

From the authors of the #1 international best-seller *Create Love*

JILL DOUKA MBA, PCC

NIKOLAS OURANOS

3 Keys:

30 Days to Make Your Dreams a Reality
With the Support Of Life Coaching

HOW TO CREATE YOUR LIFE

Extra bonus material on www.globalacademyofcoaching.com

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HOW TO CREATE YOUR LIFE

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Jill Douka, MBA, PCC
Nikolas Ouranos

*Dedicated to you, my friend, who
do your best every day and want to
Create the Life You Desire.*

To Marilena, Joy and Aggelos.

Thank you.

To my Sky. I love you very much.

Jill Douka

To your growth and your victories.

To Jill, whom I love too much.

*To Marilena and to Pantohara, who
teach what the smile of love is like.*

Nikolas Ouranos

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HOW TO CREATE YOUR LIFE

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Jill's Story

I have been a hard worker ever since I was young. I started classical ballet when I was three years old, so discipline and hard work were a part of my everyday schedule. As a result, I was able to achieve what I wanted, most of the time. I succeeded in every goal I attempted. When my ballet teacher told me that I would never be a dancer, my first thought was, *Go ahead, say whatever you want.*

When my teacher at the dance academy where I studied told me, “I don’t know if you’re going to pass your graduate exam, Jill,” I closed my eyes and envisioned myself doing a triple pirouette. I did exactly that in my graduate exam, and I passed with a 7.8/10!

Unfortunately, with all the good that came with dancing, anorexia and her friend bulimia came too. I was “overweight”—120 pounds and 67.1 inches tall—and I couldn’t find another way to handle it. I knew I was doing something wrong when I would eat two packs of Walkers cookies (those Scottish ones that are pure butter) and then throw them up afterward. After that, I wouldn’t eat for a couple of days (god bless diet colas). When I was a teenager, I was desperate to understand what was happening.

My mother was, among other things, an author. Every time we would take her books to the bookstore, Mr. Christakis, the distributor, would say, “Pick whatever you want, Jill.”

One day, I picked the book *The Only Diet There Is* by Sondra Ray. That was my first contact with the field of personal growth.

The book was about the power of the brain, and the fact that the energy around us takes the form our brain gives it. It made a lot of sense to me. She was talking about visualizations (which I had done with the pirouettes) and affirmations. So I started writing down affirmations. A lot of them. Five pages every day. And I started feeling better, day by day. Most importantly, I felt calmer around food.

As the years passed, I started loving my body. Then the bulimia and the anorexia stopped altogether. Now that I'm aware of the seriousness of this disease, I know that I should have definitely consulted a specialized doctor. But the information in that small book was my first trip toward personal growth. How could I possibly imagine that years later, Sondra Ray would become my teacher? And not only that, but that she would write a testimonial for our book *Create Love*, which she considers one of the best in its genre! The universe has a great sense of humor.

Life was going well. I went from being a choreographer and a dance teacher to studying events management and working the Olympic Games, in both Athens and Turin.

My duties were extremely important, as I was supervising hundreds of people, and my salary was proportionate to the responsibility. I was in a good relationship, and everything was PERFECT. I was happy. Wasn't I?

When I thought about my future, about going from company to company, about negotiating a higher salary, about getting married and having a family with my current partner, I realized I wasn't actually happy at all.

I wanted to learn about business management, so I added to my already full schedule, and enrolled to get an MBA.

That was when I began doing breathwork: a technique that releases negative experiences through breathing. The first negative experience that my teacher Lucy and I worked on was the fact that my sister had left eight months prior to become a nun. I had taken it personally, (my poor ego) and stopped speaking to her.

I hadn't spoken to her in eight months. So we worked on that during our first session. It was a Friday, and I called her that same night. I said to her: "Can I book tickets to come see you this weekend?" She replied: "Of course. I'll be waiting for you." That's how we solved my first big issue. If I hadn't worked on that and identified it as my own issue, maybe we still wouldn't be talking.

After beginning my work with Lucy, some repressed memories came back to me. When I was young, I was physically abused by my brother. Up until that point, I had thought it was normal behavior for your brother to hit you. That was why I never told anyone.

Lucy asked me: "Jill, has anyone ever hit you?" And I responded: "Yes, but I stopped it every time." The minute those words left my mouth, I realized that it was serious. We worked hard on me forgiving my brother. I wrote many letters of forgiveness, and I realized that it was partly because of the way he had interpreted what love meant as a child. When I worked up the nerve to talk to him about it, he told me that he didn't remember any of the things I was describing. I was furious. I had to work extremely hard again to forgive him.

With Lucy we watched *The Secret*. It seemed so simple, understandable, and real.

Then I bought Jack Canfield's book, *The Success Principles*, and read it constantly. My first copy is literally worn out. He is a phenomenon. He has written over 250 books and sold over 500 million copies in 40 languages. (Ten years later, Jack would also include my success story in this book.)

I decided to attend life coaching classes with Jack Canfield's team.

It was a big step for me, since the price for four sessions was my entire salary. However, something inside me told me that it would be worth it. That was when the goal of creating my own business was first formed.

My coach asked me what I had to do to create my own business. Without overthinking the amount, I told her I needed €25,000.

When she asked me where I could get that amount of money, I responded angrily. I told her that I couldn't save that much money any time soon with my current job, and I never borrowed money on principle. I was thinking: *Is this what I gave an entire salary for?* Upon finishing my session, she told me, "Keep your eyes open. Maybe you'll find the money soon."

During my MBA studies, my business professor asked me if I knew any business owner who was under 40 years old, with a company that had more than 10 employees and an annual turnover greater than €100,000. The Sir Stelios Haji-ioannou's award for entrepreneurs was available, if they could meet that criteria.

I told her that it was nearly impossible to meet those requirements in Greece and it was true; none of the candidates at the time met all the requirements.

A week later, I was at a job interview for a startup business. As soon as I saw how young the owner was, I cheekily asked him how many employees he had, and what his turnover was for the previous year. He met the requirements for the award!

I told him about the €50,000 cash prize, but the deadline was the next day. He told me that he had to open a new shop in six days, he had been working sixteen-hour days for the past month, and there was no way he could manage to apply for it.

He suggested I write the proposal and use the money for my salary, the budget, and the training of the new HR department, which I would be managing. I couldn't believe my ears!

When it was announced that we had won the entrepreneur award, I made myself a promise. I would tell as many people as I could about coaching, the tool that had helped me make my dream come true. That is what I have been doing ever since.

After my studies in life coaching, I learned that it's vital for every life coach to also have his or her own life coach. That is what I do. Without my work in life coaching I would never have met Nikolas, my husband. Without my work in life coaching, I would not have my daughter, Joy. Without my work in life coaching, I would not have been able to handle the fact that I miscarried my 10-week-old baby, which we conceived after a year of in vitro fertilizations.

Without my work in life coaching, I would not have been able to grow my business and support thousands of people all around the globe.

Without my work in life coaching, we would not have written *Create Love*, and dozens of couples would not have gotten married, and many children would not have been born.

I believe that these reasons are enough to make me passionate about life coaching and the results it can bring. What do you think?

Nikolas' Story

Why should you live a life that has been “chosen” for you by others?

Maybe, hidden deep inside of you, is the ability to find the strength to take responsibility and start planning, then succeeding and enjoying, the life you have chosen for yourself.

In both cases, you have to learn and to grow, but the difference in the quality of your emotions will be tremendous.

It is time to tell you my story, and to confide some things about my own life to you.

I had a happy childhood. The first memory I have is of my father in the backyard of my childhood home. This was a place where my sister and I learned how to ride bikes, where we played ball with the older kids in the neighborhood, and where we enjoyed the treats my mom and grandma made.

I was branded a good student in kindergarten. My first poetry reading was excellent. How could I imagine that much later, I would become a public speaker?

I stood out in elementary school, but that wasn't necessarily a good thing. My hyperactivity, my long limbs, my distinct ears, and some of my clumsy actions were the cause of what we now call “bullying” by other kids.

And I, not knowing how to defend myself properly, kept aiming higher and higher in order to prove myself through my infantile soul.

My highlights included excellent performances, both academically and in extra-curricular activities. I co-starred in the school play, tied for first place at my school's IQ contest, and received an award for the best student essay out of all the schools in the Palaio Faliro district.

But I did have my strange, bewildering moments. One night in the '80s, I went to my first party, and I came home at 11:20 instead of 11:00 like I had promised. I guess I had lost track of time listening to "Amadeus Amadeus" and "Touch Me" by Samantha Fox. When I got home my dad was furious.

Sports appeared in my life unexpectedly. First, it was soccer in the academies of Panionios, and after some time, because I was tall enough, I started playing basketball on my neighborhood team. The training sessions were tough, but the insults were even tougher on our fragile feelings.

I made sure to do everything with great passion, verging on over-the-top. I was the captain on every school team, and the life of the party, always participating in everything.

Just as I couldn't imagine being a public speaker, I couldn't imagine being a relationship coach either, and advocating for people to create the relationship of their dreams. Nothing foreshadowed this.

One time I was at the beach in Kavouri, playing volleyball with two sisters who were vacationing in Athens with their parents, and as always, my dad started a conversation with them without even knowing them.

That's what my dad does to this day: he begins chitchatting with strangers! Yes, that's right. I owe my communication gifts to my father, just like I owe my mother for my militant will to make a better life.

Even to this day, they still get confused sometimes. They have a hard time understanding the path I choose and serve. My mission. My profession. The demands of my new lifestyle.

My television appearances help for a couple of days, but after the effect wears off, they ask me again when I am going to get a "real job." I love them, I understand their viewpoint, and I am so proud of them!

It's just not easy.

Let's go back though, to the beach in Vouliagmeni. I had my first love when I was 13. Unrequited, as usual. The girl I wanted did not want me.

That kept happening. As time passed, history repeated itself. Girls just didn't want me. They wouldn't dance to the blues with me.

After many years, I realized that it was because of our big height difference. Up until then, I took it personally and it was not the best for my self-esteem. I'm sure you also took things personally in your life, not considering that everyone else was just doing the best they could.

I had my first sexual partner when I was twenty-one. The very next day, she informed me that she wanted to date other people. I was shocked.

My life was in full progress. Things were happening. I was in college, studying economics, and I had my first job in a multinational enterprise as an executive in sales and marketing. Happiness seemed to be forming, but it wasn't there yet.

I worked hard, but I always expected more from other people. The end result kept getting worse, and I was getting buried.

When I managed to fit all my “negative” lessons into one year of my life (divorce, bankruptcy, getting fired, panic attacks), I felt dumbfounded. I couldn't grasp how there was not a single aspect of my life I felt proud of.

I had gotten comfortable and expected everything from other people. I was living and acting unconsciously. I was full of rage, disappointment, and on the verge of having a breakdown.

While previously I hadn't wanted to listen to anyone or anything, I no longer had a choice. After a suggestion from a good friend of mine, coaching came into my life.

I started taking 100% responsibility for my life, and its outcomes. I took baby steps and showed the necessary diligence and discipline in order to move forward.

I faced life itself as a lesson, so that I wouldn't define experiences and people as “positive” and “negative.”

I worked on curing myself of my old beliefs, shedding my “skin,” and changing my philosophy, my intentions, and my goals.

Not only did I dare to dream, but also planned methodically each of my next steps and broke all the “ceilings” that I had previously rushed to put over myself.

My experiences so far have shown me that I manage all of my greatest wins by making good alliances, and all of my big losses by making bad ones.

Someone might say: “What’s the point? Everything is a lesson.” I would agree, of course, but also add that we end up learning more from our biggest failures and traumas.

In the end, the important answers are hidden inside of us; they exist and are idle within us. They are waiting for us to take responsibility and action.

For us to experience true love and its meaning, we must first look within ourselves, and then at our choices, in order to Create Our Life.

How to Create Your Life and Life Coaching

A sound mind develops in a sound body, as our Ancient Greek ancestors would say.

Wellbeing was one of their first concerns. The improvement of the quality of their lives, the development of inner peace, and the feeling of completion were concepts that were discussed and developed.

Today, how and where do we learn how to train our mind and our body?

How lacking our education is! For many years, we read some wonderful things in school and college (and now I barely remember any of it).

Where did we learn how to communicate? Where did we learn how to understand our feelings? Where did we learn how to handle our feelings in a healthy way? Where did we learn how to set goals? Where did we learn how to love ourselves? Where did we learn when our Ego is talking and when our Higher Self is talking?

The fairytales we grew up with, where the princess is always saved by the handsome prince... *Hello!* Does that actually happen in real life?

These stories always end with “And they lived happily ever after.” In truth, only dead people stop facing challenges in their lives.

The constant blame we put on others because of our own inadequacy is unbelievable!

You belong in the 5% of the population (yes, we’re that few) that is doing something to change their lives. You are reading this book, *How to Create Your Life*, and we suggest you get a beautiful notebook that inspires you, and do the practices.

We have to change all of the above and simply learn everything that is important to our happiness.

Right now, it’s important to make a decision: The decision to commit to a better lifestyle. In 30 days, if you complete all the exercises, you can take your life to the next level.

We (human beings) are programmed to do the best, to improve, and to develop. We need new experiences, joy, happiness, as well as feedback in our lives. We are programmed for more.

You are unique. There is no other person in the world who sees things the way you do.

If you work using the methods you will learn in this book and do your exercises, you’ll do your best every day. We have not been put on this Earth to pay loans and change cars every seven years. You deserve an amazing life and it’s important to stop every negative thought that pops into your head and focus.

Focus on how to be your best self. Today. Let's stop existing and start living. Living better.

