

_____’s Life-Design Journal

“The biggest obstacle to any kind of transformation is the voice that tells you it’s impossible.”

—Geneen Roth

EXPLORATION

The journey to making transformative changes begins by illuminating your legacy, stories and beliefs you’re lugging around; identifying the event that triggered your desire to change; and determining your level of commitment to finish this journey to its end.

Chapter 1

“Restlessness and discontent are the first necessities of progress”

—Thomas Edison

WHAT’S YOUR TRIGGER FOR CHANGE?

What would you like to change? Review the charts on pages 9 and 10 and list each life and business category where you’d welcome an alteration or total change.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Return to page 7.

Two or Three: Which two or three of those that you just listed do you feel the strongest need or urge to change?

Return to page 7.

What is your “The One” and why? “The One” is the area you’ll focus on at the beginning of your journey. The others you listed will be integrated in this transformational journey as you move closer to your goal.

The One! _____

Return to page 8.

Living Your ‘Someday’ Now

What is your Trigger: Why now, at this particular time, do you feel compelled to make a change to your life or business? Describe your triggering experience. If you need more space continue on another sheet.

Return to page 11.

Pushed or Pulled: Are you looking forward to this change, being forced to endure it, or feeling neutral about it? Write a few words about this feeling.

Return to page 12.

Level of Urgency: On scale of 1-10, with 10 being very motivated, what's your level of urgency? Write more about why you chose that number. Don't judge the number—it's only information.

1-10 _____

Return to page 13.

Level of Staying Power: On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to stay with this journey to the end? Why or why not? Again, don't judge the number you choose—it's just information.

1-10 _____

Return to page 13.

Chapter 2

“To reform a man you must begin with his grandmother.”

—Victor Hugo

WHO’S REALLY TAKING YOUR JOURNEY?

Your Life-Defining Play: Using the prompted questions from the play categories in Chapter 2, fill in the specifics of your Life-Defining Play. As you continue your journey, you’ll remember other events that defined your early life. Return to this journal section and add those new insights as they occur.

_____’S LIFE-DEFINING PLAY
Insert Your Name

Lead Actor: _____

Setting and Context: Use prompting questions from page 25.

Lined area for writing a response.

Supporting Cast of Actors: Use prompting questions from page 25.

Costumes: Use prompting questions from page 27.

Ending: Use prompting questions from page 28.

Return to page 28.

Chapter 3

In regard to beliefs, Anthony Robbins, motivational speaker and coach, says: “More often than not, they can limit our vision of how we want to live, and unconsciously alter our level of achievement and happiness in life.”

WHAT BELIEFS HAVE YOU BEEN LUGGING AROUND?

Your Beliefs: Start a list of your beliefs—you’ll add to it in future chapters. Include both the obvious and the obscure: *rules must always be obeyed, never jaywalk, a messy house is sign of a lazy person, older women shouldn’t wear their hair long.* In the “Liberation” segment of your journey, you’ll decide which life-defining beliefs you want to hold on to and which ones you want to boot out.

Return to page 35.

Programmed Beliefs: What did the adults in your life teach you to believe? Pull ideas from the “Script” of your Life-Defining Play on page 190. If you still own those beliefs, add them to your belief list on page 195.

Return to page 39.

Exposure: What beliefs or leanings did you adopt due to the era and/or environment you grew up in, i.e., during the Great Depression, the sixties, post 9-11? If you still own them, add them to your belief-list on page 194.

Return to page 39.

Experiences: Which words, looks, comments, smells, titles, or numbers cause a spontaneous gut reaction? Can you extrapolate the belief behind that reaction? What impacting experiences affected your life? What beliefs resulted from those impacting experiences? Add these beliefs to your list on page 194.

Return to page 41.

Unconscious Beliefs: Do you have an instinctive reaction to a person, event, idea, smell, etc.? What is the reaction and where does it come from? What is the resulting belief you own?

Return to page 43.

Chapter 4:

“Freedom involves making decisions, and each decision is a destiny decision.”

—Joseph Campbell

WHY DO YOU KEEP ENDING UP AT THE SAME PLACE?

A Road Map to a New Destiny

Thoughts > Words > Actions > Habits > Character > Destiny

Your Personal Road Map: List a situation or experience you’d like to alter. Now, fit the specifics of your I-can’t-do-it thinking into the T>W>A>H>C>D pattern. Use this Thought-to-Destiny pattern whenever you catch yourself thinking, saying, or doing anything non-supporting or not inline with the outcome you’re pursuing.

What situation would you like to alter?

Living Your 'Someday' Now

Thoughts: What “thought(s)” do you repeatedly have regarding this situation?

Words: What “words” do you repeatedly use when talking about this situation?

Actions: What “actions” do you take or not take based on those thoughts and words?

Habits: List your conscious habits surrounding this situation.

Living Your 'Someday' Now

Character: How do you characterize yourself? How do you think others characterize you in regards to this situation?

Destiny: Looking at your answers to the above five questions, in one sentence describe your current life destiny.

Return to page 60.

Chapter 5

“I’m a slow walker, but I never walk back.”

