg an imagination to visualise how things will be when they get better; strengths that got you through difficult times in the past; natural talents / things you were good at or enjoyed as a child / good qualities that you or other people have noticed in you...etc). (If you find this section tricky, try the "tapping into your talents" exercise below.)

Tapping Into Your Talents

Strangely, one of the hardest things for people to admit to is what their strengths are! Modesty, it seems, is a common virtue but, however commendable it might seem, it can get in the way when we honestly try to identify the skills and talents we bring to the world: our own unique gifts that can help us to get to where we choose to be. So if you couldn't think of much to say in response to question 3 above, have a go at this:

When you were a child, what did you find so easy that you remember being surprised when other people seemed to find it hard?

When you were a child, what did other people tell you that you were good at?

When you were a teenager, what did you most enjoy doing?

When you were a teenager, what did people tell you that you were good at?

When times have been hard and you have faced difficult challenges, what was it about you that got you through them; what inner strength did you find within you that allowed you to survive all of that so that you are still here, now, reading this?

So far in your life, what skills have you gained that could be useful to you or to others?

What insights have you gained from your life experiences that have made you wiser to the ways of the world?

What five things do you most enjoy doing?

What do other people tell you that you are good at?

What do you do easily, so easily that you sometimes find yourself helping other people to do it when you see them struggling?

What would you say were your best personal qualities?

Remember that this is you we are talking about. You don't need to compare yourself with anyone else. A fish may be a good swimmer but not all fish can fly and not all birds can swim, and there are some birds that can't do either but they're really good at laying eggs. It's what you are and what you can do, whatever it is, that's important.

And remember that if your answer to all of the above is that you are "good at nothing", that makes you a master. Masters, like yourself, are very humble, and they can spend whole lifetimes exploring the mysteries of nothing!

4. What other people might be able to help you?

(Family, friends, police, Citizen's Advice Bureau, doctor, local college, independent financial advisor.....etc)

5. What other resources might you need?

(Eg. Money - if so how much and where might that come from? Time. Equipment. Skills / training. Knowledge / information, qualifications. Library, internet, bookshop. Social skills training. Advice. Job. Different job. Career break. Voluntary work.....etc)

Now that you have your vision in mind and you know where you are in relation to that vision, and you have identified some of the resources you have that can help you to take the next towards it:

write all this down

and then let it be

and get on with living your life in the here and now,

ready to make the most of each new opportunity as it arises, allowing you to

take at least one small step each day that will bring you

closer to your dream.