We are the only ones who can create the lives we want and we can't do it tomorrow. It's important to start today. Get a great new notebook, take 30 minutes every day, study, and do your exercises. In 30 days, you will notice the difference!

We will learn in a simple way, but that does not mean that it's going to be easy to apply these strategies to our lives. Discipline, work, and life coaching are required.

But together, we can do it!

What is life coaching?

Life Coaching, as it's defined on the International Coach Federation website, and in my own words, is the process through which the coach asks powerful questions, which lead to the client (coachee) feeling inspired, and then developing and achieving the goals they have set in their personal and professional life.

Without meaning to sound like Portokalos from the film *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, who said that everything originates from Ancient Greece, the method of life coaching is based on the Socratic Method. The interlocutor, answering these questions, reached an outcome – actually, according to Socrates – by himself. The method was called maieutic, because just like a midwife (which was the profession of Fainareti, Socrates' mother) brings a newborn into the world, Socrates or each interlocutor “brought” out the truth from within.

It is extremely interesting to note how the word *alithia* (meaning “truth”), derives etymologically from the privative prefix *a* and the word *litho*, which means being oblivious.

Therefore, with coaching, we can find what’s missing.

The International Coach Federation is the biggest organization for professional coaches globally, with over 30,000 members in 140 countries.

If someone wants to be credentialed or certified as a coach by the International Coach Federation, they have to take tests and work on coaching for a certain number of hours.

ICF also accredits schools where people study how to become life coaches. The school for which I am the course director, Global Academy of Coaching, has been credentialed by the ICF as an ACSTH program, which means that our graduates can be certified by the ICF, after they practice life coaching.

Unfortunately, life coaching is not regulated by an advanced organization. This means that anyone who wants to say they are a life coach can do it without having studied it. That’s how people who have no idea what life coaching is declare themselves life coaches.

Honestly, the nerve of people claiming to be life coaches when they have not studied it astounds me. Would you say, “I’m a doctor” without having studied medicine? No, because the lawsuits from the Medical Association would leave you forever broke. But you’re claiming to be a life coach just because they can’t sue you?

If you haven't dedicated time to studying, learning, and getting a degree, how much do you respect your clients? And yourself?

That is why we need to be careful. We must do our research before we trust someone, to know that he or she is a certified life coach.

Who is life coaching for?

Life coaching is for people who are mentally healthy. People who don't have any deep psychological issues. People who have been diagnosed with illnesses such as depression, addiction, mania, neurosis, schizophrenia, somatization disorders, hysteria or any other mental disorder must consult their doctor before seeking out any other form of support.

The Basic Principles of Life Coaching

1. The solutions to all your problems are inside you.

That's the logic of life coaching: the solutions to all your problems are inside you!

Let me share a story . The Olympian Gods were very agitated with humans because the humans had everything—health, happiness, and success—yet they were discontented and didn't find their lives meaningful. So Zeus convened a meeting with the gods and told them that he had decided to hide happiness from the people. All the gods were very happy with this decision.

Dionysus suggested hiding happiness in the wine. The idea was rejected, because then people would have to drink wine in order to be happy.

Poseidon suggested hiding happiness in the sea. Zeus did not like that idea, since sailors would be the only ones to find it.

Athena suggested hiding it somewhere no one would ever look: hiding it within the people themselves. And that's what happened.

Just like in this story, the logic of coaching is based on the fact that all the solutions to our problems, and the key to being happy, are inside us.

That is why a coach never shares his opinion. Because we know what's good for us better than anyone else does. Through coaching we learn about ourselves, trust ourselves, find solutions to all our problems, and take 100% responsibility for our lives.

In coaching, we believe that you have all the answers inside you. A properly trained coach will never tell you what to do. You will figure it out by yourself, through your coach's purposeful questions. That's why it's such a successful method! How many times did your mom tell you to take a jacket with you and you didn't, even though you knew it was cold outside?

That happens because we always follow our own thoughts, even when they are "wrong." Coaching isn't psychotherapy, but it is aimed at mentally and intellectually healthy people who want to take their lives to the next level.

2. A life coach doesn't give advice.

I have been asked to give advice during a session many times. Some people have even begged me! And my Ego would love for me to act smart and share my opinion.

This is crucial. If a life coach shares his opinion, then he will turn into a counselor, and he'll no longer be coaching. Furthermore, he is going to deprive the client, the coachee, of his right to find the only right solution for him, which is hidden within him.

So, a life coach never gives advice. Ever!

3. Life coaching is focused on the future.

Since we're focusing on setting objectives, life coaching focuses on the client, or coachee's, future. It's like getting into our car and setting the destination on the GPS. We see where we want to go, but the first thing the GPS does is locate where we are at that exact moment.

The same thing applies in life coaching: in order to figure out where we want to go, it's important to see what is happening, and where we are at this moment.

There have been many occasions during sessions that required talking about the past. There are tools (such as NLP, EFT [Emotional Freedom Technique], and others) we can use to disentangle issues from the past that are bothering us. A life coach with experience and knowledge can help with that. However, 90% of the work in life coaching is about today and the future.

4. Life coaching is a process based on trust.

Anything said to the life coach (unless otherwise stipulated by law) is completely confidential. That's why nobody knows who my successful clients are or what problems they are confronting. All the names and challenges faced by people described in *How to Create Your Life* have been changed to protect their privacy.

First Key:
The GOAL

What is the route to your dreams?

*As you set out for Ithaka
hope the voyage is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
angry Poseidon—don't be afraid of them:
you'll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.*

C.P. Cavafy



What is it that keeps us away from change and therefore prevents us from living the life we want to live? Ultimately, what's the thing that holds us back from our dreams?

What kind of life do we want to live? What *are* our dreams and where do we want to be in six months?

In order to achieve our dreams, we need to become different people. Here's what I mean by that.

The dream is somewhere ahead of us, and here, standing still, is who we are today.

In order to get closer to the dream, we need to move toward it. That means we have to travel a certain distance. It's important to build, if we want to make the dream a reality.

Think of the dream as a villa, as a new house. Would you ever take old bricks from an abandoned house to build the new one? No, you would not.

Therefore, we build using new bricks. This means we develop new skills, assimilate new knowledge, find new inspirations, and make new mistakes. Building on new experiences is of the utmost importance, but doing that requires a lot of work. Way too much work.

So what does this void that exists between us and our dreams need to be filled with?

We can fill it by becoming different people. And we do that by developing new skills, accumulating new knowledge, and finding new inspiration.

All of that translates to work. Work on personal development, and on our lives.

Work means doing things in a different way. It means stepping outside your comfort zone.

Most of us want to see results. We say "I want to achieve this" and then give up, not even thinking about the steps required. We don't realize how much we have to work in order to achieve what we want.

What are the chances you might wake up one morning and decide to run a marathon on a whim? You wouldn't do it, right? Because you have to train for it first.

So why do you want to be with the perfect man or woman when you haven't worked on yourself first—when you are not “perfect” either? Why do you want a higher salary when you have not become a better employee? You have not attended a seminar, gone through training, or acquired new knowledge. What's holding you back from becoming a better person?

The thing holding us back is our dear E-G-O.

Ego doesn't want change. Ego is the voice inside of all of us, the child that doesn't want us to step outside our comfort zone, because it's too afraid of change. It's okay to be afraid of change. Just know, the part of us that says, “You don't need to work hard because you are fine where you are now” is called the Ego.

In order to get from where I am to where I want to go, I have to experience the journey.

The journey is always blank. We don't know how we are going to get there. You might be using a map, or a GPS. You may see your destination on the GPS, but you don't know if there's been an accident at the next light that might delay you. You have a rough estimate, and you know how you are going to get there, but you don't know what's going to happen along the way.

The exact same thing applies in life. There's this void: You don't know what it's going to be like, you don't know how to do it, and it's a big decision. You can't know the outcome. For example, if you decide to move, to leave your country, and you can't find a job. Or if you get into a new relationship, or have a child, or invest a large amount of money in your studies.

You don't know what the outcome will be, and you're unsure of the route. Therefore, in this void, in this journey full of uncertainty, the Ego is screaming: "Why do you want to move to a new house? Are you insane? You're fine here!" "How can you be with this guy? He has no money. He has a kid! You won't be able to go out whenever you want." "All that money for a certification? Why would you do that?" The Ego is screaming, and it's saying *Stay away from change*.

But I want to tell you something. We listen to the Ego, and we say: "Yes, I'll stay idle, I will not take this huge step. I will not say 'no' to a job where I feel like they're taking advantage of me. I won't look for a different job. I will not end an unsatisfying relationship." *I won't, I won't, I won't*. But what happens then?

If you don't take action, and you keep listening to your Ego, the universe will take action for you. The ultimate goal is to keep becoming a better person. Our goal in life is to grow more and more each day. We are put on this Earth to pass tests and to see the ways in which we can develop our higher self. Therefore, if you sit back and "chill," the universe is going to end up kicking your butt, and taking you way out of your comfort zone.

I would know; I've gotten kicked like that many times, and so have many of my coachees.

We've all been kicked by the universe.

If you don't fall into this void by yourself, the universe will come up from behind and kick you into it.

Getting fired. It's a huge kick by the universe. Unbearable loneliness. Pain. You're broke. If you don't get out of a relationship where neither of you are happy, and you both have known it for a long time, what's going to happen?

Your partner will either cheat on you, or break up with you. Things that are going to prevent you from moving on are going to happen.

Eventually, you will be forced to make changes in your life, and become a better person because of your experiences. The universe will push you if you don't decide to jump into the void by yourself.

You are currently at point A, and you want to get to point B. What's in between them? A cliff. A void. You don't know how to get over there. And that's where the great adventure is. You might be saying to yourself, "Oh no, I don't know how to get there," "Who should I ask who's already made it?", "Which books should I read?", "What seminar should I attend to become better at this or develop this more?", and "Should I get life coaching for support?"

It's the void. The one where you have to find the tools and strategies to get to your dream.

The big Ego is in fact what's keeping us from making our dreams a reality. The big Ego is a part of us, it's the fear we have within us. It's okay to be scared. What I want you to take away from this chapter is that it's also okay to take the step into the void.

I want to share two personal stories with you. Nikolas and I had just published *Create Love*. The goal was to reach one million souls and get them to "Create Love," to teach them how to love themselves first, and how to create healthy relationships.

Nikolas told me that in order to share our message with one million people, we needed to have a book tour. I told him: "We published our book [*Create Love*] by ourselves. People with publishing houses go on book tours.

What kind of book tour can we do?” He answered: “We can do it. We’re going to take a suitcase full of books and go from town to town, getting people to listen to us.” My Ego immediately started screaming: “He’s insane!” and “No way!” and “There’s no way that I, a world-famous speaker, am getting into a car and going from town to town to talk about *Create Love*.”

Anyone who knows Nikolas knows that it’s extremely difficult to say no to him. So I said, “Okay, let’s try it.”

Our first stop on the tour was in Larissa, then in Volos, and later in Pelasgia. It went well in Larissa. I’ll never forget how we sold five books there, right away. “This is perfect!” we said. “We sold five books, excellent!”

Then we got to Volos, where we had paid to have 100 printed invitations, and I saw all of them at the registers. They hadn’t handed out the invitations. We went downstairs, where there was one person waiting, and another reading an unrelated history book.

We were four people presenting *Create Love* to an audience of one.

Nikolas and I looked at each other, and then we went outside, where it was cold and drizzling. The public store in Volos is on a lively main street, full of cafes and shops. We handed out the invitations to anyone we found drinking coffee, and invited them to come.

We ended up handing out only fifteen invitations since we had to return and start presenting our book to the huge crowd of two. We had grabbed the gentleman with the history book, who didn’t stop reading it. He was sitting in front of us and reading his book while we were presenting *Create Love*. You can imagine how we felt.

The next town was Pelasgia, a wonderful village where we had 80 people, because my cousin was the mayor. The sales were great and the welcome was amazing, as was the love we got. They gave us spanakopita and crosses to keep us blessed by God. That book tour started it all, and in three years we have been to over 45 places in Greece, Cyprus, Belgium, France, Singapore, and Malaysia.

What if we hadn't taken this step? What if I hadn't listened to Nikolas and instead said, "No. I'll stay here and sell the books from my home."? First of all, you would probably not know who I am, since most of you learned who I was from the book *Create Love*. Secondly, we wouldn't have been able to express what we wanted to, and our message wouldn't have been spread. *Create Love* wouldn't have been the cause behind so many marriages and births. I want you to think about that. Think about how much we would have been held back.

I would like to share another step into the void with you, also very personal. When I founded the Global Academy of Coaching, after much meditation, I knew I had to start the certification in Cyprus.

In retrospect, it made no sense at all, as we were living in Greece at the time. I told Nikolas: "Nikolas, we are going to Cyprus and we are starting the Global Academy of Coaching there."

Nikolas, being an adventurous man, said, "Great, let's go." So we took our three-month-old daughter Joy, put her on the plane, got to Cyprus, and in Pafos we stayed with my dear friend Alexia.

In Cyprus, they drive on the opposite side of the road than in Greece, and we were okay with that. We thought, *We'll figure it out, because there's no other option.*

We realized that Nicosia, which was where we were supposed to be, was not an hour away from Pafos as we'd thought, but an hour and forty minutes away. So we loaded all of our things into a lousy rental car.

It was dark as we headed to Nicosia. Nikolas was driving. We had all of our things, and as I was breastfeeding our precious daughter, milk was spilling out.

That was the biggest step into the void I have ever taken in my life. I was thinking, *Oh my God, what are we doing? We're going to get killed!* Anyone who has driven on the opposite side of the road than they are used to knows what I'm talking about. It's like every car is coming right at you. "I can't believe what we're doing!" I said. "And why did we drag Joy into this?"

