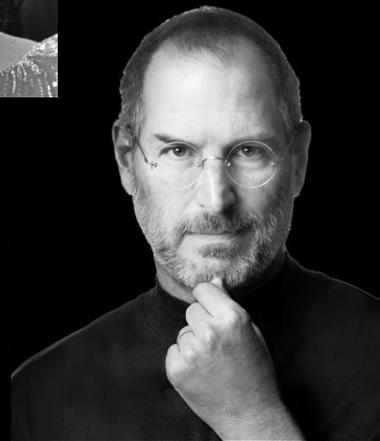
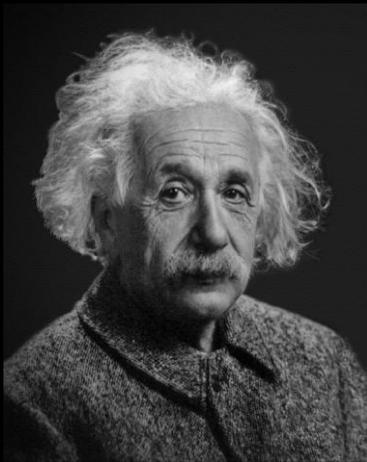


AWAKENING Your Sleeping GENIUS

A Journaling Approach to
Personal Growth and
Servant Leadership



Ann McGee-Cooper ,Ed.D AND Duane Trammell



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Pictures on the Cover; [top to bottom/left to right]: Elon Musk, South-African born businessman, inventor, engineer, and investor [b1971]; Betty White, actor with the longest television career of any female entertainer [b1922]; Albert Einstein, German-born theoretical physicist/scientist [1879-1955]; Steve Jobs, inventor, entrepreneur, industrial designer, and co-founder of Apple [1955-2011]; Maya Angelou, poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist [1928-2014]; Lin-Manuel Miranda, composer, lyricist, playwright, author, actor, and singer [b1980].

AWAKEN YOUR SLEEPING GENIUS: A Journal of Giftedness

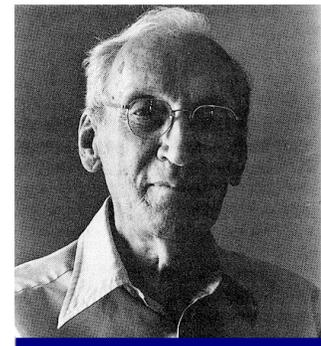
Dr. Ann McGee-Cooper with Duane Trammell



Just as each snowflake has a unique pattern, each person, so we are learning, has the potential for unique genius. Some people live their gifts, filled with curiosity, the spirit of adventure, and an eagerness to learn and grow. Others, for whatever reasons, may never realize that it's their *difference* that makes them special. Learning to bring individual differences into a creative relationship with others is what makes genius a gift to self AND to the culture at large.

This is what Robert Greenleaf did so creatively with his life as he chose, right out of college, to seek out a large corporation and bring change from within. This had been a charge from one of his college professors. Greenleaf not only took that challenge but began preparing for his second career, the years after retirement, decades before he reached age 65. Genius never stops growing...and never leaves the qualities of pure childhood behind.

Since 1950, I have been fascinated by the capacity of genius. What is it? If each of us has unique gifts, how can we uncover this kaleidoscopic, growing, changing resource and how can we fully explore it? In 1978, I began a study with graduate students to see how we could each uncover and grow our genius potential. We used a journaling process focusing on different strategies for uncovering gifts. Using ourselves as “guinea pigs,” we began to record and share our discoveries. Amazing things began to happen. In 4½ months (the length of a university semester), lives were transformed. By their own reports, people were never the same after that.

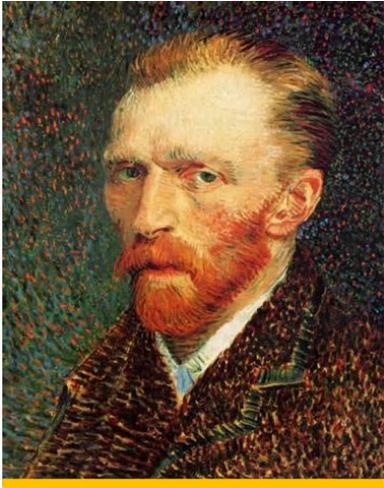


“What happens to our values, and therefore the quality of our civilization in the future, will be shaped by the conceptions of individuals that are born of inspiration. Perhaps only a few will receive this inspiration (insight) and the rest will learn from them.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AND AWAKENING GENIUS

A Personal Journey



Working in the Arts...

The *American Heritage Dictionary* traces the word *genius* back to Roman mythology and to the concept of one's calling. I can remember clearly my first call to genius. It was a warm, clear spring day in Houston. I stepped out into the sunshine after seeing my first exhibition of the work of Vincent van Gogh. I couldn't believe that his contemporaries could not see and appreciate the genius of his painting. Learning of his pain and tragic suicide, I vowed to commit my life to recognizing and supporting genius. My life would have meaning, I thought, if I could nurture and run interference for those with the courage to express and share their giftedness.

Geniuses are not appreciated until they are safely dead.

Working in Education...

Early, I worked as a teacher, always wondering who might be the van Gogh, the unrecognized genius in my classes. I specialized by working with children at risk. And soon those youngsters, who had been labeled as hopeless, were being recognized as "gifted and talented," probably because I had learned to help them find their voice, their unique way to express their message, their spirit, their calling.

The label of genius comes at a high price...
If you are so smart, why can't you spell?



Working in Business...

FORTUNE
100
BEST
COMPANIES
TO WORK FOR

After experiencing the pain of having more than one highly successful innovative program lose funding just when it was breaking records in performance, I decided to shift my focus to business. My partner, Duane Trammell, and I had both been awarded the highest honors as teachers of gifted students. What if we took what we knew about identifying and growing genius and focused it on gifted leaders in business? In my work teaching graduate students, I learned that a life could be dramatically transformed in only 4½ months. What might happen if we took this process to teams of executive leaders? In the years that followed, we have been doing just that with many amazing successes. This journaling process invites you to experience your own personal adventure of discovering and investing deeply in your own unique genius.

"The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first."

