

STEPPING
STONES
TO YOUR
DREAM
ACHIEVEMENT

CATHERINE
RAWLING

The combination of the soft, flowing skills of tai chi and the dynamic, powerful techniques of karate created a balanced and rewarding practice. This enhanced my abilities, which led to success in tournaments. I began filling the house with trophies.

At twenty-one, I represented Australia in the World Karate Championships held in Canada and won first place in the performance of a second dan kata. I took home a six-foot trophy and appeared in the local paper with the headline *Karate kid took on the world, and she won.*



All was going well, but, in my thirties, my desire to own a home and take on a mortgage required full-time work. Before long, I found myself in an unfulfilling administration job and with a house filled with clutter. At that time, I was only focused on survival—paying the bills and trying to keep the house tidy. Then came a series of wake-up calls that made me realise it was time to change and improve my way of living.

The first arrived when I decided to clear the clutter from my house. While sorting through the garage, I stumbled upon a dusty folder containing dreams and goals I had written down a decade earlier—visions of being in a career dedicated to helping others live their dreams.

The second not-so-subtle wake-up call came one night at 10pm. Just as I was drifting off to sleep, a car crashed through my front window. An elderly neighbour was learning to drive, and she had accidentally placed her foot on the accelerator instead of the brake and lost control of the car. I believe this was a literal sign from the universe to wake up, to be more aware and to question whether the path I was travelling on was the right one. It was time for a change. It was time for me to do and be what I was meant to in life.

The third wake-up call arrived when my second-hand car, which I had purchased about six months earlier, broke down on a highway. There I was, sitting on the side of the road with smoke emitting from the engine. It had blown a gasket and was completely unrepairable. This was not the first time that car had broken down. In the months and weeks prior, it had broken down many times, causing much inconvenience. This wake-up call made me question: Why am I in this situation?

How should I improve my life and my finances so something like this does not happen again?

I completed the process of decluttering my home, reducing my belongings by around fifty per cent. I achieved this by selling items, organising council pick-ups, donating to charities and throwing away what was no longer usable. After sprucing up the house, I sold it and relocated to a more desirable suburb closer to my work in Sydney's North Shore.

At this point in my life, early 2021, I started to spend more time out in natural, high-energy and beautiful environments: sitting by the sea, walking in forests or spending time in the mountains. When meditating and reflecting in silence, words of wisdom and guidance began to flow to me. I collected this wisdom in various journals and applied it to my life. This practice transformed my mindset, helping me to move from an uninspired state to an inspired state, and provided the answers I was searching for.

At one pivotal moment on a hill overlooking the ocean, I had a strong sense in my spirit that working solely in the field of administration and customer service was no longer my path and a change was needed. I decided to take a leap of faith and pursue work that aligned more with my strengths. This included teaching tai chi, writing and creating an online course, as well as launching an inspirational merchandise online store. At the same time, I began learning how to become a successful share trader to supplement my income. After two years of living in the North Shore, I decided to move back into my family home to support my elderly mother and focus on my career.

Today, I am in a career I love, waking up each day inspired by my work as a tai chi instructor, writer and share trader. I

am also on track to purchasing my dream home in the near future.

Now, it's your turn...

If you are not already living your dream life, this book can help. This book is a collection of wisdom and ideas of success written over many years, all brought together with the aim of assisting you on the journey of successful, inspirational living.

You hold in your hands the action steps and ideas that helped me to move from a life of just getting by to a life I'd only ever dreamed could be realised. It is my hope and wish that by taking in this book's wisdom and applying it to your own life, you too will embark on a journey to seeing your dearest wishes, visions and dreams become a reality. You may have had the thought that your dream is not possible—you're too old or young or there is too much involved in achieving your dream. But the aim of this book is to help transform your thinking so that you can see that the dream is possible.

Each of the chapters in the book is set out in a roadmap to help you on this journey. First, we'll establish or recall what your dream life looks like. Then, we'll clear the obstacles in your way. Next, you will learn how to organise your goals and schedule, so that you can then take action and remain inspired throughout the whole transformative process.

You may also find yourself beginning to enjoy the journey itself, as you become aware of the beauty that is all around and within you. Make sure to appreciate every moment as you take each step closer to living your highest dream and vision for life.

*It can and shall be realised if you give it a chance.
Every day, see your dream, feel your dream
and, with quiet persistence, keep moving
towards it.*

Five years ago, I was working full time in customer service and administration in a job that was only utilising a small proportion of my skill set. My dream was to work in a career that would inspire others and make a difference. I started to visualise this dream, what it would look like and entail, such as waking up inspired each day, teaching tai chi to small groups of people, writing a book, putting together an online course and starting to utilise more of my potential. Now, five years later, I am working in my dream career, and I wake up each day with great enthusiasm as I am doing what I love to do. Now, it's your turn.