I was stepping into the void; stepping outside of my comfort zone. As a result, the Global Academy of Coaching now has dozens of graduates who have changed their own lives, and are now supporting people who have the will to make their dreams come true.

What if we hadn't taken this incredible step into the void, not knowing where we were going?

How was I supposed to know that my students, my first amazing students, would be there to watch?

How was I supposed to know about all the wonderful things that would happen next, or that we would create an amazing group of people in Cyprus, and in Greece, who would help entire countries get into the mindset of personal growth? How was I supposed to know that this would happen? I didn't know.

I just felt like I had to do it. I trusted my instinct.

Think about what this step is going to be for you, and break free of your comfort zone by taking that step into the void. Get to the next level, and realize that the void is okay. It's okay not knowing how to get there. Befriend the void. It's okay to say, "Oh my God, what are we doing? We're going to get killed!" It's okay to do a book presentation in front of one or two people. Because if you go through that, thousands of people will follow. We have to overcome difficulty in order to prove who we are, and then we can take it to the next level. It's all part of our growth.

Let's embrace our screaming Ego, and say it's okay to be in the void. It's okay!

Exercises for days 1-3

1. What big step do you need to take in order to make your dream come true? What's your step into the void? Write it down.
2. Now write down the worst thing that could happen if that step isn't a success. (In my case, with the Global Academy of Coaching, I would have taken a trip and a €6,000 seminar for no reason.)
3. Now write down the worst thing that could happen if you don't take this step. (In my case, I wouldn't have created a school that changes the lives of thousands of people.)
4. Look at the two answers. Compare the "cost."
5. Embrace your EGO and move forward.

How to stop self-sabotage

*If you do what you've always done,
you'll get what you've always gotten.*

Tony Robbins, #1 coach in the world



Most of the time, paralyzed by the stress of everyday life, we manage to live, but not to be happy. We're just existing, dragging it out and saying, "Oh, I wish it was Halloween, or Easter, or Saturday, or Sunday."

Certainly, when you live a life like that, quality-wise, you just "make it through the hour," "make it through the day," "make it through the week," "wait for Christmas," "wait for Easter," wait for anything that gets you a step closer to the grave.

You are not living a happy, exciting existence in this school called "life." There's no reason to expand our souls during the times that make us uncomfortable. We desire what's convenient, to do things the way we want.

A new week has started and someone may say: "I'm tired because it's Monday (or any other day your work week starts)."

You're not tired because of that, since Monday is the first day after a nice weekend during which you hopefully got some rest, and you were able to sleep in a little bit.

Your problem is that Monday signifies your personal battle, and your energy outflow.

The week has started, and you have started struggling with yourself. In the end, the enemy is not across from you. It's not your husband, your wife, your friend, your colleague, your sister, your mother, or your father.

The enemy is in the mirror. You are your own enemy. But who are you fighting, fundamentally? You look in the mirror, and see you are fighting with yourself. Your Ego is fighting with your higher self. And that leads to sabotage.

The first category of ways in which we sabotage ourselves is gossip. Without knowing it, we engage in gossip wherever we go. We gossip while interacting with other people, while out in coffee shops, while in clubs, or while going out for food. You have coffee with your best friends and right away you start to trash other people you encountered throughout the day.

No matter what the subject of the conversation is, you start bad-mouthing and transferring negative energy to the person I'm talking to. For example, a few friends go out, and one of them starts listing her problems while the rest are waiting for their turn. They respond with, "Don't listen to him," and "He's doing it because this or that."

Going out with one of my friends, forming an alliance, and bad-mouthing someone by transferring poisonous messages, is a process that leads to digging our own pits to fall into.

In this low energy vibration of gossip, we are never going to be able to dig ourselves out of this stage, the gossipy mood, either in our next relationship, or in our next professional or personal interaction.

I'm never going to have the ideal relationship or job that makes me truly happy. Because by gossiping, judging, and trashing others, my vibration stays at low levels. I can't demand something higher when I myself am at a low vibration.

The term "friendship" is really misconstrued. A friend is not a person who holds you back.

Is it time for me to wake up? Should I get a broom instead of the shovel I usually choose, and start cleaning up? Am I letting someone hold me back? Am I letting someone control me emotionally because they're a mess, because they're too lazy to work, and they want to get me into the same situation by hanging out with me?

I have a friend who never wants to read a book. She never wants to watch an educational video on YouTube. She never wants to learn more. She never wants to attend a seminar.

She just wants to cuss, to blow off steam, and blame things on everyone and everything. I'm by her side, all day, all week. I spend Saturdays and Sundays with her. I'm wasting all my time with a toxic person who can only offer me pain. I would say that she doesn't cause me pain in a direct way, but rather in a sly way. She doesn't insult me or offend me, but her energy alone keeps me stationary.

I certainly don't suggest taking it to an extreme and cutting out all your friends right away. Instead, I suggest you have a filter to check up on yourself. Ask yourself: *What do I want out of life? Do I want progress? Do I want what's best for me? Who do I have beside me? Who do I have around me?*

As Jim Rohn, the father of personal growth, wisely said, "I'm the average of the five people I hang out with most."

So, one way or another, I'm going to end up being the average of the five people I hang out with, and associate with daily.

The second category of sabotage is to believe someone else's opinion about you. Somebody might have told you something at one point in your life, and not only did you believe it, but you applied it and made it your ceiling.

Let me start with a personal example. God blessed me with height, and a big love of sports. I was first string in school, in kindergarten, and in elementary school. In the first grade, I started playing basketball. I joined a small team, an average team. Unfortunately, when we engage in learning something new, or start training, we want to be among the best. Do I want to join a basketball team? I'm going to join what I consider to be the best one. Do I live in an area that doesn't have the best one? I'm going to inconvenience myself and go the nearest area that has an even better team. Do I want to take English lessons? I'm going to look for the best teacher. Do I want to learn something, to be mentally trained, to get coaching? I am going to look for the best teacher. How do I know who is the best? I'm going to look at the life of the teacher. I am going to look at his or her successes and credentials. And then I'll choose, depending on what I see.

When I started playing basketball, many coaches would tell me: "You're not going to make it," "You're not a good dribbler," "You are way too tall, it's making it harder for you," "You're not doing that right," "You'll never get it," "Don't shoot a three-pointer," or "I'll cut your arms off if you shoot from that far again."

Each one of us is a special case. Look at yourself in the mirror and ask yourself: Who has told you things like that? I bet you all have a person like that in your life, even now.

For example, your mother, or another member of your family, might be messing with your head. Maybe she is saying, “You’re not going to make it,” or “What’s the point of a promotion, if you don’t have a husband, you don’t have a family, you didn’t have a child, and you didn’t make me a grandma?” or “You got married and you broke up, so you weren’t capable of keeping a man.” Essentially, the message is You failed.

I’ve gathered all of this from people who do me the honor of trusting me to work with them on a very personal level. They have decided to plunge the knife in deep, and then clean their wounds.

And certainly, if this happened when I was in my teens or twenties, you know where it’s coming from. It’s not caused by a stranger passing by, or by some guy honking at me at the traffic lights. It’s caused by my mother, my father, my relative, my grandfather, or my grandmother. It happened somewhere.

Unwise people throw a subjective opinion or judgment at me, and I rush to turn it into part of the script in my life’s movie. Allowing my subconscious to absorb it, to turn it into a self-fulfilled prophecy, will cause me a lot of pain. I will get dragged into it, without being able to shake it off.

Unfortunately, I stick like a leech. I get stuck to the belief my mother or my father instilled in me at some point in my life.

I’m going to share another example from my life.

When I got into Panteion University, by being a very good student, my father told me at one point: “Come on, you’re not going to graduate, you’re not going to get your degree. You’re not going to make it, you’re going to give up.”

The words of these people hold a lot of power over us because we love them, and we appreciate them. But we have to learn to set filters and boundaries, so as not to get “roped in” by their words and confirm them. That requires attention.

I was working while I was studying, as well as doing other things, such as playing basketball. Suddenly, I was 21 courses behind.

I had started to believe what my father told me. I was manifesting it in my life, in my reality. A friend of mine blackmailed me emotionally with that line, and I froze. At first, I lost interest in my courses. Then I set a school record and, thank God, I graduated and got my degree. The fact that my father told me that I would not make it hurt a lot, and I tried very hard to shake that off. Since I was young, around 25-26 years old, I managed to do it more easily.

As years go by, when it gets bad, when I’m a little jaded, when life is exhausting me, it takes a bigger effort to shake those feelings off. But it’s possible. You can do it!

Do you want to? Do you want to understand?

Do you want to pull up your sleeves and look at the wound? Put rubbing alcohol on it, and clean it?

It’s going to hurt at first.

There’s a third category of sabotage that involves posts and dialogues on Facebook and on my social media accounts. These are working against me. I was dating a guy who dumped me; I’m mad at him, so what am I going to do? I can’t tell him. I’ll go on my profile, find a meme, and I’ll start a public dialogue for whoever gets it.

How is posting something like “All men are like this,” going to help me overcome a problem? Of course, every curious and uninvited person shows up and comments: “Oh, really? What happened to you, girl? I’m very sorry something like this happened to you,” without knowing what I am talking about. As a matter of fact, I barely know what I am talking about.

I found something clever, posted it, and started a dialogue. The comments are never-ending.

When I’m alone and posting photos of my dog, or when I’m sick and posting my antibiotics, my thermometers, my painkillers, I’m doing subliminal advertising. “I’m in pain now, I’m suffering, I’m alone.” I begin to take advantage of my loneliness. I scream how lonely I am. I make me weak. I sabotage myself, instead of understanding that it’s not exactly loneliness, or that my solitude is chosen by me. Instead of investing in it, and saying: “Yes, I love being alone.” Some of us are alone, and it’s not a bad thing. It’s the best time to prepare, and regroup. If I invest in that correctly, since I’m not essentially alone, I have a relationship with myself. That’s the relationship I’m called to upgrade in order to attract a better relationship with my mirror, which will be a future partner.

And what am I doing? I’m in front of my fireplace at night, with a glass of wine, posting, in case anyone lurking over my profile messages me. I’m looking for a needle in a haystack. Let’s say a social media vulture sees me alone by the fireplace, and messages me. Is this how I want to start the relationship of my dreams?

On the other hand, there are certainly great people on social media. The way in which you attract them, the misery you exude, the loneliness, the whining, and your overall energy at that moment are not ideal.

There's always a divine balance, and a causality in everything. When you write, and you post like you're miserable, you're going to attract miserable people.

You're not even going to remember that, when things don't turn out the way you thought they would. You will deem yourself amazing, and the other person inadequate for using you, blocking you, dumping you and not speaking to you again. You didn't notice that you had agreed to that from the beginning—your beginning.

Another way in which I sabotage myself is with self-deprecating language and behavior. I have a close friend who happens to have thinning hair. He joins the group and says: "Don't turn on too many lights because I'll look like a globe."

Without any introductions, he starts being self-deprecating to preempt the worst. He doesn't realize that by doing that, he creates the worst. Even if the other person likes him when they meet, subconsciously, he's going to rank him a little lower.

Humor is sacred. It's a portal of wisdom. It produces serotonin and dopamine. Smiling, giggling, and roaring laughter are healthy. They replace negative hormones with positive ones, just like working out does. However, I have to be cautious about the quality of the humor, and what I choose to joke about. I have to be careful of what lines I use and whether I unwillingly take out a gun, and shoot myself. "Well, honestly, what did you expect from me? I'm sloppy and irresponsible, I never would have made it."

That's my sense of humor. It's bad enough that I'm laughing at myself, but other people are laughing at my expense as well, making it an even bigger energy drain.

Be careful of what you joke about and don't use yourself. I can live my whole life and never understand that I'm beating myself up, trash-talking myself, humiliating myself, corrupting myself, and alienating myself when I'm being self-deprecating. Self-deprecation is not funny!

Tomorrow, I'm going to have a fresh start and keep my self-deprecation in check. Sarcasm is hurting me.

I don't see it because I'm not in pain.

An invisible knife, self-deprecation, is stabbing me and sabotaging my development, and what's best for my life.

I left the superficial part for the end.

I'm in too much of a hurry. Without having the knowledge, I rush to be the wise one in my group, the wise one in every situation. It's the novice stage we all go through.

We heard something that impressed us, read something that affected us, but instead of focusing on it and applying it to ourselves, we rush to "teach" it to our father, our mother, or our brother. We get offended when they can't understand or when they don't listen to us. We forget that everyone is a separate case, and has their own personal journey of self-improvement.

I assume that if I give 30 *likes* to posts by Tony Robbins, Brendon Burchard, or Oprah, and agree with everything they wrote on their photos, I automatically don't have to do anything else.

I'm already wise because I liked all of their self-improvement pages, watched a movie with the same theme, read that quote by Coelho, and I finally realized the universe conspires. So, everything in my life is going to go great.

Hitting the *like* button on a website, a post, or reading half a book, doesn't change my life. Yes, it's nice to take care of myself, good to watch what I eat, and which ingredients I put in my body, but they're superficial actions. Reading half a page of my book every day is very good, it's a good start. But I shouldn't have any expectations after reading half a page of my book and giving a couple of *likes* to nice pages, or pretty posts. I'll end up disappointed and think it's not actually working, and that Ouranos and Douka are writing all this for nothing.

Nothing changes. I fall back into the vicious cycle of my vanity.

There are ways to dig deeper into this. Not by taking it to other extremes, like spending 24 hours a day wondering whether I should be breathing, or if I'm going to ruin the energy, or whether I can say this joke, or if I'm going to offend someone, or sabotage myself. If knowledge is putting pressure on me, at some point I am going to get sick of it, and give it all up.