—Robert K. Greenleaf

AWAKEN YOUR SLEEPING GENIUS

This is your *Journal of Giftedness*. I suggest that you begin by reading through all 20 sections. You will note that each section alerts you to one different perspective through which you will discover areas of personal giftedness.

One Magic Suggestion...

Let your journal be something you write in **for fun**, as you feel the urge, rather than something that becomes a compulsive “have to.” Sometimes I write in my journal for several days in a row. Then several weeks will pass when I do not make any entries. Meantime, I’m still thinking about all these ideas and processing them creatively in my mind. Then I will once again feel the urge to bring out my journal, review sections, read earlier entries, and add to them.

Always let it be fun. Joy is closely linked to your giftedness. We contaminate the excitement and clarity of our new discoveries when we allow compulsive self-nagging behavior to spoil the natural rhythm of personal discovery and search.

After several years with my *Journal of Giftedness*, I find my actual writing time rather brief. However, returning to the journal keeps the concepts fresh in my mind. The discovery process is constant, ongoing, daily in my life. **Expect to discover well over 40, 50, or even 75 areas of personal giftedness!**

The more you uncover, the more your gifts will seem to grow and reveal themselves to you. Enjoy your exciting new adventure.

Sincerely,
Ann McGee-Cooper & Team

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

5-5-89 I was amazed to discover that my doodles and fun little drawings are messages from my subconscious. Dr. Bernie Siegel illustrated how dreams and casual drawings can give profound messages regarding choices for optimum healing in times of serious illness.

I have always enjoyed doodling, especially during long classes, lectures, speeches, meetings, or phone conversations. Now I have a new respect for what I used to think of as rather meaningless!

“

JOURNAL OF GIFTEDNESS

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AWAKEN YOUR SLEEPING GENIUS: A Journal of Giftedness

from the research of Dr. Ann McGee-Cooper

“Be careful to keep your many gifts secret. They will frighten most people and turn them against you,” Superman's adopted father wisely counseled him when he was just a boy. Perhaps we have all heeded this wisdom in our own way without ever remembering it being said directly to us. And as a result, our many-faceted gifts have remained a secret, not just from others, but from ourselves as well.

This Journal of Giftedness is designed to help you uncover and develop the many areas of strength, outstanding qualities, individual characteristics—GIFTEDNESS—that belong uniquely to you.

Let your first entry be a quick list of all your gifts or outstanding qualities that you are now aware of:

Date _____

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

If you will continue through all 20 sections of this journal, each presenting a new perspective on your giftedness, you will be amazed at what you discover within the coming year.

1.

SLOWING DOWN: INSIGHTS INTO GIFTEDNESS

“The ability to withdraw and reorient oneself, if only for a moment, presumes that one has learned the art of systematic neglect, to sort out the more important from the less important—and the important from the urgent—and attend to the more important, even though there may be penalties and censure for the neglect of something else.”

“Pacing oneself by appropriate withdrawal is one of the best approaches to making optimal use of one’s resources.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

1. In our frantic pace to get more done faster, we often rush past our own abilities. We just don’t “have the time” to discover and develop them.
2. To keep our healthy creativity alive and develop untapped potential in ourselves and others, we must balance quick response with strategies to help us step back, relax, laugh, let go, and reflect.
3. The art of journaling in itself is a withdrawing strategy. Elevate it to a new priority.
4. As you experience the struggle of allowing yourself to know about, acknowledge, and trust your giftedness, begin to keep notes on your insights into giftedness. Date each insight to help you see the pattern of growth as it unfolds.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

- 10-4-78 It’s risky to say out loud, “I’m gifted.” Others are quick to search out your Achilles heel and wound you: “If you’re so gifted, why can’t you spell?”
- 5-15-79 It’s tempting to spend my time encouraging others to discover their gifts and be too busy to discover my own.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





2.

FORM A SUPPORT GROUP

“Living in Community as one’s basic involvement will generate an exportable surplus of love which the individual may carry into the many involvements....All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his or her own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

MY TEAM...MY LEARNING PARTNERS



Find at least one other person willing to risk awakening his or her sleeping genius. You might be lucky enough to find two or three others. Keep your group small. It will be more manageable and more likely to succeed.

Plan times to touch base with each other briefly each week to share what you are learning and encourage the gifted “swan” in each other. During these brief encounters (which might be by phone or note) you will begin to unravel some amazing discoveries of trust and revelation.

(You might enter the name or names of the people in your group and comments from your conversations, dating each.)

1. Duane because he’s my mirror opposite and managing partner
2. Nancy because she’s good with numbers and cheerfully helps me manage the flow
3. Larry because he’s my spouse and life partner
4. Rayo because he’s my son, special friend, and coach for my speeches

YOUR THOUGHTS...





3.

OBSERVING OTHER PEOPLE'S GIFTEDNESS

“When one is aware, there is more than the usual alertness, more intense contact with the immediate situation, and more is stored away in the unconscious computer to produce intuitive insights in the future when needed....A qualification for leadership is that one can tolerate a sustained wide span of awareness [in order to better see] it as it is.’ ”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

In *American Caesar*, a biography of Douglas MacArthur, the writer notes that the same qualities that led to his finest achievements also led to his failures. This reinforces my belief that every weakness or bad habit is one of our gifts working in reverse.

When I give people a genuine compliment, I often notice that they doubt either my sincerity or my judgment. I wonder why it's so difficult for most of us to believe in our gifts?

“Whether you believe you can or you can't, you are right!”

—Henry Ford

Make notes in this section on the giftedness you observe in others.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

7-4-80 When I watch others perform in their area of giftedness, it appears so easy. Come to think of it, when I give my best speeches (one of my gifts), I don't try hard either. It's almost like flying – it just comes out wonderfully and I enjoy being a part of it.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





4.

STRENGTHS OR GIFTS

“Servant-leaders lift people up and make the journey possible...The process of change starts in here, in the servant, not out there.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Begin by listing what you feel are your best qualities, strengths or gifts. Date your list.

Now, each week for five weeks, invite one person who knows you well to exchange with you a list of strengths or gifts. You jot down the other person’s best qualities while she or he lists your talents or gifts. Then exchange lists and discuss any feelings or ideas that result. You will probably discover some new bridges and positive moments of intimacy that come from these five risk-taking experiences.