—Abraham Lincoln

WHICH PATH WILL YOU CHOOSE?

Path of Least Resistance: What pain-avoiding, anesthetizing, or repeating behavior do you use? What’s your first action, your first thought, or the first words out of your mouth when you’re feeling uncomfortable? What’s the first thing you’re inclined to do?

Return to page 68.

Path of Thoughtful Transformation: Reflecting on your level of urgency from page 185, record any thoughts you have about this path taking longer to travel or being a bit weird. Also, include any gut reactions to not having your pain-avoiding, anesthetizing, or repeating behaviors to use when you feel uncomfortable.

Return to page 72.

LIBERATION

Chapter 6

When you don't know what to do next, dance!

—Jo Anne Musolf

STOP! DON'T DO ANYTHING

The first step on the transformation journey is actually a non-step. Just stop for a moment to let the work you've done so far settle in. I suggest that today, instead of writing in this journal, call a friend to engage in a feeling-good activity. Take a few hours to experience some of the benefits of living a thoughtful, transformed life.

What did you do?

Return to page 78.

Chapter 7

“In the long run men only hit what they aim at.”

—Henry David Thoreau

WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT?

What are your **Aha’s?** To get to the truth of what your heart, mind, and soul *really want* and to liberate your “Aha’s,” answer the four Destiny-Clarifying questions.

What don’t you want?

Based on those answers, what do you *allegedly* want?

Why do you want what you want?

And why do you want those things?

And why those things?

Chapter 8

“Thinking about the right thing to do often gets in the way of doing it right.”

—Sue Bender

WHY DON'T YOU ALREADY HAVE WHAT YOU WANT?

Why Don't You Have It? For each of your answers to “What do you really want?” on page 211, extrapolate the limiting belief that's keeping you stuck.

I really want: _____

But: _____

But: _____

I really want: _____

But: _____

But: _____

I really want: _____

But: _____

But: _____

I really want: _____

But: _____

But: _____

Return to page 98.

Chapter 9

METAPHORICALLY “LOBOTOMIZE” LIMITING BELIEFS

Destiny-Diverting Belief #1: What do you believe is unchangeable or insurmountable in your life, with another person, or concerning a specific situation?

Return to page 106.

Destiny-Diverting Belief #2: List at least five times you've made changes or learned new skills that were enjoyable experiences. When you're tempted to go down the "I hate changing and I'm going to stop now" spiral, you can refer to these experiences to break that useless thought pattern.

Enjoyable learning and changing experiences:

Return to page 107.

Destiny-Diverting Belief #3: Write about a time when you downplayed feeling joyful or when you minimized a successful business outcome because you thought if you made yourself seem "less than" or "not okay" it would make someone else feel better.

Return to page 108.

Uncover, Lobotomize, and Update Your Beliefs: Practice this exercise by stating one thing you've always wanted or one thing you'll regret not experiencing. Take time as you go through each step. Pay close attention to the **words, thoughts, and actions** you're using to rationalize why you don't already have what you want. Then, be equally thoughtful about replacing them with alternatives that are empowering and supportive.

I want: _____

1. State why you don't already have what you want.

2. List your beliefs based on the statements you just made.

3. Declare those beliefs “lobotomized” and replace them with new empowering beliefs.

4. If you “owned” those new empowering beliefs, what would you think, say, and do (T>W>A) differently?

- 5. If you're resistant to taking any of those actions or adopting the replaced empowering beliefs, start over with #1.**

Return to page 114.

CREATION

Chapter 10

WHAT ELSE IS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

Your Bucket List: Use the questions posed in Chapter 10 as a guide to create a draft of what your “Ideal Destiny” might look like if you had it all. Sit with your idealized destiny for a few days. Then return to these pages and re-examine your answers. Add to, delete, or edit as you gain new insight.

1. **Leisure:** (page 125)

3. Geography/Environment: (page 126)

6. Health/Wellness: (page 127)

Benefits of Living Your Ideal Destiny: Extrapolate the benefits of living your Ideal Destiny by finishing this sentence: “If I give up the me I know I want to be and the life I want to live, I give up the following...” You’ll refer back to this list later when you create a plan for the support you’ll need as you continue on your journey.

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Chapter 11

“Regardless of circumstance, each man lives in a world of his own making.”

—*Josepha Murray Emms*

WRITE AN EMPOWERING STORY

COACHING NOTE:

I recommend handwriting your story on a separate sheet of paper. The process of putting pen to paper engages a rhythm and energy where the story sort of begins to write itself. If you absolutely hate the idea of handwriting, type it into your computer.

Your Better-Feeling Story: If you’ve worked along with the chapters in this book, writing this uplifting story is almost complete. Use the play components from Chapter 2 as your outline. As the author of your idealized story, you’ll have total artistic license as set designer, casting agent, costumer, playwright, producer and director. To help fill in the broad categories of your story, refer to the components of “Ideal Destiny” from pages 218 to 228 for your setting, ancillary characters, and ending. From pages 202 and 203 use the thoughts, words, and actions to create your dialogue and direction.