But there's a proper balance, which says: "I train, I make sure that for one, two, three days, however many hours during the week, I attend to my body, to my physical activity, and to my spirit." And it's really important to find a teacher, since without a teacher you can't become a champion. I need to find a coach, to have discipline, and to be consistent in order to create my life the way I want.

Uploading cute poems or quotes and giving *likes* is not enough. Am I sabotaging myself when I'm resisting my new reality? Do I have to die exactly like I am right now? Can't I be happy? Don't I deserve to have a partner? Don't I deserve to be trained in identifying my emotions?

A study mentions that babies have to be trained in order to identify at least 70 emotions.

Were we ever trained at identifying emotions as babies?

As adults, we can barely recognize fear, worry, and anger. I have to be trained in order to realize that at the moment where I'm about to get into a fight, I feel fear. I cannot skillfully blame it on the other person.

Nobody can do anything to another person unless they allow it.

So we are talking about superficial actions. Tony Robbins says that massive action is needed. Action for working on my beliefs, changing them, finding out what makes me happy, learning to manage my thoughts, setting boundaries, and putting my goals in order. It's not just sitting around and giving *likes* to five quotes and three poems, waiting for my life to change while it's slipping out of my hands.

When I'm tired of hurting, when I'm sick of setbacks, when my procrastination hurts me, then a new beginning is possible. I choose the right ally, the right coach, the right expert, and I make a small or a big investment. I invest time, money, and energy working on my substantial progress and change.

Exercises for days 4-6

1. In which ways are you sabotaging yourself? What have you read that made you feel like it was written about you? Write down: "I'm sabotaging myself by doing..."
I'm sabotaging myself by going out with my friends and discussing how much all men suck.
2. What actions do you need to take to change the sabotage?
*I'll change the subject once the conversation starts.
I'll leave if the subject of the conversation doesn't change.
I'll choose to go to the cinema or to the theater, places where we don't have to talk much.*
3. How long are you going to apply them for? Write down the date and time.
I'll take the actions above until Monday, February 18th, 2019, at 11:11 or earlier.
4. For the next few days observe yourself and your life. In what other ways can you be sabotaging yourself? Write them down and repeat the aforementioned steps.

Stepping out of your comfort zone and taking action

Everything you want is outside your comfort zone.

Jack Canfield, #1 success coach



Our life is demanding and nobody can claim otherwise. It's difficulty keeps increasing when I'm not sure how to act. When I waver, hesitate, cancel actions, or overthink what to do and what other people are going to think of my decisions, I reach a certain crossroads. I'm not sure what to choose, or what I should decide.

I would like to have an expert available in my phone, like in game shows.

It would be great if every time I wavered, thinking about which road to take, or what choice to make when various subjects trouble me, I had an expert on the line, someone wise to answer all my questions.

I understand it's impossible, but even if it could happen, we would be settling and be deprived of our personal freedom. Not even God does that. He gives us freewill to act.

What happens when I don't make the decision? What happens when I don't know what to choose? I have a dilemma: It's Saturday night, and I have an invitation to go out with people from my gym class, or to go out with *that* friend. Should I go out with my friends from the gym class?

What should I actually do? I start asking a bunch of people, who are supposed to be my friends. In other words, non-experts. I ask others because I don't have an answer for what I should decide, but mostly because I'm scared of the consequences of my decision. While I'm already weak because I'm wavering, I start to lose more strength and energy by asking: "How do I do this?"

The question itself, like every question not pertaining to knowledge, contains ambiguity, or doubt. Every question like that makes me weak, and makes me lose energy. Furthermore, I'm asking people who definitely don't have more insight into the subject than I do.

Actually, I'm asking people with the secret intention of them taking the responsibility of my decision, so I can later use that like an ace up my sleeve. I can say: "Oh, I didn't make that decision. I went out with those people on Saturday, but I didn't have fun. It's not completely my fault. It's your fault, since I asked you." There it is!

So what do I do? I'm confused. I like being confused, and indecisive. While I'm paralyzed by anxiety, fear, and worry, I torture myself further by asking questions constantly.

With each question I leave my inner center and move away from the answers that are inside me. It doesn't really matter if the decision is important or not. I've turned this habit into my life sport.

I do this with my parents, with my siblings, with my relatives, with my partner, and with my ex-husband or wife.

A small tip that I want to give you is this: If something is bothering you and you need to make a choice between two things, choose the more uncomfortable one. When you pick the more uncomfortable option, you automatically take action and begin working on a part of yourself that needs improvement.

For example, let's say you want to wake up a little earlier in the morning. Are you a morning person or a night person? If it's hard for you to get up in the morning, you have an opportunity to change this. Why not sacrifice a bit of sleep to go the gym before the sun has risen? Try starting your day by working out, by taking a shower, packing your clothes, and going to work. Have you done that?

I suggest you try it. You'll be surprised by how our biological clock and our mood shift in a day where we sacrifice half an hour of sleep. It's not really sleep, but more like lounging, since I'm already awake and checking my phone, scrolling through Facebook and Instagram to check if I got any *likes* last night, and seeing whether I have any new mail.

Essentially, I think I need about an hour to make breakfast, I lie in bed, I go to the bathroom, I go from my bed to the couch, I read the morning newspaper, I watch morning shows because god forbid their ratings drop.

Instead of getting up in the morning and lazing about, get up when you usually do and use that lost time, that fifteen minutes or half hour or hour, to run a couple of miles. Run around the block, lift a few weights, work up a sweat, take a shower, and then go out to face life. It will be easier to face your grumpy friend, your colleague, or opponent at work (the one who keeps asking you for things), your clients, or whoever else you encounter. You'll be surprised.

When you fight it, it's very difficult. It's not easy to go against your habits and your beliefs. In other words, we are telling you: take the plunge.

There are no mistakes, there is no pain, there is no invalidity, there is no rejection. Whatever your biggest fear is, whatever is holding you back the most, look it in the eyes, and defeat it.

Your biological clock will be working inside you all day. Your morning workout will give you enough energy to last until the night. You will annoy your ego because you went through a hardship, and although you struggled, you had discipline. All wise and mentally beneficial decisions are results of discipline, confidence, and being uncomfortable. Those practices constitute the characteristics of a "right decision." I don't like to use the term "right decision," since there are no right or wrong decisions, only mentally beneficial and not beneficial. Besides, if I don't make the mentally beneficial decision, it's okay, it's not the end of the world. I'll be troubled, I'll have a bad taste in my mouth and bitter feelings, which all mean I need to change something in my life.

The first stage is not knowing, and not wanting to know, what is right and beneficial for you.

The second stage is experiencing pain, recognizing certain things, growing, and evaluating your options.

You realize that an hour of working out or reading a book would be more beneficial than going out with the people who annoy you, and talk about others. Staying alone, listening to some music, relaxing, or taking a walk on the beach are all better choices, yet you don't pick them.

Don't be disappointed, because you need to go through this stage.

The third stage is where you will find the power to start applying the knowledge. When you do, my friends, you will not be able to go back. You will be so happy, so satisfied, and able to see solid results. You will have gone to the gym, and you will be calm. I'm not saying you will lose five pounds, but you will possess a spiritual and mental wellness.

You will not find the strength through your thoughts. You will find the strength through what you decide, and what you support. It's not important to just make a decision, it's important to stand behind your decisions. If you don't, then who will? Others won't support you.

Others never support you. If you don't support your decision, you don't support yourself.

Start by supporting your decision and by taking action. Action will set you in motion.

Everyone says, "Take action." Change things, be active. But how?

From the inside out, and from the outside in. It's extremely important to see how my choice, my decision, is a move that will benefit me from the inside out.

So, if I want to buy a new shirt, or a pair of shoes, how will that benefit me? Will it benefit me on the outside to wear a shirt to feel more attractive? Will I feel better afterwards?

Nobody knows you like you know yourself. “Should I buy this shirt or not?” Why do you want to buy it? “Should I buy these shoes or not?” “Should I go to the club or stay in a pub?” “Should I go to that restaurant?” “Should I take this trip?” Why do you want to get uncomfortable?

Do it. Will you feel better mentally? Do it. Will you spend all your money recklessly, then cry, and get upset about it? Don’t do it! Will the friends you are going to meet cause you concerns or give you a push? Yes, do it.

We definitely need the experts, but for the minor decisions in our lives, it’s good to start activating our own personal instincts. It’s essential to understand where we can go, and what will empower us while making decisions. That’s why coaching is so effective. It helps us find the solutions that are already inside of us.

It’s vital to make decisions, and stand by them. To be able to check whether this decision benefits me from the inside out, makes me serene and calm. You might say: “It’s Saturday night, I’ve been asked to go out. If I don’t go out, I’ll get to sleep for another hour. I’ll rest, take a candle-lit bath, put on scented oils, and chill. I won’t watch television. Instead, I’ll listen to some music, open the window, and look at the stars.”

You may wonder, “Will they think I’m an idiot for not following the group, and instead staying home?” I suggest you examine whether this decision was made so that you could appear intellectual. Start asking yourself. Nobody knows you better than you do.

Stop surrendering your strength to strangers and nosy people. Don't give power to people who get off on giving you advice, pretending to be smart, and playing games with you. They are not your real friends.

You want to have friends. A friend respects my opinion, a friend makes me take responsibility, a friend apologizes. Some of my friends call me and say: "Should I do this?" I tell them, "I'm sorry, I don't know. Ask yourself. See how you feel, close your eyes, and think. You're following this path, you're making this choice, see it happening. Focus and say: 'Oh, I'm going to feel something' or 'I don't feel well' or 'Don't do it'."

Close your eyes. and press play on your scenarios. Focus, get in the mood, and you will give yourself the answer. We have forgotten how to communicate with ourselves. We only communicate with ourselves when we want to blame ourselves, punish ourselves, guilt-trip ourselves (I'm a mess, I can't make it – I failed, I got a divorce – I'm broke – I lost my job – I'm single) Big deal! Read books, do coaching sessions, attend a workshop.

Invest in yourself, bet on you. Ten, twenty, or thirty euros for a book, a seminar, a session, a webinar. Bet on you. You have already bet enough on vodka, whiskey, and on who is going to win on *Survivor*. Don't stop doing it, just turn it down, and turn something else up at the same time.

Here's something very important: I'm anxious, and I don't know what to pick, or how to act. One of the few things I got from college that I actually remember, and apply in my life, is "delayed gratification."

If I have a plate of chicken and vegetables, I go first for the chicken, and leave the vegetables.

But shouldn't I have started with the vegetables, then eat my chicken, so that my meal would be more pleasant and filling?

Of course, this example is an allegory. I'm rushing to eat the cherry instead of the cake. I'm missing the point of things, and I'm missing the essence of my choices.

I make choices just to make choices. I choose erratically, angrily, while I'm upset and agitated.

My friend, anyone can see that if I feel anger and hatred, or if I'm not feeling well, calm or serene, that no matter what choice I make, it's going to be the worst one. I should calm down, find ways to relax, not make decisions in the heat of the moment, but instead, investigate things as an observer.

The right observer is the student. And isn't the right student an observer? They operate in reverse. Which means that we are and must be both students and observers.

In doing so, we will increase our confidence, our self-esteem, and give life a different meaning. Some might say, "That sounds good," "You're good, I'll try it out," "You're getting passionate, you convinced me." What will happen if I believe this would be the choice to satisfy me, but then it didn't?

The biggest secret regarding gratification is to be able to live in the moment. To make the decision, feel like you made the best decision possible, and let things happen.

Sometimes we might make a "right" decision. It's a positive decision for us, but when we are making it, we stress over making it work. Even though we made a right decision, we weren't so sure it was the right one, and we were slowly stifling it. We say: "Oh yes, that's my decision. I decided not to go out."

While staying in, I start thinking: *I'm probably stupid, I'm probably depressed. It's Saturday night, everyone is out and I'm a fool for staying in. I don't deserve them, I don't have friends, they didn't want me in the end. I rejected them, but they had probably rejected me first so that I would reject them and not go.*

Instead of waiting to be familiarized with the positive aspects of my decision, I make the decision, then strangle it, and claim it was a “bad” decision.

Buddy, it's not a bad decision. The way you handled it was bad because even though you made a decision, you wouldn't let it breathe. You didn't let it develop, and you didn't enjoy it. In order to enjoy your decision, you need to give it freedom, the ultimate grace.

You made the decision to stay in. You shouldn't feel guilt, or remorse, or let your brain tell you that you did something stupid. Make the decision, and then be free of the decision. Let it do its job, and you do yours. Thank God, you have so many things to keep you busy during the day.

You don't need to hover over the decision and wait for it to satisfy you. Give it space so that things, and the situation, can develop.

How can I know what is going to benefit me mentally at any moment? Can I look inside myself to check if what I decide is going to benefit me? Can I get an answer to see how I'll feel when the scenario plays out? I can ask myself “What if?” and mentally run scenario A. Then I can do the same “What if?” for scenario B. A good choice would be to select the scenario that makes me feel more inner peace and calm. Meaning I will press play, close my eyes, focus, and see my first option play out, and then the second one.

If you have a hard time choosing, even after that, then I simply suggest you pick the road less travelled, the more uncomfortable one. That's what we suggest: discomfort.

It's not hard to start getting our truth out, and externalizing it. It might be hard the first or the second time, but when I start winning, I feel invincible, like a warrior, a winner. It's then way easier to follow my own path, break my old molds, and create new ones, which will have other criteria and priorities. I'll have the brushes, the painting, and I'm going to paint, not scribble. I'm going to create a piece of art because a decision that gets me out of my comfort zone is a piece of art.