Start now by listing the five people you will invite to share this experience with you. Choose people who know you from different perspectives, such as your child, parent, spouse, best friend, employer, employee, colleague, neighbor, or minister etc.

Enter each list in your journal and then expect to have new discoveries to add to your original list at the beginning of this journal.

From my Mom

1. Friendliness
2. See the good in others
3. Creativity
4. Help others
5. Generosity
6. Eager to grow

From Larry

(my spouse)

1. Your intellect
2. Creativity
3. Candidness
4. Verbal expressiveness
5. Smile
6. Ability to think on your feet

From Duane

(coauthor & business partner)

1. Creating trust
2. Able to think on feet
3. See “3rd right answers”
4. Disarming hostile situations
5. Seeing ahead 10 years
6. Fun playmate

From Rayo

(my son & business partner)

1. Gifted problem solver
2. Ability to come up with many answers
3. Improvising in a complex situation
4. Gifted designer
5. Artist
6. Excellent communicator

YOUR THOUGHTS...





5.

KEEP A LIST OF YOUR SO-CALLED “WEAKNESSES”

“Acceptance of the person, though, requires a tolerance of imperfection. Anybody could lead perfect people—if there were any....People grow taller when those who lead them empathize and when they are accepted for what they are, even though their performance may be judged critically in terms of what they are capable of doing. Leaders who empathize and who fully accept those who go with them on this basis are more likely to be trusted.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Make a list of your so-called weaknesses, and look for the gift or gifts hidden in each. For example:

Weakness	Gift
Telling outrageous stories or “stretching the truth”	Rich imagination, gifted storyteller.
Spread too thin, can’t say no	Sensitive to the needs of other people
Overweight	Love to cook, enjoy food
Gabby, talk when I should be listening	Highly verbal, entertaining speaker
Create clutter	Highly creative, enjoy rich visual stimulation
Bored with details, poor on follow-through	Interested in the big picture

Begin to ask, “Among the people I know, who is strong where I am weak?” Team with these people for synergy and to begin building on both your strengths **and** your weaknesses.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





6.

RISKING OR STRETCHING

“A leader says: ‘I will go, follow me!’ while knowing that the path is uncertain, even dangerous.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

If you are not risking, you are not growing. I use the term *stretching* to signal to others in my support group that I am risking trying out a new experience, or at least one I am not yet comfortable with or that I have not yet mastered. This gives me permission to “not be perfect” and offers others an opportunity to help me celebrate my first shaky, and perhaps awkward, attempt at new growth and new discoveries.

What new growth did you risk today? This week?

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

- 7-28-78 I have been notified that I will be audited by the IRS for all of my business tax records for the past five years. Although I am profoundly dyslexic, I am choosing to “stretch” by working closely with my accountant to prepare for the audit.
- 8-30-78 I came through the audit with great success!!! All of my records were approved as declared. When I asked the IRS agent for feedback as to why the audit went so smoothly, he said that I had taken it upon myself to work hard to understand the guidelines and typically appeared to claim slightly less, rather than more, than allowed. Also, the fact that my records were in grocery boxes clipped with clothespins painted bright colors and labeled clearly. A unique, well-kept, but very homemade system. “It just didn’t look like the work of a shyster,” he declared!

4-8-92 We were invited to do our presentation from our third book, You Don't Have to Go Home from Work Exhausted! for several hundred participants with the CIA. Typically, we are introducing the participants to the energizing neuro-peptides that are produced when we connect with our “kidspirit,” or the vulnerable child within.

Was it really appropriate and did I have both the courage and the skill to sell this research to the audience? This meant inviting them to bring a photo of themselves as a child and a favorite toy from childhood, and to come dressed in play clothes. In addition, I would tap dance badly for them to role-model how we all claimed bold dreams as children.

The presentation was a roaring success, as the retiring division chief chose to come and tap dance with me in a spontaneous and delightfully playful spoof . It brought down the house!

YOUR THOUGHTS...





7.

WAS I LUCKY . . . OR GIFTED?

“Awareness has its risks, but makes life more interesting; certainly it strengthens one’s effectiveness as a leader.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Reflect on times when you felt lucky. Often we choose to disclaim our gifted potential when it is revealed to us by saying, “Oh, I just got lucky!”

Can you think of any times when you credited to luck something that may have been your gifted potential startling you with unexpected possibilities? I remember going bowling with a friend years ago and, after several apologies and nervous laughter because I had only bowled a few times in my life, I was embarrassed to knock over all the pins seven out of my first ten turns. People began to gather around, and my friend thought I had conned him with my story of being a novice bowler. I felt so embarrassed by my newly discovered talent that I credited it all to luck and never bowled again.

In retrospect, I wonder why I didn't join a bowling team or take up the sport for fun. Instead, I fled from my unexpected “good luck” as I might from a bad dream. Keep a list of times you considered yourself “just lucky” and what you did to cash in on your so-called luck.

Louis Tice says that lucky people expect to be lucky and **make their own luck subconsciously through positive expectations.**

“Believe in your limitations and, sure enough, they are yours.”

—Richard Bach

“Believe in your giftedness and, sure enough, it is yours.”

—Ann McGee-Cooper

YOUR THOUGHTS...





8.

CULTIVATE OR COLLECT A WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTS

“Beauty being the best of all we know sums up the unsearchable and secret aims of nature. A mathematical solution is called beautiful when it penetrates the unknown, opens up new insights, advances knowledge....One can cultivate beauty.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Old World thinkers say, “Jack of all trades and master of none.” They choose to believe that a person can only excel in one area of specialty.

New World thinkers say, “Jack of all trades and master of many,” as they reflect on the predictable characteristics of the multiple gifts and interests of so many gifted people. Think of the classic Renaissance person ...

Leonardo da Vinci
Maya Angelou
Thomas Jefferson
George Washington Carver
Golda Meir
R. Buckminster Fuller

All of these people are recognized as outstanding in several areas and active in many others.