I have included another client example to assist you in writing your story. Brian found it easier to write his Ideal Life story in the third person. Here is his self-authored better-feeling story:

The Story of Brian the Artist

Don't say it's too late for anything. Brian Smith is an artist who has changed his life and career many times.

He and Adrienne moved to Europe to be near the water, the culture, and the people. Brian has built quite a unique living space for them. Their "home" is right on the water. There is a stand of trees/bushes on the front of the property along the beach. They have a walkway from the property to the beach that they travel each day to watch sunrises/sunsets and take walks.

Brian and Adrienne live in two separate structures on either side of a common courtyard with a fireplace, flowers, and comfortable chairs and tables for conversations and reading. Brian's house/studio is two stories. He sometimes lives in the upper half with a bedroom, office, bath and kitchen/living area. There is a large window where he can see the ocean and a balcony off the living space. Downstairs is his art studio that has a large glass sliding door leading to his private personal patio, where he can store stuff or do whatever the hell else he wants with it. In the back of his

“piece of paradise” he has a workshop for woodworking, etc. He foresees a time in the near future where he has 2-3 on-call employees who do the basic woodworking, run into town for supplies etc.

Brian loves the fact that with a living/working area separate from Adrienne's he can make as much of a mess as he wants and he won't interfere with her organized, clean living area. Brian sees Adrienne's house as big enough to have all the room she wants, including a guest room and a large garden in both the front and back yards. They both work in the garden at times.

When he gets up in the morning, Brian puts on his work jeans, grabs a cup of coffee and walks to the ocean to smell the air, hear the birds and begin his day. What he likes most about his lifestyle here is that he has no restrictions on his time unless they are self-imposed. He gets up when he wants, take naps when he wants, and doesn't have to answer to anyone unless he wants. If he is working on an art piece or another project, he may “hibernate” for days at a time and work as long into the night as he wants.

It takes Brian about 15 minutes to drive his truck into town, which has supplies, stores, movies, culture, cafes, art shows, museums, festivals, swap meets, and a farmer's market.

With the airport and train station less than an hour away he takes trips (sometimes alone) to other European towns and villages to explore and experience the area's attractions

and people. He's been to Africa and all over Europe. He particularly loves the street vendors, local markets, cobblestone street, shops, cathedrals, museums, and street cafes.

Although Brian spends some time on his artwork, with his doctorate in physics (theoretical and experimental), he consults on selected projects. As a matter of fact, he is working on a project now that, because of his thesis, may earn him a nomination for a Nobel Prize. As part of an Art Association, his work is marketed and sold across Europe.

Tom, Brian's brother, recently moved to the area and lives not far from their house. Sometimes Brian and Tom go backpacking and explore the local trails. Once a year Brian goes back to the United States to visit his family and friends.



Your Commitment: What days and times do you commit to reading, editing, and/or rehearsing your story for the next three months? Set your phone alarm with a special ringtone as a reminder. Create a habit of reading your new story while you're on the treadmill, during your mid-morning break, or last thing at night before you go to sleep.

Return to page 148.

TRANSFORMATION

Chapter 12

“The diamond cannot be polished without friction, nor the man perfected without trials.”

—Chinese proverb

GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH BEING UNCOMFORTABLE

How to Unstick Your Feet:

Tip #1:

Whose discomfort are you most concerned about?

What beliefs and stories do you have about causing someone's discomfort?

Return to page 160.

Tip #2

What does your play-it-safe voice say to you?

Living Your 'Someday' Now

What will your supportive voice need to say to prod you out from under the covers?

Return to page 162.

Chapter 13

“Instead of crying over spilled milk, go milk another cow.”

—Erna Asp

PREPLANNING SUPPORT TO KEEP YOU ON COURSE

Support People: Who are your support people? Do they know where you’re going? What specific support will you need?

Return to page 169.

Support Environment: Where are your “getaway locations—at work and at home? What do you need to get away from when you are tempted to chuck it all?

Return to page 170.

Support Activity: What activities, both physical and mental, do you have at the ready to keep you calm, focused, and off the edge?

Return to page 171.

Support Objects: What visual reminders or objects will you use to support you on this journey? What reminders, pictures, or objects will you remove that keep you stuck in the past?

Return to page 172.

Jolt-Yourself-Awake Phrases: What words or phrases will you use to stop a defeating thought, word, or action from taking hold and causing a backward slide?

Return to page 175.

Specific Pre-Planning Needs: Refer back to page 229 where you listed the benefits of living your ideal life and choose ten that you want to experience sooner than later. Next to each, indicate the kind of support you think you'll need and the person or organization you can call on for assistance.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
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10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Chapter 14

“One of these days” is none of these days.

—Anonymous

LIVING YOUR “SOMEDAY” NOW!

I sincerely thank you for reading this book and I applaud you for your courage to make transformative changes in your life. If anyone tells you you’re crazy for trying to make your life better, don’t listen to him or her. I personally support you’re every effort and look forward to hearing how your individual journey is progressing. You can email me at joanne@joannemusolf.com. If you include your email address—make sure its correct and current—I will respond to everyone. Also, if you want information about up-coming appearances I will be making or workshops and retreats I will be leading, check my website at www.joannemusolf.com.