I can become a painter of life, an artist. In order to be an artist, I need to come closer to my soul, and to listen to it. When I'm living as an artist of my soul, and going after the mental result, then I'm truly going to be happier without causing it.

I have the courage to make beautiful, but hard, decisions. What are you scared of? Strong people are strong when things get hard. They don't get called "strong" when things are easy. A strong person becomes stronger when it's hard. You'll see when you make the hard decision.

It's funny because many of my coachees call me, text me, send me emails saying, "I had to make this hard decision and I did it. I don't regret it. Suddenly, someone left a path opened, sped me up, and pushed me along."

I remember when we were in Heraklion. There was a giant waterslide. I was at the top of the waterslide, thinking: *Wow, the pool is so far away down there. All this yelling and screaming. Should I go down or not? What's going to happen? Am I in danger? I'm scared of heights.*

When I'm making a hard decision, it's not really a hard decision because the difficulty lies in aligning myself with my desires. I listen to myself and no longer look outside and beg, or ask myself why I want to do it. Why do I want to make this decision? What's my deeper purpose?

That is a beautiful talk on that high level with myself. That's when I'm going to go on the waterslide. And what is life going to do? It's going to speed me up. Have you seen the way I go down the waterslide once I'm on it, and get started?

You're going to experience it like that, if you haven't already. Many of you who have worked with us have already experienced your changes. You've achieved great victories. With your kids, with ex-husbands or wives, with chronic financial problems that have changed you completely.

We are happy that you conquered true change by yourself. We just gave you a push. You did all the work, and congratulations on that.

Get in line for the slide, be happy with yourself, and those around you. Travel, and enjoy the slide. Appreciate that pleasure and that beautiful feeling of joy. Look at your life like a game, enjoy the sounds, enjoy the sensations and most of all, enjoy the new relationship you are launching with yourself.

You now have the tools to decide. You don't need to ask anyone else. You don't need to postpone the decisions you make.

Now is the time to make decisions, give love to the present, stop getting lost in the past, stop daydreaming about the future, and act now.

Εφαρμογή για τις μέρες 7-9

Next time you want to make a decision, think first and then write down the following:

1. Which path is going to be the hardest one? Which decision is going to make you more uncomfortable?
2. What would be the ideal result for you?
3. Close your eyes and “see” the ideal result.
4. Which positive emotions did you feel? What did you see? What did you hear?
5. Live the experience now and make the right decision.

Second Key:
TOOLS

Stress; and how to deal with it

I realize that stress is only fear. I now release all fears.

Louise Hay, mother of personal growth



How can we create a better, healthier life, and allow ourselves to enjoy every day? How can we live without stress?

We may call it anxiety, stress, a noose around our neck, a heavy heart, a punch in the stomach, or the sensation of suffocating. It's clear we are talking about an extremely negative feeling, which overcomes us, and everyone can relate to it. If you meet someone and you say, "Good morning. How are you?" and they respond "I'm great," you may look at them curiously, thinking, "Really, you're not stressed?"

I want us to realize that we are all carrying negative feelings, even if we identify them differently.

Furthermore, those negative feelings cause tremendous obstructions in our bodies, and even illnesses. It's especially important to find ways of taming them. We must find ways of making those feelings work for us, and not against us.

Stress and anxiety equate to the same thing: Fear. Specifically, fear of change in our lives. We're scared that things are not going to go the way we think they should.

Let me share a quick example. Today I was supposed to take Joy to her rhythmic gymnastics class for the first time. Between our travels to Cyprus and the holidays, we were somewhat disorganized. Joy took a late nap, and I had difficulty waking her. We left the house at 6:15, and the class started at 6:30. I mentally beat myself up the entire car ride there, thinking, *I can't believe this. I'm such a bad mom. It's my daughter's first class, and she's going to be late. How could I traumatize my child like this?* I created these negative thoughts myself. The only fact was that I left the house late.

It's only a fifteen-minute ride, though, so I would have gotten there right on time. I just wanted to get there a little earlier, so that Joy could get attuned to the environment, since it was going to be her first time there.

I had this huge fear that things weren't going to go the way I wanted them to. Where does this fear come from?

It comes from me, and only me. I created this fear. Nobody told me to take my child there early, and nobody told me that the class would start at exactly 6:30. It was my own voice. Therefore, it was my own fear.

I wanted to share with you an acronym my teacher Jack Canfield uses in his book *The Success Principles*: FEAR: **F**antasized **E**motions **A**ppearing **R**eal. They're imagined emotions that I have created in my head, and made to appear real. Fear does not exist. It's something I have created in my mind.

In the end, Joy and I parked outside the place at 6:29. I went in, and the lady at the entrance greeted me with: “Hello, welcome. No one is here yet. We’ll start soon.”

I could have spent that 15-minute ride enjoying the music, watching the beautiful sea, asking Joy about her day, and talking to her about mine. Instead, how did I spend it? Anxious about an imagined possibility I had created in my head.

It’s important to realize that fear is something that exists only in our minds. You could probably say: “Yeah, sure, Jill. The fact that I can’t pay the electricity bill is just in my mind? The fact that a person very close to me is terribly ill?” No, no, no—that’s not what I’m saying. But what stress does is take a situation and expand it until it’s huge.

If you think about what happens every time you’re stressed and how your own brain enlarges the issue, you’ll realize it’s true. That enlargement is significant.

Our Ego does a great job at that. The truth is that there’s no fear, there’s no stress, it’s only what we make up. You might be saying to yourself, “Yes, but there is fear and stress. It’s the voice inside my head.”

I am going to tell you how we can control three things in our lives: our thoughts, our words, and our actions. In this part, we are going to see how we can control our thoughts.

Nobody else can control your thoughts. Not the government, not an illness, not the IRS, not your debts, and not the electricity provider. Nobody can control your brain. Only you. If we consider this fact, everything else becomes really simple.

So, let's take 100% responsibility for our lives, and 100% responsibility for our thoughts. We can tame our thoughts and our anxieties, and do whatever we want with them.

A great coach can really help with that. I'm going to tell you how to do it, but it requires work.

It's something we've been working on intensively at the Global Academy of Coaching. By the time our coachees graduate, they have gained the ability to stand up for themselves and control their thoughts, so that their minds work for them and not against them. They are also able to help other people do the same. So, what can we do with this lovely anxiety? How can we tame it, and how can we transform it?

I'll use my own example. While taking Joy to her first rhythmic gymnastics class, I was feeling like I was late and thinking I was a bad mom. What do we call that? Self-flagellation. Who is talking then? My Ego. Are those thoughts helping me? No, they are not. I'm going to take my Ego and let it know that I am calling the shots now. While your Ego is talking, you are going to make a decision. Right now, Ego, I am making a decision.

The decision is to feel inner harmony. Your Ego is going to go wild! It will say, "What are you talking about? You're late! Your kid won't get to class on time. You're a heartless mother! Look at that guy trying to pass you. Step on it, step on the gas, and get ahead of him!" At that moment, what are you going to say to your Ego? "Thank you very much for all the beautiful things you are telling me. I love you, I release you, and I choose to feel inner harmony. I have faith that everything is going to work out." Your Ego will attack: "No. What are you talking about? Why are you saying that? It's not possible!"

It will get even wilder. This is Ego's job. You will continue: "I choose to feel inner peace at this moment, and have faith that everything is going to work out. Stress is the beginning of being unfaithful."

I'm not talking about being unfaithful in a romantic relationship. I'm talking about the fact that we need to trust that the universe, and God, if that is part of your faith, knows what needs to happen better than we do.

Faith is about knowing that everything around you is happening exactly the way it should. You'll get there on time, even if that time is different from what you thought it would be. You are going to pay your bills at the exact moment you need to pay them, even if you think that it's a different time than they should have been paid. Faith is the idea that everything is happening exactly how, and when, it's supposed to.

What I did in that moment when I was on the way to my daughter's class and anxious about being late was this: I talked to my Ego and told it beautiful and peaceful things. Since my Ego kept going, I started talking to Joy, and explained to her: "Joy, I feel like we left a bit late, but I promise we're going to get to the class." I told her, "I know you might not get all the time you wanted in order to prepare, but please know that I've done my best." What did Joy do? She sang cheerfully in the backseat.

Joy knows better than I do that everything works out perfectly. In this way, you can manage stress, which we explained is fear, which we further explained is a lack of faith in the universe, in God, or in whatever power you believe in.

So, as soon as your Ego starts talking, you listen to what it says and you thank it for whatever it's saying. Then you choose the emotion you want to feel, and eventually you release your negative thoughts.

Something else that's extremely important is taking a deep breath. What happens when we get stressed? We suddenly lose our breath. That happens every time we feel fear. It begins with our "fight or flight" reaction, a primal instinct we used to hunt and kill an animal to bring back to eat.

The question is: will I stay and fight, or should I flee?

When you see a bear in front of you, an alarm immediately goes off in your head. That's your survival instinct. We've taken this instinct and incorporated it into our daily lives, as we stress over what to eat, or if we are going to have time to go to the gym. Fight or flight. Primitively, we stressed over whether we were going to survive. Now, we stress over the smallest things. We shouldn't.

Today, we've taken fight or flight to extremes. We like to label things, so we go around saying: "I am stressed, I am stressed." You can choose not to be stressed! Take 100% responsibility for your life. Talk to your Ego, which is afraid of changes, show it love, tell it, "Thank you very much," and take a deep breath. Take twenty deep breaths if you need to.

Another way of dealing with your Ego is to step aside for one minute and think: *What's the worst thing that'll happen, if things don't go the way you planned?* For me, in that particular example I shared with you, the worst outcome was that we would arrive late, Joy would cry, and the other moms would be side-eyeing me, thinking: "You're a bad mom, you brought her here late."

We are talking about situations of equal importance. Still, that's the worst thing that could have happened. And I missed out on the wonderful moments we could have had on the journey there because of my stress. There are more serious situations, yes. You might not be able to pay your rent, and get kicked out of your house. What's the worst thing that could happen to you? You're going to be homeless. Will you survive? Yes, you'll survive. What's going to happen? You're going to find another solution. You *will* find a solution! There's never, ever, ever a case where God, the universe, or whatever you believe in, gives you something that you can't face. Never. So, have faith. Anxiety equals fear, which equals lack of faith.

Make the decision to reject stress. Stress is created in our heads. Like we said, there are only three things we can control: our thoughts, our words, and our actions. Start with your thoughts, and you can tame them; otherwise stress will prevail. It's going to manifest in different ways. It's amazing what we can do by creating **F**antasized **E**motions **A**ppearing **R**eal. I shared with you a way to deal with stress: We take our Ego, we love it, and we tell it: "Thank you very much, but I choose to feel inner peace and inner harmony right now." Choose this, no matter what's going on around you.

There's no way that the universe or God will give you something that you can't face. There's no chance. That's one of the ways in which you can deal with stress.

Have faith in yourself!

Exercises for days 11-13

1. When you start stressing over the following days, ask yourself: Who's talking now? My Ego, or my Higher Self? You can tell them apart by the fact that your Ego is afraid of changes, and acts like a child, while your Higher Self takes responsibility, and acts like an adult. Moreover, your Ego makes you feel negative emotions, while your Higher Self makes you feel positive ones.
2. As soon as you realize that your Ego is talking, say: "Thank you, and I love you, but I choose to have mental health and peace now," or any other positive emotion.
3. Take four deep breaths.
4. Envision how the situation will play out in the ideal way.
5. Say out loud: **"I have faith."**

From overanalyzing to making a decision

Only make decisions that support your self-image, self-esteem and self-worth.

Oprah Winfrey, #1 television host in America

Speaking of overanalyzing, the first thing that pops into my head, and also the first thing people ask me during life coaching sessions, is: “Why do I overanalyze?”

Everyone does it. It’s not just you.

Your Ego tries to convince you that it’s only happening to you. That you’re the only one falling for it, the only one overanalyzing. That’s not the case. We have all gone through that stage—we have all fallen into the trap of overanalyzing.

We’re going to unfold the reasons for it. Even if you already know what they are, it’s important to analyze them, and realize that when analyzed properly, we can overcome them.

The main reason I overanalyze is because I don’t trust myself. Someone may ask: How is that possible? Not trusting yourself?

How can I not trust myself? I want to overanalyze. Someone may claim that the reason they overanalyze is that they trust themselves, and consider it the “safest” option.

Unfortunately, most of the paths we’ve followed in our lives until now, and especially in our adult lives, don’t come from objectively wise people.

We see our parents and relatives trapped in what they do and how they act. They have a hard time making decisions, they blame each other, they avoid responsibility, and they create confusion in their thoughts. Even though older people should have the wisdom of life, and set an example for us, they end up setting an example of confusion. They make it seem logical that whenever we make a decision, whether it’s important or not, we have to go through the pain of confusion.

Well, not anymore! It doesn’t make sense. We are going to analyze the ways in which you can clear that fog and set things straight regarding my decisions.

I am not alone in my thoughts. I have old Nikolas and young Nikolas with me, talking in my head. I have my Ego, which means I always hear the opinions of Jill, Joy, Marilena, my mother, my father, my mother-in-law, my father-in-law, my two best friends from school, my three best friends from basketball, someone on Facebook who popped in when he got the chance and was happy to share his opinion as well... And so it goes. But I am here to make a decision.

What would it be like to see this trouble, this confusion, this cloud, in a picture?

How easy would it be to make this decision?

I am a boiling pot. I throw in potatoes, cans, chicken, anything else I find, and still expect it to turn into food good enough for me to eat.

I believe that my decision won't be the best one. Why do I overanalyze? Honestly, I do it because I'm afraid of the consequences. I'm afraid that if I make a decision, I'm going to feel insecure that this decision was not the best one.