The man who invented the artificial heart valve was first a jazz musician, then an engineer in fluid dynamics, and later a surgeon. He combined what he learned in all three fields to make possible his creative invention of an artificial heart valve.

What do you like best, or what would you most enjoy learning about? If you had one year to fill **only** with pleasure, how would you fill it?

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

- 11-14-83 We put in a turnaround drive to get cars off the street. I persuaded Larry to take out all the grass and make all the yard a garden. Now I'm learning about plants, composting, perennials, Xeriscape, and sprinkler systems. Gardening is a wonderful way to heighten intuition.
- 8-21-94 I've signed up to participate in a study group focused on understanding dreams taught by Dr. Leroy Howe, professor at Perkins School of Theology. There are only five in the class and the others have participated for several years, so this will be a very special opportunity to grow and learn. I've been journaling my dreams since the early '70s and have done a good bit of reading about them, but now I am eager to enjoy this weekly, two-hour intimate study group experience.
- 9-27-94 I bought a chord book so I can get better on the piano. I've never had formal lessons but I enjoy doing the best I can with my self-taught ability. My goal is to get good enough to play Gershwin and some of the jazzy blues (Duke Ellington) with Larry on the clarinet and sax. It's slow but I'm having fun and making progress. Also, it's a great way to reenergize and relax in the evenings.

YOUR THOUGHTS...







HUMOR

“How can we grow to respond to the opportunities to remake the world and bring it more in accord with virtue and justice, more in accord with our own hearts, unless we can have that quiet inward smile called humor when we regard the silly little half-made creatures that we are? But as Thomas Carlyle said, ‘It is a loving smile.’ ”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Very bright people enjoy more humor than others. They see humor in situations that others miss. Often humor is based on seeing something from more than one point of view. If you enjoy adding humor to your conversation and life, chances are you are brighter than most.

Punning has long been known as a pastime for the intellectually elite. List ways to expand your active, positive humor.

Note: Most humor in America is negative, based on the “put-down.” Many comedians use heavy put-downs to gain laughs at the expense of others. Put-downs make it difficult for those around you to risk, which is so necessary for gifted potential to grow. Be aware of how you use humor. It can be positive as easily as negative, but old habits take effort to change. This is certainly one worth the effort to change, since the price tag for hanging on to negative humor can be a block to both your genius potential and that of others around you.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

9-2-94 Herb Kelleher is one of the best examples of how to use humor to inspire and lift up those around you. His teammates love to tell favorite Herbie stories. Here are two of my favorites:

He prefers to dress casually but keeps his suit coat handy for client meetings and business occasions when a coat and tie are appropriate. His team will remind him to put on his coat before going to these meetings or when a VIP is coming to his office.

One day he went to Vicki, who is the receptionist in the executive offices, and said, “Vicki, I have my coat on. Am I going somewhere, or was I just cold?”

The Southwest Team replies to all Customer complaints. When no one else can come up with a suitable reply because the letters are so difficult to answer, they go to Herb.

One woman had written a several-page letter with only negatives. She didn't like their seating, their snacks, their fun-wear in lieu of uniforms. She went on and on about every aspect of Southwest. Herb is said to have labored over several pages of various explanations. And then, deciding these were too defensive, he simply wrote, “Dear Mrs. Smith, we will miss you! Love, Herb.” Gentle, open, playful, and honest!

YOUR THOUGHTS...





10. WHAT'S EFFORTLESS FOR YOU?

“Only as what is uniquely me emerges do I experience moments of true creativity; moments which, when deeply felt, temper the pain of long periods of frustration that are common to a lot of us and give me the impulse and the courage to act constructively in the outside world.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

In areas of giftedness, it often seems effortless. For this reason, we seem to discount our giftedness, as though we can't take credit for it since we didn't have to work at it. Be aware of what you are doing when you do exceedingly well without really trying hard. Note what these effortless abilities are or have been in the past.

Another way to get at this is to note what you are critical of in others. Typically, we are poor teachers in areas of our giftedness because we never had to struggle to learn. More likely, it just came naturally.

Whether it's working with numbers, writing, expressing yourself verbally, using the art of persuasion (sometimes called sales), gardening, cooking, bringing people together socially, resolving conflict, or working with your hands, notice what you learn or do easily and effortlessly. Even small things can be significant clues. So take note. The more aware you are, the more these things can serve you well. Begin to claim them as gifts.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

- 7-18-94 Duane and I were working with a professional film crew in Boston to produce a 28-minute video on our time management concepts called “Managing Time Your Way.” We had worked for weeks on the script and were expecting to ad lib before the camera, each working off the other’s comments. When we got there, nothing went as planned and we knew that every minute the meter was running with an expensive crew, technical equipment, and technicians. The situation called for a memorized script, but there was no TelePrompter, something neither of us had prepared for or anticipated.

My partner, who is typically brilliant under pressure and tight deadlines, grew pale and struggled through endless retakes. I could see that this was painful for him so I began to play with him and the crew, to keep us all relaxed and loose.

This unexpected situation brought out the best in me yet was a nightmare for him. I can remember other situations where he would star and I would stumble and agonize, writhing in frustration.

The unexpected calls forth my very best, whereas planning ahead and the foresight to know how to plan for every contingency are some of his gifts. Synergizing with an opposite elevates the level of giftedness in all who participate.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





11.

REDISCOVERING INTUITION

“I did not get the notion of servant as leader from conscious logic. Rather it came to me as an intuitive insight as I contemplated Leo. And I do not see what is relevant from my own searching and experience in terms of a logical progression from premise to conclusion. Rather I see it as fragments of data to be fed into my internal computer from which intuitive insights come. Serving and leading are still mostly intuition-based concepts in my thinking....Intuition is a feel for patterns, the ability to generalize based on what has happened previously.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Keep a running record of all the times your hunches have been on target. Have there been times in your life when you had a great idea about something that you never put into action? Then two years later you find that someone else is getting rich and famous on your idea?

Begin to listen to and learn to trust your intuition. The more you value it and use it, the stronger and more accurate it will become.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

2-10-82 In the early '70s I sensed that to be creative wasn't enough. Learning to read and master the “politics of change,” so that one could not only survive with one's creative ideas in motion but thrive within, were critical to success. The momentum of positive change was the critical issue. My intuition led me through a self-designed, multidisciplinary doctoral program at Columbia University, which is as relevant today as it was when I completed it in the early '70s.