Exercise

Please take out your journal and write the answers to the following questions.

1. Mark your starting point.

Look at where you are today. What is your starting point? What habits and routines have brought you here? Where would you like to go from here?

2. Define your dream.

Write down your dream with as much description as possible. For example, if it is to live in a beautiful home, what features does the home have? And what would be its location?

*Many don't do this, and they wonder
why their lives
lack direction and meaning.*

Once you know what your dream is, there's no reason for delay. There's no reason to put your dreams on hold until one magical day when the conditions will be just perfect to act on this plan. Is there anything you can do today to move closer to living the life of your greatest dream?

What makes your heart sing? It may be being out in nature, quietly reflecting. Or maybe you are at your best in a group setting. The answer to this question can be a great clue as to what your dream truly is. I personally love to be out in natural environments—it is where I can reflect and gain clarity about what is important and what isn't and what priorities I need to focus on.

What is important to you? What would life look like if you were living at a higher level, if you were giving your absolute best in all endeavours? Always ask, "*Am I in alignment with my highest vision of myself, my life and with others?*" Don't sell yourself short. Go after the very best and highest dream for your life.

*Step up to who you can be
Step up to the one you know you can be.
Step up despite the naysayers.
Step up despite the fear.
Your dream was given to you for a reason.*

POT OF GOLD

*There is a pot of gold, a great treasure, that awaits
every time you remember your dream
and what you are capable of when you reach
your true potential without allowing fear
to hold you back.*

What is your dream? Can you see it and feel it? Is it, for example, to love and be loved? To express your gifts in the highest way? To be of service to the world? Or is it to achieve greater abundance in life so that you will have more to give to others?

Later in this book, you will be guided by many exercises that can help you to realise or remember what your dream is. But it all starts with getting quiet and asking yourself questions such as, “*What skills do I have that can help others in some way?*” We all have something unique we can offer the world and something we secretly yearn for if we had nothing stopping or preventing us.

State often when you visualise your dream, “*Thank you. I’m worthy of this dream.*” Now, dig deeper. What parts of your heart have you temporarily closed off or tried to close off because you felt you weren’t worthy of a dream or that you would make mistakes. Is there a dream you have put on hold for another time and place? What is a small step you can take towards the dream realisation now?

*Take the time to listen
and heed the calling of the heart.*

of denial or of just being busy and distracted—buried under seemingly never-ending to-do lists. As you clear away the mental clutter and the clutter in your environment, you'll start to visualise the dream in even greater detail. Ideas may start to flow, and you may find opportunities in your environment that you couldn't see before. Watch as they take on new meaning.

Be true to the calling of your heart. Nourish your greatest dreams into fruition by spending time each day focusing on them.

*Great dreams can become true if you take action
steps daily and with discipline.
It's important to apply yourself to achieve the
highest possible vision for your life.*

Dreams don't just take shape by themselves. They require planning, action and review. I went to a seminar over ten years ago where all the participants were asked to write on a card, "I'm on schedule for financial freedom." I strongly believe that one of the most important foundations of a great life begins with the following affirmation: "I'm on schedule for achieving my dream. I'm on schedule to achieve my highest potential."

SMALL BEGINNINGS TO A GREAT DREAM

This book is all about the little steps we take each day to keep the commitments and promises we make to ourselves, which lead to gradual improvements that take place over time. The cumulative effect of those little steps is what builds a beautiful life. All of this begins with you recognising that the way you have been living up until now needs to improve and it may be time to wish for a better way of living.

*Give yourself the permission to dream,
the gift of believing this dream is possible
and the gift of persevering until you see your
dream realised.*

A dream will sustain you in your everyday life. It can inspire you to learn what you need to learn or do what you need to do to get through the mundane and hard tasks. When times get tough or challenging, it allows you to know that—somehow, someway—you can one day live the life that matches your spirit and vision. If you have a big dream, don't just immediately dismiss it as too far-fetched. Give your dream, and yourself, a chance. Remember this: you are worthy of your dream, and your dream is possible.

It starts as a small wish, just a little hope that things may improve, but if you dig deeper, you may find a dream that has been buried under years of non-acknowledgment,

CHAPTER 1



DREAM ESTABLISHMENT

*The acorn begins its life as a small seed,
but, given time and the right conditions,
it can grow into a great tree.*

So too can your dream.

*Starting out as a vision and sense of knowing,
with nourishment and perseverance, taking an
action step each day in time,
the dream becomes no longer just a
dream—it becomes a reality.*

As you read through the book, have a journal on hand to write down the answers and thoughts you have as you work through each chapter's exercises. Participation in the exercises will help you to bring your dream life into existence, one step at a time.

Let's begin!