It's like if someone told you that your entire life would depend on this decision. That you are "married" to this decision, and you can't change it for the rest of your life. That if you make this decision, it's going to be final, and that you don't have the ability to readjust your plan.

Then Ego steps in to make this decision, a life or death decision. I let my own Ego, my own young Nikolas, and everyone else I've conceded the power of adult Nikolas to—my mother-in-law, my father-in-law, my sister, my brother, my cousin, Jill, the baby, my neighbor, my friend, my good friend.

If I concede all my strength, all my competence, and all that is in me to the opinions of strangers and non-experts, what's going to happen? You could ask is your cousin, your sister, or your friend a stranger? Maybe they are, when it comes to the decision you have to make.

The odds are not in their favor. They're in mine.

To be at peace with my decision. To be ready to stand by the consequences of my decision. I have seen what "healthy" is like and I follow that example. That example is the existence of bustle, the existence of worry, of going to sleep and thinking "Oh, maybe I shouldn't do what I decided I would do tomorrow?" and losing sleep over it.

I overanalyze by creating imaginary scenarios that tire me, drain my energy, and eat away at me.

Basically, these scenarios are going to swallow me whole. They're going to first swallow me, then swallow everyone around me who was involved.

We have all been through it. You know very well what I'm talking about.

It's not good for me. I don't like clearing things up. That's because I like being a little bit idle. I like delaying my decisions. I like being a little lazy, a little whiny, and using other people's opinions as a crutch, because I am limping a little bit.

Therefore, it's not in my "best interest" to clear the mist. I put "best interest" in quotation marks, because it's really in my favor to keep it foggy; it's more convenient.

It's convenient to be idle, to gossip, to have too many cooks in the kitchen.

If someone has run out of options, and is thinking, *Nikolas, I don't have a choice, I'm waiting to see a sign that will lead me to make the right decision*, then I'll agree with that person. I'm going to tell him to hold on. Don't make any decisions yet.

However, you still have to stop overanalyzing, and wait until you see the signs. Do some work on something else, and when you see a sign steering you in a particular direction, then invest in that decision.

What do we do? We may not see a sign, we may not have a choice, we struggle, we fight, we get blocked by others, and we don't create enough space for that choice to bloom.

We rush into imagining a choice, yet it would not be ideal to act on a fantasy.

Like we said, fear is Fantasized Emotions Appearing Real. When we don't have a choice, we make up choice out of fear. Tell me truly, when I make a decision based on my fear, what are the chances of that choice being blessed, working out, and leading to a positive outcome?

Does the habit of overanalyzing ever change?

Of course, people change. Don't listen to those saying that they don't. We have been put on this earth to become better day by day. People don't change when the change comes from someone else. People can only change on their own, starting from within themselves. They can roll up their sleeves, fix their shirts and ties, and say: "It's time for me to change. I'll work as much as I want, and I'll do my best to improve myself. I'm going to be the best version of myself."

Has anyone ever succeeded by overanalyzing? Who says that? Where is it written?

What if I want to analyze? In that case, I'm going to analyze with a clear-cut beginning, middle, and end. Analyzing should be done in moderation.

Overanalyzing happens most times because of our tendency to control things. What is control? It's the fear of change. Even when I don't have any decisions to make, I control my daily life, and my schedule, to the point where I feel pressured as if there were an issue to analyze and decide upon.

We've all been taught this way. Let's say that we are in a safe environment, and our decisions are not dangerous.

The first step is realizing that overanalyzing doesn't guarantee a better result. It doesn't guarantee peaceful sleep, or a peaceful conscience. It doesn't guarantee a successful choice that is going to benefit you.

You may have noticed that when you overanalyze, you essentially lose your power. Confusion takes it away from you. Misunderstanding takes it away from you. Gossip takes it away from you. Other people's opinions take it away from you. You might ask their opinions, apply them one by one, and have them all fail. What do you do after that? You might say: "It's not my fault, it's your fault, you gave me this advice. I was amazing, I did my best." My friend, are you sure you did your best by surrendering your power to others, and letting them make the decisions for you?

Why did you surrender your power? You did it because you wanted to blame them. So that you could have an alibi, because you were truly scared of taking responsibility.

To get the result you want, stop focusing on the results. Start focusing on the choices and the solutions.

And then, time goes by. February is over, March is here, and summer is around the corner.

"Did you go to the gym?"

"No I didn't."

"Didn't you want to go to the gym so that you can get a hot beach body?"

"Yes, I want to have a hot beach body, but it's okay. What can I do? I don't have the time. I had saved up some money, but I spent it. I went out for drinks and treated some friends."

This is self-observation, and requires a change in thinking. Self-observation can help with changing your flow, and your way of thinking. In the gym example, you're pouring energy into your decision, and not into gossiping. You're saying, "Okay, I'll make a decision about the gym at some point." This means that you are giving a sign to the universe. You use your antenna to broadcast that you're serious about implementing a routine into your everyday life besides going to work and going home. When you start taking yourself seriously, spend some energy on making decisions, and take credit for going to the gym, that's when something wonderful will suddenly happen.

Something magical will happen, and a sign will come. For example, while you're going into the gym, you might see two friends laughing and glowing after their workouts.

Something might happen, something might unfold in front of you, either positive or negative.

If you take action, tap into your strength, you'll be rewarded by the angels with signs that will help the right path to unfold right in front of you. It's important to remain calm and not be confused by your Ego blabbing in your ear. Then you can see more clearly.

Nobody knows better than you do.

Go within yourself, because the answer is inside you. I don't have the answer for you, and neither does anyone else. Settle your thoughts, relax, and don't fret over it constantly. Do some work, do some other activities during the day, and then come back to it when you are calm enough to identify the emotion.

When you are about to make a decision, no matter which path you choose, it's going to be accompanied by an emotion.

Whether you go to Gym A, which is in a different neighborhood, Gym B, in a different town, or you choose to join Gym C, which is right around the corner, they all have a unique feeling.

You activate your instinct not by imagining the things that scare you, but by evaluating the signs with your senses. You evaluate what you hear, what you see, what you smell, and what you feel. When you make your senses work for that feeling, that's when you activate your instinct.

Also, it's okay to not make a decision right away.

The world is not going to end if you don't make a decision under pressure. It's going to be just fine if you don't corner myself, like a mouse in a trap, if you don't pressure yourself, if you don't lose sleep, if you don't lose peace of mind.

It's okay to let yourself relax sometimes. Take a time-out. Get some breathing room, give yourself some freedom, don't stifle yourself or create an overly complicated situation. Don't let your Ego make you think that if you don't make a decision, the world is going to end.

Therefore, I set boundaries on my relentless internal babbling, and I stop negotiating and getting into fights with myself. There isn't anything worse than negotiating and fighting with myself. I want myself as an ally, as a loved one. I want myself as a friend, and I'm going to do this by taking a piece of paper and writing down my many thoughts. When I see my overthinking written down on paper, the right decision will become clear. A third, fourth, or fifth path is going to come along, in addition to the ones I already have to choose from.

I will be at peace with myself. I'm going to have an alliance with myself.

When we listen to other people, we concede our power to them. When we confuse ourselves, we won't have a strong ally when we're called on to later defend our decision.

As the writer Terry Goodkind says, *Sometimes, making the wrong choice is better than making no choice.*

You have the courage to go forward, and that is not easy for everyone. A person who stands at the fork, unable to pick a path, will never get anywhere.

Take responsibility, make choices, pick, filter your options, don't leave it to luck, don't flip coins, don't gamble. Everything is going to be fine because nobody but you knows what's best for your soul.

Even when our souls choose to trip us up so that we get stronger, it doesn't mean that we made a mistake. It means that we learned through a different option, through a different path, and we became wiser.

We will have trained our guts. We will have the courage of our opinions, and the courage of our choices, which are important assets for our next choices in life. Failure doesn't exist. Just like being wrong isn't real. There are only two things that can happen to me: I'll either win or I'll learn.

I can be a part of the winning team or the learning team. There is no losing team.

Exercises for days 14-16

1. Write down the issue that's bothering you in your notebook.
2. Write down the desired result. When do you want it to be done?
3. Then think: Who has achieved what I want?
4. Is there a book I can read or a seminar I can attend on that subject?
5. Would it help me to get life coaching sessions, or some other form of support on this matter?
6. Write down the actions you are going to take to work toward your goal. Next to each action, write down the date by which you will have completed it.

How to set healthy boundaries in your relationships

The difference between successful people and really successful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything.

Warren Buffett, entrepreneur and philanthropist



Do you sometimes feel like you are a doormat?

This is an issue I've worked on with many of my coachees. Highly skilled people, with incredible knowledge and an amazing education, still face this issue.

It's something I have worked on a lot for myself, so I know how hard it is to develop. In school, nobody taught us how to set boundaries or be assertive.

We are going to learn why it's particularly important to do this and in what way we can do it without becoming rude or mean.

So, how can we set boundaries? And why should we bother? When a person sets boundaries, it means that he is telling his truth, and he's saying what he feels.

He is setting boundaries with confidence and honesty, without being aggressive.

The “without being aggressive” part is essential, though it’s important to know that it’s fine if you don’t do it perfectly right away.

When we’re learning how to drive and we first learn how to park, we don’t immediately know how to do it in a small space, so we end up going back and forth to fit. Similarly, when we learn a new way of dealing with things, it’s normal if we can’t handle it flawlessly from the beginning. That’s okay. Setting boundaries is a behavior that nobody taught us in a formal way. It’s absolutely fine if you stumble in the beginning. As long as you start applying these lessons as best you can, that’s perfectly okay.

When we go from one extreme to the other, it’s completely normal to get off track. Sometimes you are going to get upset. You might even be rude until you get to a point where you will be able to balance it and set your boundaries in a healthy and calm way.

Setting boundaries is connected to self-esteem. Don’t become a doormat. Become a person who knows how to communicate your desires in a healthy way, with respect, firstly to yourself and then to everyone else.

Many of us were born with “good girl” syndrome: be good girls, don’t make others mad, don’t make others sad, don’t say no. In order to CREATE YOUR LIFE and live it exactly the way you want, you can’t have good girl syndrome. If we can’t say *no* in a healthy way, if we can’t set boundaries and tell someone, “I don’t like what’s happening right now, it’s not good for me, I’m not interested,” we won’t be happy.

You can't be loved by everyone. Not everyone can accept us as we are. And the moment we accept that, a big step toward self-acceptance will take place.

Most of us live through other people's lives. We constantly do things for others. We get into the habit of always saying *yes* and serving other people. Then we subconsciously expect them to serve us as well.

In the end, we get angry with them. We get angry because others don't pull through like we expected they would. And then we wonder why they don't act the way we want.

What are the characteristics of people who set healthy boundaries? The first characteristic is that they can express their feelings. Now, when it comes to expressing feelings, you might say: "How can I identify my feelings so that I can express them?"

Over 850 different emotions have been recorded, and we use and express our feelings with only ten! So there is a huge gap there.

We haven't been trained, so we don't know how to identify what we are feeling at any given moment. We are working in depth on this with our coaches in the Global Academy of Teaching curriculum.

The first thing we do is identify what we are feeling at that moment without judgment. Just identifying the feeling is vital.

People who set boundaries are the people who can express their feelings in a healthy way. They can create easy relationships with other people. They are aware of their rights responsibilities, and they know the limits. They can control their anger, which is difficult for most people.

Just because these people are establishing boundaries, it does not mean that they are repressing anger. It means that they can manage the anger when it comes by doing this simple thing: they leave the situation that causes them anger, handle their emotions, and return when they can communicate what they want, with words and not with anger.

People who set boundaries can clearly express their needs and desires to others in a healthy way. They approach relationships, platonic and romantic, with this mentality: “These are my needs, and I understand that those are your needs.”

I’ll describe to you three different ways through which you can begin setting healthy boundaries. My coachees and I have been using these methods with great success.

We are going to start by taking baby steps. You wouldn’t try to climb Mount Everest without having climbed smaller mountains first, right?

Following that logic, you are going to start with something trivial. Share the most trivial thing that bothers you with someone who doesn’t have a great significance in your life. You can express your discontent with the convenience store owner over something he did, in a nice and calm way.

Or, once you’ve been shown to your table by the hostess at a restaurant, say, “Can we have that table instead?” In general, you should express your desires—get them out, don’t hold them inside you. You can ask for a better room at the hotel—say, “Can you upgrade us to a room with a sea view with no extra charge?” That’s how you get into the habit of sharing your feelings. So in this way we are going to start with baby steps, with things that don’t bother us that much, so that we can start setting firmer boundaries.

We must learn how to say *no*. The most important tool we learn in coaching (and one of the most significant tools our coaches teach at GlobalAcademyofCoaching.com) is learning how to say *no*. A person who learns how to say *no* is definitely not selfish. She's a person who knows how to set boundaries and create her life. Next time someone asks you to do something for them, say, "I'm sorry, I can't do that," or "I won't be able to help you with that right now." Learn how to say *no, no, no* to stuff you know you don't have time to do or don't want to do.

No is a full sentence. How many times have you been asked something, immediately said yes, and then right afterward the first thing that pops into your brain is: *There is no way I am doing that.*

In order to say *no*, you must shed your guilt. What is guilt? Who's in control when you feel guilty—your Higher Self or your Ego?

The Ego, of course, since guilt is a negative feeling. After you have set your boundaries, shed your guilt and tell it, "Thank you very much, Guilt, for being here. But you are not benefitting me at this moment. I'm doing what I have to do to set boundaries." Then release your guilt up into the sky. Let it go; you don't need it. It's not helping you.