5-17-87 I seem to have been 10, 15, or 20 years ahead for most of my life. In 1950, I became fascinated with the patterns of genius. In 1967, creativity seemed a key issue in education and all areas of life. In 1974, I worked on research to prove that creativity could be rediscovered by postdoctoral scientists and engineers. In 1980, it occurred to me that all the strategies we were using with great success with gifted children could be used with business leaders. Each of these ideas was running at least 10 years ahead of public readiness.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





12

MISTAKES BECOME GROWTH

“In growth there is likely to be a measure of failure; not so much failure that life is a net loss and one is overcome by it, but enough that one knows what failure is, and has compassion for the failing persons one sees around oneself all the time.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Innovative leaders throughout history have made more mistakes than most other people. Purposely, they learn not to fear mistakes because they view them as an important part of the learning process. What is your attitude toward mistakes? When you make a mistake do you ask, “What can I learn from this experience?” Or “If I had it to do over again, what would I do differently?” Do you look for a way the mistake can be used as a plus instead of a minus? Did you know that 18 people discovered penicillin before Sir Alexander Fleming? The difference was that the first 18 called their discovery a mistake. Fleming found a way to put the mistakes to work for us.

Recall at least three mistakes you’ve made in the last year. What positive learning did you glean from them? Learn to view your mistakes as opportunities to grow. For example:

Mistakes

I planned too much too close together in December.

I stopped to help my son with a problem. I helped too much, rescued him, and made him feel inadequate.

I went over budget on a project.

Positive Growth

Allow “cushions” of time in my schedule, particularly in busy seasons.

He would rather solve his own problems unless he requests help. Next time I will wait until I am invited to help.

I will ask for financial status reports along the way, even if I am pleased with the results.

If you are not aware of any positive growth or valuable learning from a recent mistake, perhaps you are still too close to it and/or the pain is still too great. As you work through and let go of the pain, new insights will emerge.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





13. CLUSTERING

“Think of yourself as a person with unique potentialities and see the purpose of life as bringing these into mature bloom.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

New gifts are born as several areas of giftedness come together to form a cluster. For example, you might be good at cooking, bringing together interesting people, and providing a relaxed atmosphere for conversation. All these may cluster into a new gift of gaining political support for various issues by bringing the right people together in a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere for conversation and the exchange of ideas.

Also, as you reach mastery in some areas, you will begin to feel restless. As you break out and begin to grow in new areas (clustering), your gifts will multiply like branches on a tree.

What examples of clustering can you identify in your life?

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

7-7-93 In 1983, I designed and we built the tree house as an experiment in high-energy, office-in-the-home, multipurpose work and family space. I also love entertaining and in '85 and '87 we expanded a series of decks at several levels to connect the house, spa, greenhouse, gardens, and tree house. Then in '90, we added a four-level water garden with four pools, four waterfalls, and dozens of koi fish. (Another passion is gardening.) Incredible business innovations have come from creative teams brainstorming while enjoying delicious snacks, music, and fun in this unusual oasis within a big-city environment.

From this series of projects I discovered gifts I didn't know I had in architecture, landscaping, water garden designs, and outdoor lighting and the impact of our environment on our social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual selves. As I continue to study Japanese gardens, I am growing to respect the healing powers of such aesthetic beauty.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





14.

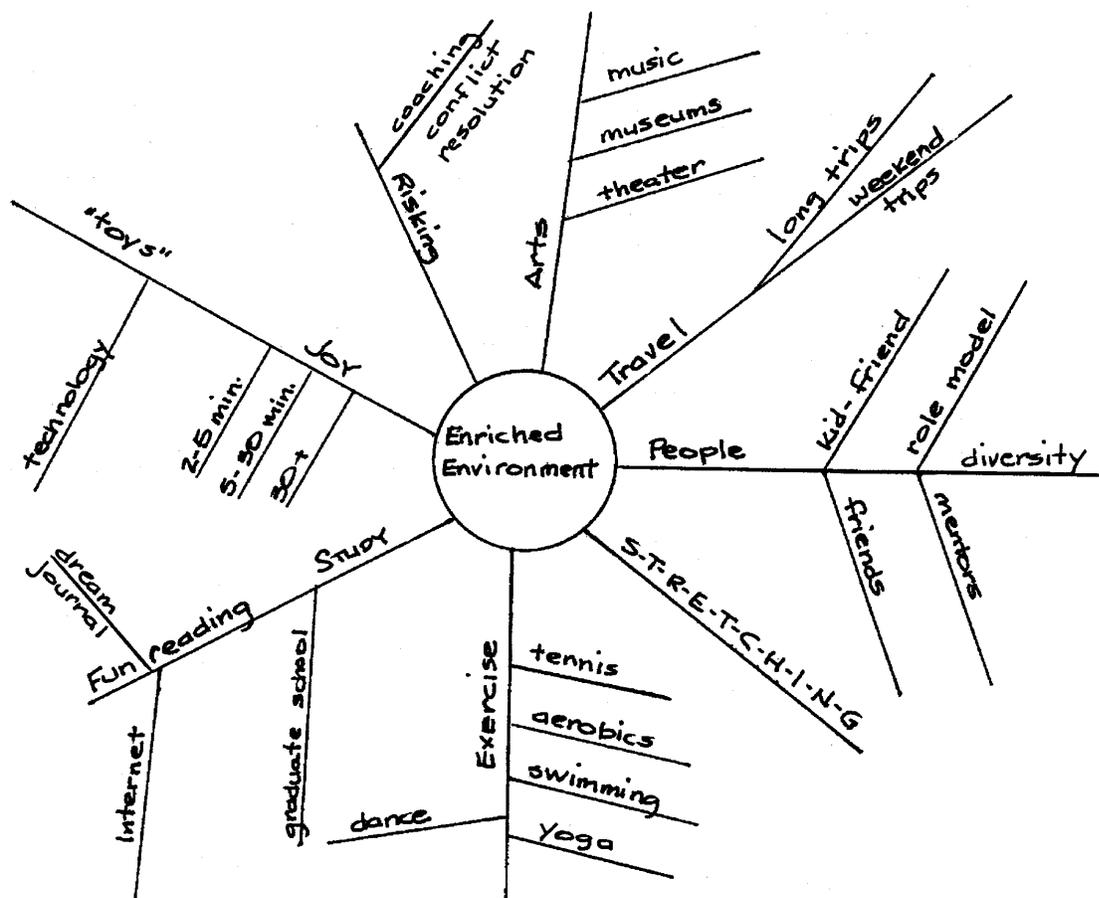
PLANS TO ENRICH MY ENVIRONMENT

“It is not enough just to try and keep up, to maintain the level of intellectual curiosity you have achieved....The intellectual life must expand.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Research indicates strongly that environment contributes heavily to expanded IQ. Think of ways you can enrich your environment and make these ways a part of your ongoing plan for having fun in your life.