At first, when you are setting boundaries and saying *no*, you are going to feel guilty, especially right afterward. This will fuel your Ego, and that's when you need to be strong and tell it, "Thank you very much, Guilt, but this feeling isn't helping me right now, so I'm releasing you."

We learn how to release guilt through coaching. Your Ego is always going to be against change.

When you are trying to take a big step, your Ego is going to be there to hold you back and tell you, “No, it’s not the right time. I don’t have time, I don’t have money, I don’t, I don’t, I don’t...” That is the moment when you need to stand up to your Ego and say, “I am going to set my boundaries now,” and do it. Set your boundaries against and despite your Ego.

Something that can really help you tremendously in setting your boundaries is breathing. Take a deep breath right now with me. Before you answer and before you explode, if it’s something that drives you crazy, take a breath. Take a beautiful breath because when we are breathing, our brain gets more oxygen and we can think more clearly.

Before you respond to a request, take a deep breath and from it derive courage, positivity, and tranquility. Your mind will operate much more smoothly.

Start with small victories, and then develop the muscle you have inside you that can create boundaries. At first you should practice saying *no* to something harmless, to a minor request from someone you don’t know very well, and then move on to someone who is more important to you: your partner, your boss, or your parents. Strengthen the muscle day-by-day, and set healthy boundaries in your relationships.

Setting boundaries is the only way to live your own life and put your priorities first. Learn how to say *no*.

Exercises for days 17 – 19

1. Set a goal of communicating something you want at least three times, something you would not have expressed before. It could be telling your boss that you need days off during the holidays, or telling your partner that you don't want to go visit his or her parents. Say it and then take a deep breath.
2. Write down this phrase ten times in your notebook: “*No* is a full sentence.”
3. Say *no* as convincingly as you can in front of your mirror.
4. Act like it's a game. Say *no* at least ten times. Say it to anyone, at the supermarket, at the cafe, at the restaurant, at the gym, even to your dog. Listen to how beautiful that word sounds, coming from your mouth.

Third Key:
RESULT

How to boost your self-confidence

There is a sun within every person.

Rumi, poet



George was a high-ranking executive in a multinational company. During our session, he described how he had gotten fired after he had fired thirty people because of the resizing of his multinational company. He had been unemployed for a year, and he had difficulty facing his wife and child. His self-esteem suffered a serious blow, which is something that thousands of others who have also been fired are feeling today.

Let's examine self-esteem. Self-esteem is the way in which we perceive our value in this world, and how much we believe we are worth to others. Our self-esteem affects the trust we have in other people, in our relationships, and in our job.

The correct amount of self-esteem gives us the strength and versatility to take 100% responsibility for our lives, learn from our mistakes, and not become paralyzed by our fear of rejection. As a result, self-esteem is necessary in our lives.

We are filled with confidence when we can find solutions to our problems, and we don't blame others. When we know our strengths, we learn from our mistakes, and we accept that other people can make mistakes too.

Our self-esteem flourishes when we are optimistic about the future, when we are cooperative, when we can handle our whole range of emotions, from deep sadness to great joy, when we trust people, when we set personal boundaries regarding others, and when we take care of our health and of ourselves.

Self-esteem is built brick by brick. It takes time, work, and sometimes the support of an expert.

There are simple methods you can use to start developing your self-esteem, and we'll talk about two of them together.

Affirmations are positive and optimistic phrases we tell ourselves every day until they become a part of our values and of our emotional system. Louise Hay, the mother of personal growth, was instrumental in developing this method.

Affirmations help our conscience look at the positive side of things. An affirmation is: "I deserve the best, and my life is getting better day by day!" Or: "I'm taking my life into my own hands and creating the life I want." Or: "I enjoy every moment in my life." Or: "I, Jill (it's good to add your name), love my job, and feel good about the way I am contributing to society."

It's important to use only positive words and terms for your affirmations. For example: "I don't want to have a bad time" and "I'm not in debt" are not affirmative. Instead, you could say: "I am spending my time with inspiring people," or "I am taking care of my financial obligations, and my income is increasing."

Another very effective way of strengthening your self-esteem is to take care of yourself, and take action. I asked George, “How do you spend your day?” He responded, “I watch television.”

I asked him, “Would you like to do something different?” and he said, “Yes, I would like to go for a walk.”

Exercise! This is a great way to take action in your life. You don’t have to join a gym. You can start with a simple walk. Go to a park and take a walk.

You can use facial masks to feel beautiful. There are so many recipes on the internet. You can create a mask with natural ingredients, put on some perfume, put on nice clothes you don’t wear often, take a walk by the sea, or find a way to be out in nature.

Another way to take action is to participate in volunteer work. So many people need you. Find an organization you are passionate about and send in your application. Are you sympathetic to the elderly, to animals, to kids, or to the poor?

The world needs your help, and the opportunity is out there waiting for you.

By taking two actions every day you are saying to the universe: “I am ready for more!”

Let’s take action.

Let’s do the exercises!

Exercises for days 21 -23

1. For the next 21 days, write down an affirmation seven times per day. Start with your name, and add something positive. “I, Jill, am full of inner harmony and peace.” “I, Nikolas, am now living this moment full of confidence.”
2. Write down all your victories, from the moment you were born until today. Divide the periods of your life by decades. From 0–10 years old, from 11-20 years old, from 21-30 years old, and so forth. Write down everything you accomplished, like the fact that you walked, talked, graduated high school, or got the promotion you wanted. Think hard, and if you remember other victories over the next few days, write them down too.
3. Actions. What are two actions you are going to take within the next seven days? Write them down.

How to effectively communicate with the opposite sex

Knowledge is a virtue.

Plato, ancient Greek philosopher



Everyone agrees that one of the defining points for the success of any relationship or marriage is communication. Communication, apart from being the oxygen in a relationship, cultivates trust.

Why do we have so much trouble communicating these days? Why is it so difficult? Why does it annoy us sometimes, and cause us problems? Why do we feel like we are talking in code, or on a different frequency?

How do we end up feeling like we are talking to a different person than the one we first met?

What are the keys to healthy communication? How do we improve on the things that have not been working?

The excuse that they “aren’t the right man or woman” can’t be enough.

It helps us to avoid our responsibilities for a while, but we’re going to get bored of that. We are going to get bored of excuses, and we will need training, if we want to change our course.

John Gray, the “father of relationships,” put his own personal stamp on *Create Love* by adding the foreword. He indicated in his book, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* that men and women used to live on different planets. Men lived on Mars and women lived on Venus. Since women and men lived on a different planet, they had developed different habits and different codes of communication. When they were transported to Earth, as John Gray jokingly says, they experienced selective amnesia and forgot their communication codes. Men and women started getting angry with each other. They expected the opposite sex to treat them the way their own sex treats them, or the way they treat themselves.

I get mad at, or become afraid of, the opposite sex because I expect them to treat me exactly like I would like to be treated. Our desire is for the other sex to want what we want, and feel like we feel.

Some might ask: *Isn’t that a little selfish?* If we analyze it, and remove our ego, we can understand it.

So, what do we want? We want a relationship for ourselves. We don’t want an open relationship, or a “breathing” relationship, as I like to call it. We want a relationship in which we’ll have the first and the last word, whether we’re a man or a woman. We convince ourselves that our partners don’t love us. That’s the main complaint.

What do I mean when I say to my partner, “Do you love me?” What’s hiding behind that question? It’s that I want them to tell me they love me in the way I want them to. It’s a form of demanding love.

If I’m being walked all over, and ignoring my own needs, it’s not going to work. If I’m a puppet, or only a sounding board for their needs, they will get bored of me eventually. So what do I do? I take responsibility and say: “I’m going to be treated fairly.”

What happens when we feel neglected as a man or a woman? A wife goes to her husband to share the problems of her day, or something that upset her or that’s bothering her. Some husbands might say: “She’s complaining.” But let’s not say that. A woman is coming to share. Sometimes, when the man sees the woman approaching him with a troubled look, he gets anxious and thinks that he’s done something wrong.

Other times, he wants to take on the role of an expert, and try to offer a solution. He puts on his metaphorical cape and dresses up as “Mr. Fix It.” He thinks that the woman is broken and sharing her emotions so that he can get his tools to fix the gears and solve the problem. He’s not listening to the reality of the situation. The woman is opening up her heart and soul. She wants the man to listen while she’s sharing her problems and her anxieties.

But the man starts giving incessant advice and solutions. He thinks that’s going to make her feel better. He wants to give her love and it comes from a good place. But that’s not enough for the woman. The woman doesn’t need a solution.

Even after the knowledge I have acquired, and the training I’ve done, this is still hard for me to comprehend.

I try to get it right, and sometimes when Jill opens up in our relationship, I get close to restraining myself from providing solutions while she is talking to me about a seminar we are planning, a problem we have, or a trip we're going to go on. I see light bulbs appearing in that moment, shouting "solution-solution-solution" and I grab my tools so that I can start fixing.

That is annoying to a woman. She feels like the man isn't listening to her. The more a woman shares her complaints and worries, the more a man is going to want to provide solutions. After a couple of minutes, they're both going to be displeased.

One of them is going to say, "You're not listening to me," and the other will respond, "But I'm giving you so many solutions, darling. Do you still have a problem? Are you still complaining?" This is the prelude to a fight.

Let's discuss the woman. Most women are more interested than men in the improvement of themselves, their partners, and their relationship.

When a couple is having a discussion, the woman may be quick to offer some remarks. She might give some constructive criticism. If he says something offensive, things may get out of hand.

How is her partner going to take it? How do you think he will perceive her remarks? Perhaps he is going to think that the woman wants to change him, or that she doesn't accept him the way he is.

In reality, this is a misunderstanding. While the woman is interested in improving their relationship, the man thinks she just wants to change him. This is a man's permanent nightmare: being in a relationship where he's in danger of being changed.

At some point, in some magical way, he thinks the woman will make him see things her way, and bend him to her will.

The main complaint women have about men is: “He is not listening to me. I’m telling him something, I’m sharing my soul, I’m opening up my heart, and instead of listening he just tries to tell me how to solve the problem.”

As men and women, we carry a collective subconscious, a subconscious that has existed for centuries. It’s based on women being scared of abandonment, and scared of the relationship failing. They fear that they’re not going to be an equal in the relationship.

It’s also based on men wanting to provide the solution. They want to be in a relationship, even if that relationship is a win-lose one. For example, they want to enforce their opinions and be inflexible.

The key is to observe your own behavior, and to observe the other person’s behavior without judgment.

Success in a relationship is looking into your partner’s eyes and listening to them, composing yourself, and deciding together what’s best for both of you.

It’s good to take a step back, and be ready to learn from the best. You should try to bring out the best in each other and in yourselves by implementing new philosophies. This is how we move forward with strength and momentum. Nothing can stop us.

What am I doing, essentially? I’m making love bloom. I respect and accept our differences, so that love has a chance to bloom, and to last.

Now we know that a man's biggest fear is that the woman wants to change him, and a woman's biggest fear is that the man isn't really listening to her. What do we do?

The woman is going to make sure that when she starts giving the man advice, she offers him a solution that won't seem like she wants to change him, since she knows he's going to think, *There she goes again, trying to change me. Thanks, but no thanks!*

A man needs trust in a relationship. The woman must trust him, and make him feel valuable, but not just for his solutions. She needs his solutions, but only after he hears her out first.

The man has to learn how to give the woman her time, to listen to her, and not comment on what she is saying. He must listen to her feelings and come back in an hour, or the next day, and give her the solutions then. She will ask for them herself, but only after the man has sat patiently and listened to her.

The woman should not have an attitude or give condescending lessons to the man. She needs to raise him up, find what motivates him in the relationship, and highlight his positive characteristics even when she is unhappy with something. If he is late coming home one day, for example, she could say, "Darling, you were extraordinary today, I am so happy your meeting went great, but it bothered me when you didn't let me know you were going to be late for dinner. I was waiting for you, and the food got cold. I was worried because you were late. You could have texted me. However, I really appreciate you being here now in such a good mood."

It seems impossible, but we need to start implementing these changes in our behavior. It's going to be difficult at first, since we have not been trained.

Men and women are from different planets. We now live on Earth together. Women give lessons to men, and men give lessons to women. We have been getting along great so far, but we can definitely do better. As long as there is a desire for understanding and knowledge, a desire to be informed about how a couple can communicate better, and a desire to be informed about how the man or the woman next door thinks, then we can improve.

If we manage to clear this hurdle, this primal misunderstanding, great roads are going to be cleared ahead of us.

I have to start by understanding that I'm not playing alone on the field. There's another team, and the other team is different from me. I must respect its needs, its function, and the way in which it perceives things. Through my different perspective, I can turn it in my favor, in *our* favor, and align things to create an amazing relationship.

Exercises for days 24 – 26

For you, my male friend:

Next time your partner approaches you to discuss a problem she's having, nod your head and say "Oh, really? I'm so sorry that happened." Don't say anything else. Don't try to offer a solution, don't share your opinion. Just listen. You'll see the difference!

For you, my female friend:

Next time you want to tell your partner to fix something about himself, or say something like "Wear different socks," or "Park here," or "That shirt is wrinkled," remember this: You're not his mother! Have a glass of water instead of sharing these thoughts!

How to develop inner peace

Out of clutter, find simplicity.

Albert Einstein, physicist

As you're reading this book, you might recognize that you belong in the category of people who dream big, who want to create a beautiful life, who want to create a difference in their lives, who want, want, want. You suddenly realize that things can often throw you for a loop. You have a goal, you want something in particular, and suddenly the thing you want has nothing to do with what you are doing at that particular moment. That has happened to me many times, and it's a subject that often concerns my coachees.

Let's look at the phrase "I am busy." What does it mean?

For my generation, it was "cool" to be extremely busy, to be in over your head. We probably got it from soap operas like *Dynasty* or *The Bold and the Beautiful*, where they showed everyone working, gossiping, or sleeping with each other all the time.

The idea that being busy and stressed is glamorous is ingrained in us. It's "cool" to have an infinite number of things to do.

If someone isn't in over their head or stressed out, others start to believe that there's something wrong with them. If they ask you "How are you doing? Are you okay?" and you respond, "Yes, everything is perfect!" they're going to look at you strangely. People who don't know me personally give me an odd look when I reply like that.

Let me share a story with you. I was driving to work one morning, and the woman in the car next to mine was holding a coffee and a cigarette in one hand while she was talking on the phone. I remember looking at her and thinking: *Wow, she must be an important person to be so busy.* It was an image. That image was "cool" then.

Let's agree that the *normal* thing for a person is to feel good, to feel like his or her life is beautiful, and to feel calm without stress. To live in the moment and CREATE YOUR LIFE.

That is the natural order of things. The *abnormal* thing is feeling constant pressure. The abnormal thing is not living in the moment. We don't live in the moment because we are too busy thinking about the future.

We are thinking about what's going to happen next, we are thinking about where we are going to go, we are thinking about the next month, and next year. In general, we think about what we are going to do in future moments, instead of what we are experiencing in the current moment.

If you have kids, you may have noticed that they live in the moment.

We, the grownups, get agitated when they don't follow our fast pace. They don't dedicate enough time to something they should be focusing on, and it throws us for a loop. It throws us when we see how intensely kids live in the moment.

Having entered a different stage in my life, I understand that being "in over my head" only means that I have overfilled my life, and I don't have time to think about my life.

I don't have the time to live in the moment because I'm too busy thinking about the next moment.

What is it that keeps us from living in the moment?

Personally, when that happens, I am thinking of something that needs to happen later. At this moment, for example, I'm writing this book, but I'm thinking about how I'm going to spend the evening with Nikolas. I'm not here because my mind is someplace else.

I'm going to quote one of my favorite teachers, Brendon Burchard, and call it presence. Presence is when I'm living in the moment. It's very important to live in the moment, and to set our priorities.

In life coaching we focus on our goal, and we make it clear. We can't do everything simultaneously, so it's essential to know what is important to us during particular moments. What is important? What's your priority for the next three months?

You will get the chance to write it down in the exercise below.

When I was working at the Olympic games, I had an amazing boss. When he hired me, he asked: "Do you think you can train and supervise 400 people?"

I looked at him, and with absolute certainty I said, “Yes.” At the same time, I started screaming to myself on the inside, *What are you talking about? How can you supervise 400 people when you’re 27 years old?* It seemed impossible.

But I did it. I was highly ranked, I had undertaken a sports venue, and I was in charge of the audience for the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, where all the fun began. Of course, there were several problems which needed to be solved along the way. At certain points, those problems became too big for me to handle.

Crying, I went to my boss, Jan, and told him: “I can’t do it anymore. This isn’t right. I can’t, I can’t, I can’t...” And Jan, who supported me in becoming a manager, would say this phrase, which I now use in my life almost daily: *“How much does this affect your mission?”* How much does this particular problem affect your final outcome? The *mission* was the function of the establishment during the games. So whatever it is that throws you for a loop, whatever it is that constitutes a big problem for you at any moment, how much does it affect your final outcome?

To answer this question, it’s especially important to know your endgame.

Let me make a suggestion: Every time you get upset and something throws you for a loop, every time you don’t live in the moment, every time you feel like responsibilities are suffocating you, think about that phrase. “How much does this affect your mission?” How much does this affect your final goal? It’s super important.

This is a small tip I wanted to give you, something that my coaches and I use that has really helped us a lot.

It's important, as we said, to know your desired end result. Our endgame is to be happy. To find happiness is our primary goal in life. I will offer you some ways to achieve that.

In order to live in the moment, it's important to start observing. Observe what's happening around you. Most of us just observe our cell phone screens.

We might get into negative observation, as we notice how the lady across the street is being rude, or what sort of pants that guy is wearing, and so on. Observation can also be neutral. We can commence neutral observation, and be present, observing the space we are currently in. Observing our own hand, observing where we are sitting, feeling what we are stepping on. We can try to experience our feelings in that moment.

To start observing, another neat trick is to give a compliment.

One of the exercises to do when you start observing is to notice something beautiful happening around you. It could be a lady in a store who's very nice to you, to whom you can say: "Thank you very much. You are very kind." People love hearing compliments. You never know what her reaction is going to be. She may even blush.

The point is, during that moment, you'll have used observation to offer something positive, and when we give something positive on the outside, something positive always comes back on the inside.

But you must be careful. Don't expect to get something positive in return. You will release an energy to the universe, and it's going to come back when it's supposed to. You shouldn't say, "I gave a compliment, and I didn't get one back from you." And you shouldn't wait for it to come back.

I suggest you start giving compliments to people from whom you have nothing to gain. See the positive immediately. Tell a stranger, “Your hair is so pretty.” She will appreciate it. At the bakery, you can say, “This cheese pie is amazing! Who made it?” The chef will be ecstatic! Those small gestures bring incredible joy and happiness, and warm people’s hearts.

Apart from warming the hearts of others, yours will warm up too. I promise. You’re really going to get into observation when you start giving compliments.

Here’s another small tip, in case you’re in over your head.

You can return to happiness—and you can return to yourself—by breathing. Take three deep breaths. Let’s do it together.

Every time you get stressed, and start wondering, “What are we going to cook today?” or “How am I going to make ends meet this month?” or “How am I going to handle this upcoming trip?”, it means you’re suffocating yourself. I want you to notice that. It’s really important to check in with your breathing at that moment, and note how much you have suffocated yourself. When we feel stress, our breath gets cut off from below the neck. The deep diaphragm breathing that brings us back to ourselves is not happening. Another small tip is to breathe in sets of three. Take three deep breaths in a row. You’ll see how much it helps, next time you get cut off in traffic, or when your bills are higher than usual.

Those things are a part of our daily lives, and we can learn to check them. What sets us apart from the animals we adore is that we can manage our thoughts. Our bodies and minds are not designed to contain negative thoughts. You are in control of your own mind. Not the IRS, not the country, and not the person in the car next to you.

No one else can put a thought in your head. Only you can do it.

We *create* negativity.

Our bodies are designed to live in wellness and in peace, When we focus on all the negative things that can happen, it never does us any good.

We have established that fear is Fantasized Emotions Appearing Real. Fear doesn't really exist.

Small doses of happiness can become permanent doses of happiness. We are the only ones creating stress. We have 100% responsibility over our own lives. Nobody can tell you what to do or how to think.

Live in the moment. Live in the now. That's all there is. The past is gone, and we don't know if we're going to be present for the future. Live in the moment with your family, with the people you love, and do beautiful things for those people.

Give a nice compliment to someone, and it's going to come back to you. Begin the practice of positive observation for yourself, at first, and then spread it on the outside.

Exercises for days 27 – 29

1. What are your priorities for the next three months? Write them down according to the following categories: financial, career, romantic relationship, family, friends and society, health and physical exercise, and giving back to the community. Write down what you want to achieve in each of these aspects of your life in the next three months.
2. During the next week, write down a moment from each day where you observed the world around you carefully. What did you see? How did you feel after?
3. During the next week, pick a moment during each day and take three deep breaths from your diaphragm. What did you observe? How did you feel after?
4. Every time you get annoyed with something, think: *How much does this affect my mission?*

An Invitation

Formal education will make you a living; self-education will make you a fortune.

Jim Rohn, “father of personal development”



Congratulations—you have completed HOW TO CREATE YOUR LIFE!

You belong in the 5% of the population that is doing something to improve their lives. You deserve congratulations! Notice the changes in your life. Notice how you see others now, and how much stronger you feel.

You don't begin the new year by eating breakfast and saying, “That's enough for this year. Let's eat breakfast again next year.” It has to be something you keep working at, every day. The muscle of personal development needs constant care so that you can become a better person every day, and live your life with happiness, joy, success, abundance, and everything positive and beautiful that you desire.

The next step would be to go to www.globalacademyofcoaching.com and sign up so that we can see how we can help you achieve your dreams.

We offer many seminars, both online and in person, which have helped thousands of people. We'd be very glad to have you with us!

Another step is to ask for life coaching with one of the graduates of the Global Academy of Coaching. You can send an email and your telephone number to info@globalacademyofcoaching.com and we'll contact you to discuss how coaching can help you.

If you want to drastically change your life, the next step is to study and become a life coach. Whether you need school to triumph in life, or whether you want to excel professionally, your life will move to the next level.

In case you are already a certified life coach, and you are interested in becoming an expert on relationships, we would be happy to see you join the Create Love Relationship Coach Certification program at the Global Academy of Coaching.

The Global Academy of Coaching is one of the most prestigious training certifications and is accredited by the International Coach Federation. Because we offer online courses, students enroll from all over the world.

Have you noticed the chaos out there?

Today more than ever, people need support in order to be clear on their goals and their vision? With all the background noise and the lack of focus, people desperately need support from someone who will help them discover their own voice.

They need someone to help clear their thoughts, and realize that life is about joy, fun, wellness, and the creation of meaningful relationships.

If this subject interests you, then you are in the right place. At the Global Academy of Coaching, you can become a coach leader.

A coach leader is a person that has transformed his life, and has turned all the setbacks and challenges in his life into lessons and opportunities. We spent the last ten years examining how we can support others while they find their life's purpose. How we can help others create the lives of their dreams. How we can help others live in harmony, in abundance, and in happiness.

We've coached people to help them find a partner, we've coached people who wanted to create their own business empires, we've coached people so that they could learn how to say no and express their emotions in a healthy way, and we've coached people so that they could learn how to process their emotions and stop being angry all the time. People asked us to teach them how to do what we do, and to train them to become coaches.

After all these years of studying and practicing, after we were trained by the best coaches in the world, after reading thousands of books on coaching and personal development, and after coaching hundreds of people, we put all of this knowledge into one system: the Global Academy of Coaching Certificate.

At the Global Academy of Coaching Certificate, you will learn how to become a top-notch coach by following the code of conduct of the International Coaching Federation.

You will learn who you are and what your potential is. You will become a better colleague, you will transform the quality of your relationships, and you will become a role model to your children and to society. When you graduate from the Global Academy of Coaching Certificate, you will become a world class leader.

You will defeat insecurity and procrastination for good.

You will learn how to be a life coach, and how you can make a difference with your career.

If you want to be a first-class leader, it's vital to take action now. A leader doesn't procrastinate, doesn't leave things to chance. Leaders focus on what's important to them. Your family and your job need you full of strength, clarity, and focus.

You don't want to show up every morning exhausted, with no energy or joy.

You want to be full of energy, focus, and compassion.

You want to be a coach leader.

And after thousands of hours of research, we have come to the conclusion that the first thing that makes people prosper is commitment. Commit in order to prosper.

Commit to creating the life you want and the life you deserve.

That's why the *Coaching Harvard Business Review* says that coaching is an industry of \$1 billion per year. And *Forbes* states that coaching is one of the top professions in America.

A study conducted by Right Management Consultants discovered that 86% of companies use life coaching.

Coaching is considered one of the most effective tools for productivity, and is being taught at London Business School, Harvard Business School, Princeton University, and other top business universities all over the world.

That is why we are inviting you to sign up for the Global Academy of Coaching Certificate. We're by your side to help you become your best self, and share with you the tools we share with our clients who pay us hundreds of euros for a coaching session.

We have a 100% satisfaction guarantee policy, because we only want committed students in our school. You have absolutely nothing to lose.

We know you want to make a difference and find your life's purpose.

We know you want to be full of energy, clarity, and compassion.

We know you want to become a coach leader.

Follow us. Become our student, and then our colleague.

We can't wait to become your coaches or your mentors!

We're here for you!

Jill and Nikolas

How often have you felt stress wearing you down?

How often have you backed out of a decision of vital importance?

How often have you wondered if you possess the strength to change your life for the better?

How often have you felt helpless, been in pain, or been disappointed because you were stuck in a situation?

30 days can make a difference in your life.

You hold the 3 keys to happiness in your hands. All you have to do is use them!

The authors of the #1 international best seller Create Love are here to support you.

NOW you have the chance to make your dreams come true!

Take action, listen to yourself, and identify your inherent abilities.

Follow the road to success, with the support of life coaching, in order to enjoy everything that's coming to you.

Make a decision NOW to be active, to improve the quality of your relationships, to boost your confidence by setting boundaries, to find your inner harmony, and learn
HOW TO CREATE YOUR LIFE!

Jill Douka is an international speaker, mentor coach certified by the International Coach Federation (ICF), a European Union award-winning business mentor, and the co-author of the #1 international bestseller, Create Love. She is the founder of the Global Academy of Coaching, the prestigious coaching certification program where graduates become leaders and brilliant coaches certified by the ICF. Jill Douka has coached and trained thousands of people on 3 continents. She appears on television programs and travels the world with her husband, Nikolas Ouranos, and their children.

Read more on www.globalacademyofcoaching.com and www.jilldouka.com



Nikolas Ouranos is a relationship coach and co-author of the #1 international bestselling book-phenomenon Create Love. He uses his experience, knowledge, and certified specialization to support women who want to experience the ideal relationship with their other whole. Furthermore, as the Course Director for the Create Love Relationship Coaching Certification of the Global Academy of Coaching, he and other select professors from all over the world educate accredited coaches on the principles and values of relationship coaching. He makes appearances on TV and writes articles for online and printed media.

For more information, visit www.nikolasouranos.com and www.jillandnikolas.com

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