You might develop a Mind Map* to begin brainstorming the options. This process allows you to develop new choices as you spin a web of possibilities out from a vortex.



*Mind Mapping comes from Tony Buzan's book, *Use Both Sides of Your Brain*.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





15. COLLECT MENTORS

“As I enter my 84th year, I now see my life with my father as the years of my formation. These years are the rock on which I stand as I sum up my life.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

A mentor is someone who is already doing something you would like to do. Search out mentors from whom to learn. You don't have to talk with them in person, though that can be special. Just reading their biography or autobiography can give you vital clues.

Use this section to collect ideas learned from mentors. List some of your previous mentors and think of a few new ones you might tap in your community, through conferences or tapes, or from history.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

Fall '70 Eleanor Roosevelt took her personal loneliness from a less than loving marriage and reached out to a nation of people who needed her love. She turned the potential of personal loneliness into a legacy of enormous caring as she became a role model of leadership in social reform across this nation.

June '74 Margaret Mead's grandmother would clap her hands with delight when the New England winds howled and the temperatures dropped below zero. She would say, “Oh, it's going to be a blackberry winter, Margaret!” From this Margaret learned not only that the more bitter the winter the sweeter the blackberries that grew the next spring, but also how to anticipate and harvest personal benefit from the hard times in her life.

Don't overlook kids as mentors. Kids can help us rediscover our creativity and passion. It is interesting to note these traits in the lifestyles of noted geniuses.

ACTION PLAN

Find a youngster under the age of 10 and spend at least 20 minutes together for several days or evenings. Be sure the child is the leader. It is essential that you, the adult, not lead in any way. Then notice what is different about how the child finds and creates fun.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





16.

DEVELOP A TIME LINE OF AWAKENING POTENTIAL

“The main difference between this present past-eighty period and my earlier old age when I still felt myself to be in a career, of having a work, may be that up to recently there has always been a future that would ultimately be connected with the present as the past. Now there is no future and there is really no past....There is only now.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Break your life into periods. Perhaps birth to 12 years, 13 to 18 years, 19 to 30 years, 31 to 45 years, 46 to 60 years, etc. Then go back and jot down areas of giftedness that emerged during these different periods. Sometimes an area of giftedness will emerge and then be forgotten; for example, at age 10 I was a great tomboy. How might that gift help me now? Search for forgotten giftedness and think of ways it might reemerge or be put to good use now.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

- Birth** Tomboy. Excelled at boys' sports. Challenged to keep up with brother 3 years older than I was. Loved to climb trees, build tree houses and forts. Excelled in expression lessons.
- 10 years** Won scholarship to attend classes at the Houston Museum of Art. Completed four years of college art prior to graduation from high school. Great with kids. Ran highly successful baby-sitting service. Assisted older brother on his paper route. Wrote and produced shows given in backyard. Had several jobs to earn money for college. Leader in small Methodist church, sang in choir, taught in Sunday school, leader in youth groups. Taught self to play piano, with toes! (Only one song)

17 years College years. Art design, architecture. Taught in state mental institute for four years, also worked two years with blind, deaf, and orphaned African American children.

30 years Senior Fellow in Christian Faith and Life Community. Completed two years of seminary work. Put husband through Drew Seminary. Moved 21 times. Got very good at moving and making home out of orange crates and remnants! Living on peanuts budget. Preparing to be missionaries. Taught in small school district in New Jersey to pay the bills. Taught in street programs in Harlem.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





17.

SEEK OUT FRIENDSHIPS WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM YOU

“Most of my learning in this forty to sixty period was in conversation with people....I found my way to people interested in sharing (and I had much to share, especially in these last ten years) with people whose perspectives were different from mine and who made me stretch.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

[Old Age: The Ultimate Test of Spirit](#)

Without thinking about it, we usually seek out clones as friends—people who are very much like us. Yet we can learn so much by spending time with others who are different. Look for a friend who is 10 years old or younger, one who is over 65 and still curious, growing, and risking. Look for friends of different backgrounds, interests, and nationalities. A gifted couple I know participate as hosts to international visitors who come to Dallas. Then they travel every summer and have host families eager to welcome them all over the world. It has opened amazing doors for them. What new experiences might happen for you if you begin to look beyond the usual group for special friends?

When I was commuting to New York to do my doctoral work and visiting sites of innovative educational programs, I often stayed with a family instead of at a hotel. This did more to open my eyes to new possibilities within family structures and marriages than any other single source of new learning. Having access to an insider's view of how others manage their lives can be quite a privilege and a challenge. What options are you overlooking that might introduce you to new choices within your life?

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

2-2-90 I am learning to think Japanese by spending time with my friends who are certified in acupuncture.

4-9-94 I have a special mentor who stretches my thinking in many directions. He is a leader in the utility business and in nuclear power. I am an active environmentalist and have opposed nuclear power. He is an active Republican. I have typically supported more liberal candidates, independents, or Democrats. He is an Aggie, former Marine, and pretty macho guy. I am an active feminist.

We see many issues differently, yet we have developed a deep trust, sincere friendship, and productive synergy by listening to the differences and letting them work for us rather than keep us apart.

4-17-94 We have a special client and friend who is a very wise young woman of color, head of human resources for a steel company, who is coaching the all-male executive team and insisting that they address the issue of diversity with the many opportunities it brings. As we participate with our own research, we are challenged to stretch along with the client group. Our different cultural backgrounds influence everything and must be considered. What powerful resources differences can be when viewed as such.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





18.

LEARN HOW TO LISTEN

“I have a bias which suggests that only a true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first....This suggests that a non-servant who wants to be a servant might become a natural servant through a long arduous discipline of learning to listen.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

So often we hear only what we wish to hear. Or we are so busy thinking of what we are going to say next that we miss what the other person is saying to us. You might take a course in listening skills. Or, better yet, interview several people who use listening in their profession and see what you can learn about listening. Does a counselor listen in ways different from those of a trial lawyer? Does a musician listen differently from a mechanic? In the process, see what gifts you might have or develop in listening, communicating, and intuitively knowing what to say or what is trying to be said.

Other gifts linked to listening develop as you learn to listen to yourself. What is your body telling you? Are you blocking out your intuition or your forecasting skills? Have you learned the healing peacefulness that comes with silence? Do you take time to listen to birds, the wind, leaves dancing against one another? As you explore all the many possibilities that can enrich your life through listening, note both your gifts and new skills you choose to develop. This is one of those gifts that forms a basis around which others can cluster.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

- 6-20-82 Today I heard the frustration of my stepdaughter rather than getting bogged down in the criticisms she was expressing. She needed to vent her frustration, and once heard, could then move to positive solutions. I am celebrating my new listening skills! Listening with a detached perspective instead of personal defensiveness.
- 7-13-94 Today my client unloaded about the leadership team we are working with. She was overwhelmed and needed to vent. I used empathetic listening to provide a safe time for her to release and mirror her concerns and feelings.

YOUR THOUGHTS...





19. TRANSPLANTING IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES FROM PLACE TO PLACE

“Whatever your work is, make something out of it that enriches you. Work itself cannot be truly significant except as it is seen as the means whereby the people who do the work find themselves in it.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

One of the reasons people with many interests seem to generate so many good ideas and new creative solutions is that each interest serves as a library of possibilities to be transplanted and adapted to a new need or situation. The process can be like grafting plants to produce a lovely hybrid rose. Be alert for opportunities or instances when you might lift an idea from one area of your experience to link into some new need or interest, and note them in this section. Remember, Jack of all trades and master of many.

EXCERPTS FROM MY JOURNAL...

9-21-81 I learned from my last professional assignment that energy is contagious. If people are discouraged and frustrated, that mood spreads and drains others. However, if a few are positive and energetic, that too can catch on.

In starting my new business I'm following Larry's advice and only working with people who share positive energy. People who constantly drain energy, their own and other people's, are too expensive.

YOUR THOUGHTS...







CLAIM YOUR DREAMS

“Nothing much happens without a dream. For something really great to happen, it takes a really great dream.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

Time loses its energy, meaning, and power unless it moves us toward our dreams. Taking the time to listen to our wishes, dreams, and fantasies opens up our unique genius, talents, and reasons for being. It's easy to get “too busy” for dreams, and when we do, a very special part of us dies. Our sense of realism contributes to subconsciously squelching those delicious fantasies, which seem totally impossible.

Twenty years ago I made my first list of ten outrageous dreams. Then, to my amazement, most of them came true. I learned that writing them down and keeping them before me energizes and focuses me. Some have never happened but become like stepping-stones to move me toward other horizons.

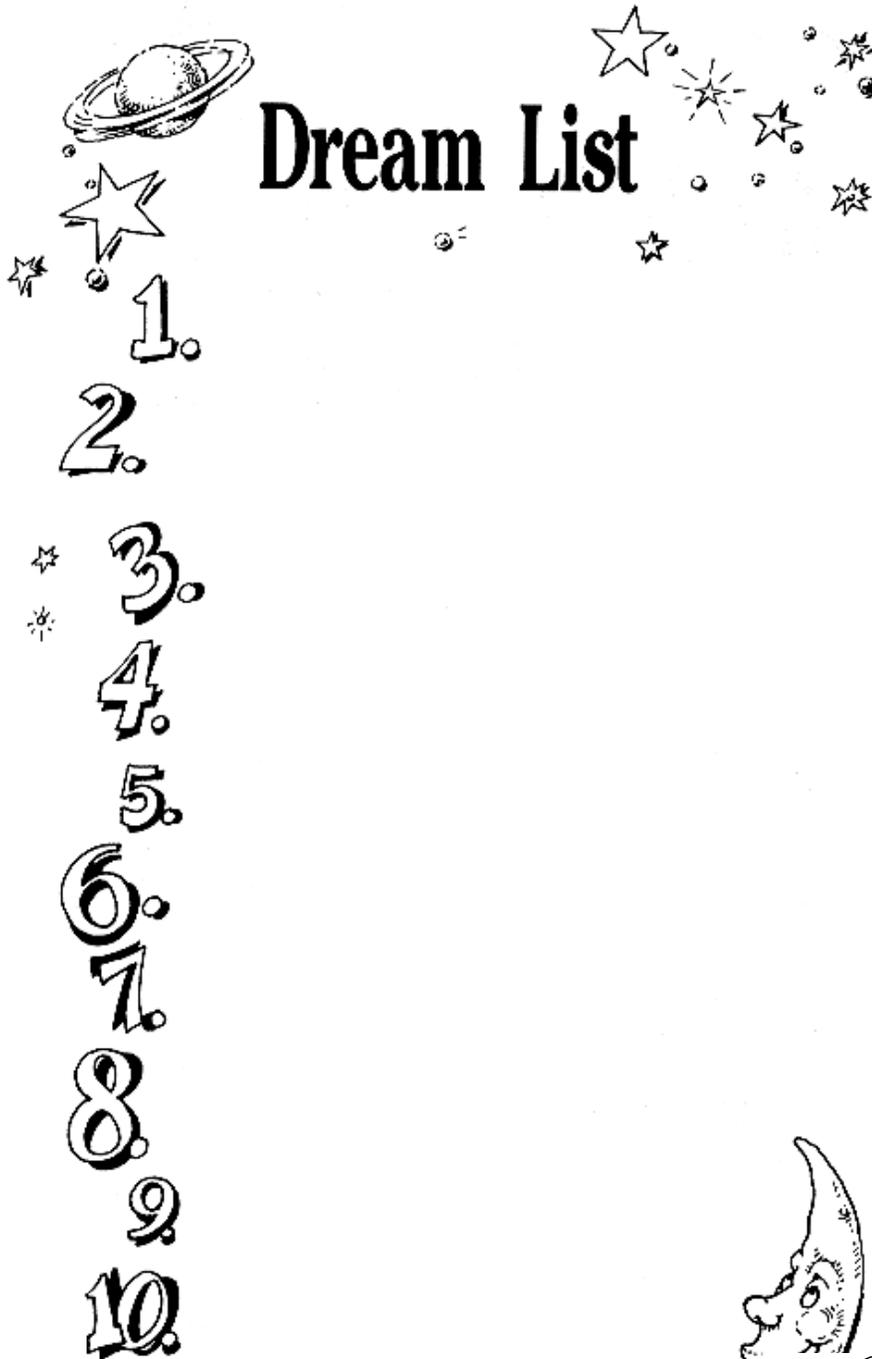
Capture your own special dream list. Then hold the “keepers” in your mind and heart and enjoy the new energy and fun they bring.

DREAM LIST FROM MY JOURNAL...

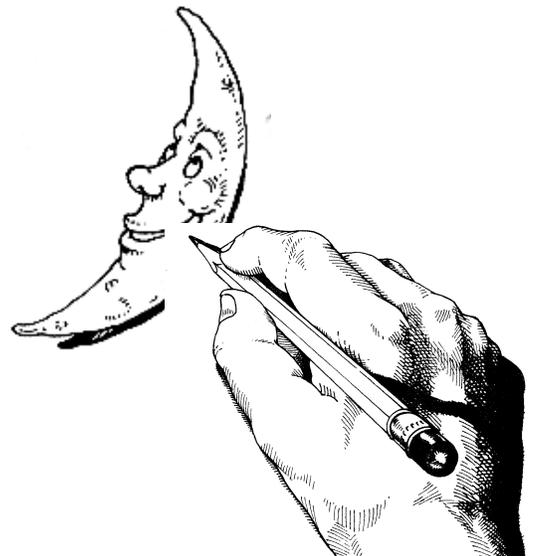
1. Find a monogamous soul mate who shares my commitment to family and is eager to love my son.
2. Write a successful book honoring the right brain and misunderstood creativity.
3. Start my own business as a futurist. Attract a small team who are willing to pioneer together in growing our collective genius.
4. Build a grown-up tree house that captures the fantasy of childhood.

YOUR DREAMS...

Dream List

- 
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.
 - 9.
 - 10.

& one to grow on







WHAT HAPPENS AS A RESULT OF THIS JOURNAL

Step outside yourself and watch what changes occur as a result of working with this journal. I suspect that, as we become more aware of our gifts and consider ourselves gifted, the gifts will grow and prosper. Keep some running notes of your observations. As you begin to discover how to successfully coax your giftedness out where it can be nurtured and applied to bring more positives into your life, you will discover techniques and insights of your own. We would be eager to hear from you and add your ideas to our list.

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YOUR THOUGHTS...





TEST FOR SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

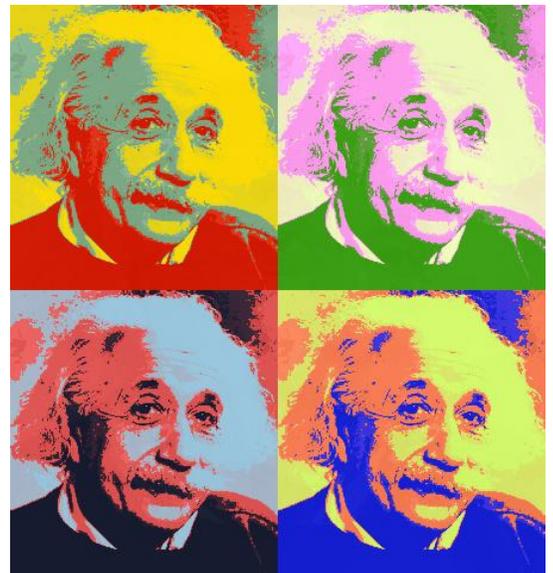
“The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, will they not be further deprived?”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

AN INVITATION:

If you would like to participate in our final pilot study leading to the final design and publication of our book *Journal of Giftedness: Exploring Team and Personal Genius*, we would welcome your insights and information.

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FEEDBACK FROM OTHER JOURNAL USERS

“Being exposed to Ann McGee-Cooper has turned dreams into reality for me. A year ago, I was almost completely a left-brained thinker. Now my life has more balance and my right-brained processes have been activated. I have consequently surrounded myself with creative people. Within eight months I have linked myself with a jewelry designer and traveled extensively as her agent. At this time I am responsible for her work being sold in three of the best-known and most prestigious stores in the country. I have truly learned to turn work into adventure and fun!”

Linda Sharp Bentley
Administrator, Highland Park
School District

“The first thing I began to notice was an amazing new amount of energy. I have enjoyed more energy than I've had in the past several years.”

“Then I began to think of new areas of learning that would be fun. I signed up for a watercolor class and, by my third lesson, was amazing myself with some really nice landscapes. Then I ran into an old friend I'd grown up with who wasn't at all surprised by my 'new-found talent', saying, 'Why Dan, you were always a good artist in school!' It seems I had allowed my seventh-grade art teacher to talk me out of my talent.

“Well, I'm having great fun rediscovering it and the energy that goes with it!”

Dan Young
MANUFACTURING REPRESENTATIVE
ADVANCED TECHNICAL SALES

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“Creativity involves risk, experiment, and perseverance in the face of failure, somewhat the opposite of prudence....Survival depends on being both prudent and creative.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf



“No matter how badly you may be shaken, no matter how serious the failure or how ignominious the fall from grace, by accepting and learning you can be restored with greater strength. Don’t lose this basic view of who you are.”

—Robert K. Greenleaf

“Never doubt the power of a small group of committed individuals to change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead

