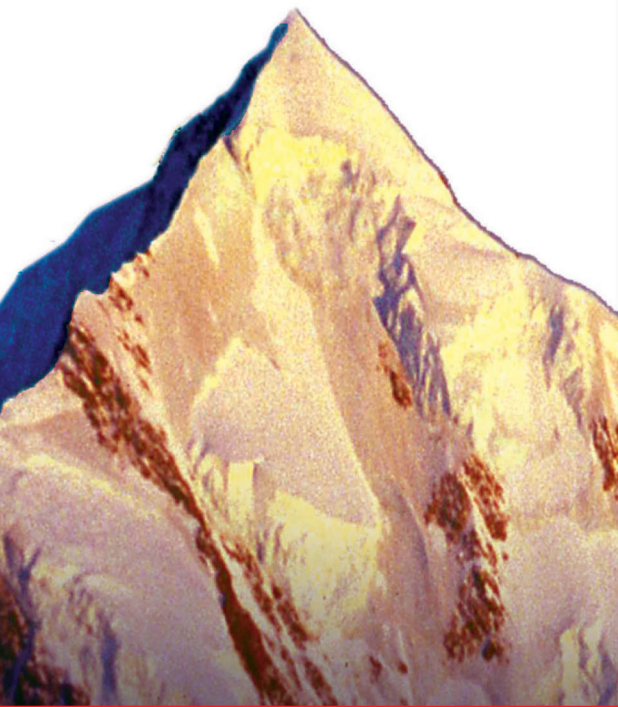


YOU CAN



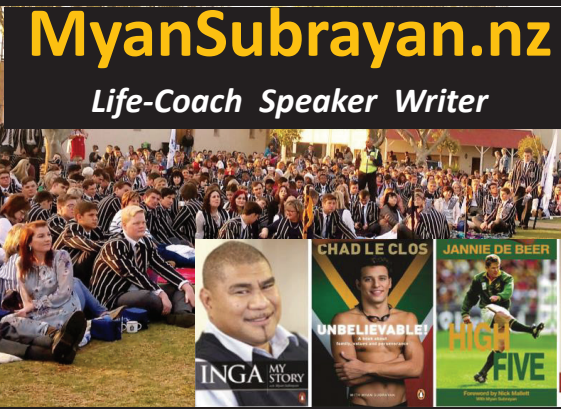
Eight
choices
for a more
rewarding
life

Foreword by
MARK INGLIS

MYAN SUBRAYAN

MyanSubrayan.nz

Life-Coach Speaker Writer



Mentor, Motivator & Speaker to businesses, sports teams, schools and churches.
Myan's talks and books have inspired many to aspire for greater things!

Do contact him: MyanSubrayan@Gmail.com or on social media:



(+27) 812712242 (WhatsApp Only) (+64) 22 097 0534 (NZ)



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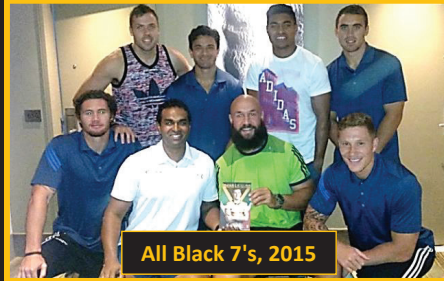
Lions 2014



Springboks Dublin 2014

"Myan had a significant impact on the Lions. His zest for life, positive nature and unwavering faith inspired us to become better players and people."

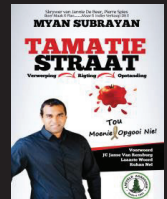
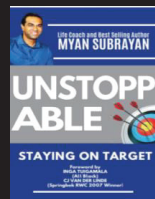
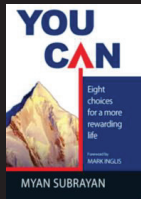
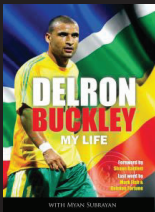
Warren Whiteley
(Lion's Captain /Springbok)



All Black 7's, 2015

"Myan's talks were encouraging and reassuring, especially when we faced tough times as a team. He is a mentor & good friend to us."

DJ Forbes
(Captain All Black 7's)



**YOU
CAN**

**EIGHT
CHOICES
FOR A
MORE
REWARDING
LIFE!**

MYAN SUBRAYAN



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info@hope2overcome.org

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DEDICATION

To my late mum, Uma Subrayan (7/03/49 to 08/10/2010).

Her untiring love and devotion to us despite her lifelong fight with ill health is a true inspiration, and one that continues to inspire me. She never complained but always soldiered on, and her example is embodied in the message and title, YOU CAN!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My foremost thanks go to Jolene for being a great wife and an awesome mum to our lovely children. I am so grateful to have you all as my family. Thanks also to my Dad for his support and help.

I also thank Mark Butler, Charles Kandregula, Jacob Isaac and Ken Youngson for their valuable feedback on the earlier manuscript.

To Roberta Budvietas for your belief and support in me to make this book a reality.

To Mark Inglis for his inspiring foreword.

Last, but not least, to the Creator of the Universe, who has given me the ability to write this book, THANK YOU.

FOREWORD

I had always dreamt of standing on the summit of Mount Everest. In 1982, I thought I had lost that dream when, as a Search and Rescue Mountaineer in New Zealand's majestic Mount Cook National Park, I had a 'hiccup' in my climbing career.

I found myself stuck in an ice cave dubbed 'Middle Peak Hotel' near the summit of Mount Cook for fourteen days.

As a result of this stay I lost both legs below the knees to frostbite. But on May 15th, 2006 my dream came true when I stood on the roof of the world - the first double amputee to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

To achieve this, choices were made and acted on - choices that involved careful thought, with an understanding that every decision we make in life has a consequence.

In this book Myan sets out the importance of making wise choices - planning being the central one for success. I agree.

In conquering Everest it took me years of preparation. You don't get to the top and down just like that.

Years ago I almost believed that I had lost the ability to climb Everest - *almost* that is! I was thrust into a completely new world after awakening with no legs on Christmas Day, 1982. I had to learn not just to walk again but, more importantly, to *think* again - to think of life as an advantage and not a disadvantage.

That choice sounds simple but many of us find it a hard decision to make.

Above 8000 metres on Everest you step into what is known as 'The Death Zone'. Normally there is only a window of five to fifteen days to make a bid for the summit, so planning is crucial.

With temperatures around -50° Celsius you can't stop. You have to keep your metabolic rate up or else you will die. One out of fourteen people who attempt Everest die.

On the last day, at 1.30 a.m. on the way to the summit, my oxygen mask broke and I was only getting a quarter of my necessary oxygen. It was time for a choice and I chose to continue, knowing that I may suffer some frostbite. I knew the consequences; I could either turn around or carry on. I pictured my family in my mind.

They are always my motivation and reason to succeed but, most of all, they are my reason to survive.

Everest wasn't without cost and I lost five fingertips to frostbite; that was a consequence of the choice that I made.

Was it worth it? Absolutely!

I like the thoughts that Myan has conveyed in this book and I believe that they can help you achieve your dreams. We all have our own Everests to conquer. We have dreams and goals to achieve. I choose to believe that in life, each and every one of us can do anything we put our minds to. Achieving your dreams is about taking that all-important first step. I could have given up on my dreams when I lost my legs and many would have accepted that decision, but success in life is about attitude and how we harness it.

Hopefully that's what you will get out of this book. As the title says, "YOU CAN"!

Mark Inglis

As well as being the first double amputee to climb Mt Everest in 2006, Mark Inglis won a silver medal for cycling at the Sydney Paralympics in 2000 and also achieved a first class honours degree in human biochemistry. Currently he heads up a charitable trust, Limbs4All, which helps provide prosthetic legs for amputees and the tools for the disabled of the world to achieve their potential.

For more information visit www.limbs4all.com

PREFACE

When I wrote and released *You Can* in 2007 I drew from my own experiences and lessons that I had learnt from life. It was my second book, and I thought I had achieved quite a lot. Today in the beginning of 2016, some nine years later, my achievement roll has increased considerably. I have written around fifteen books and have helped many others to publish their own. By the grace of God I now work with and share the *You Can* principles with elite international sportsmen and corporates throughout the world.

In January 2013, I began working with the Lions Rugby Union, in Johannesburg, South Africa. They had just been relegated from the Super Rugby competition, and my task from the Head Coach, Johan Ackermann, was to motivate the players to ensure they were focused to win back promotion later that year. They did, and have gone on to astound many with their positive attitude and approach in Super Rugby, culminating in winning the 2015 Currie Cup. This book formed much of the basis of what I did with them. It is these tried and tested principles that I have lived and which has also been put into practise by the many who have read it and testify to the simple, yet profound truths it conveys. For this 3rd edition I have still

left the original text untouched because these principles stand the test of time. As this saying conveys,

Methods are many, principles are few. Methods change often, but principles never do!

In relating to the problems and challenges we face, the wise King Solomon, is noted as saying, “There is nothing new under the sun.” So if the challenges that we face are pretty much the same as those of the past, then what needs to change in order for us to overcome them? I believe Albert Einstein offers some help,

The significant problems that we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.

We have to exercise our ability to think and see that in every problem we face there is a solution waiting to be unlocked. Don’t allow yourself to feel as if there is no way out of your difficulties.

The limits of our mind-set determine the boundaries of our future!

Do not limit yourself and what the future may hold for you and your dreams. Hold on, press forward and never give up. Don’t let people or circumstances tell you that you can’t achieve your dreams or goals, remember, *You Can.*

INTRODUCTION

No matter where you end up in life, it is nearly always the result of choices you have made in the past. It is these choices, good and bad, that have resulted in you arriving at where you are today.

Maybe you don't like where you've ended up, but don't worry!

The good news is that, if you want to, you can change your current situation.

This process happens one day at a time, but you can start from where you are right now.

Most of the good things in life don't arrive by chance, luck or coincidence. In life you'll come across obstacles and problems - you wouldn't be normal if you didn't! But the secret to achieving your dreams and ambitions is to overcome these difficulties by choosing to never give up.

"Yeah, yeah," you may say, "I've heard all this before in other books and from other people."

The difference with this book is that I have written it from what I have learnt based on my life experiences.

I am confident that if you choose to put into action what you will read here, YOU CAN achieve your dreams.

I have experienced my fair share of problems in life – especially “put-downs” and criticism. I grew up in South Africa under the racist Apartheid government that deprived me of many things; however I chose to not allow it to make me feel inferior and quickly learnt that,

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

Even in being “oppressed” I learnt an important truth about life. I found that experiencing difficulties was not an excuse for abandoning my dreams. I had to make a continual choice not to give up. I learnt that I could not blame anyone or make excuses for my life; after all, it is my life. No matter how difficult our circumstances may be, we have the power to choose how we will respond.

When people told me I was not going to succeed when I started in business as a 20-year-old, I chose to persevere. Later I was able to provide employment for the same people that didn’t give me a chance of succeeding.

I experienced the highs of being a successful businessman and also tasted the bitterness of losing it all.

You’ll read more about that later in the book. I chose to maintain a positive frame of mind despite the calamity that surrounded me. My wife and I had started off with

nothing, got to something, and now we were back to nothing. Been there, done that, got two T-shirts.

On the road to recovery I was prepared to work my way up by starting at the bottom. After being a wealthy businessman I was now in a new country flipping burgers at a takeaway restaurant and packing shelves at a supermarket.

I began to implement the eight choices that I have shared in this book and with hard work and discipline was able to get to where I am today.

I like to say,

The road to lasting success is not an easy one, but no one said that you couldn't enjoy the journey!

I am very fond of a principle called "sowing and reaping". In life, what you sow you will reap. If you sow negative or positive thoughts, you will reap the same.

I have written this book to share with you what I have learnt and it all comes down to this:

Life is about making wise choices!

Throughout the book you will be presented with eight key choices that will help get you from where you are

now to where you want to be. I have divided this book into two parts. PART A is called *Plugging the Holes* and PART B is *Removing the Water*. Imagine that you're out in a small boat.

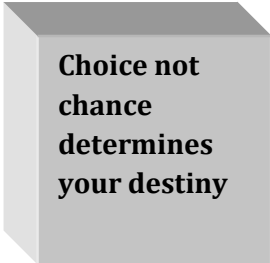
There's a hole in it, and you're starting to sink. You can remove water from that boat all day, but until you've plugged the leak, you won't be safe from sinking. So Part A is all about getting the basics right. Part B is all about what to do once you have a good foundation in place.

At the end of each chapter, I have listed check points under the heading *Choices to Consider*. Then under *Actions that I Need to Take*, there is a space for you to write your own ideas. These will help you pinpoint the choices you need to make towards achieving your goals.

Within you are seeds of great potential – seeds that I hope will spring to life as you read this book. The main thing I want you to remember is that the quality of your life is determined by the quality of your choices.

As successful businesswoman Jean Nidetch said, "Choice not chance determines your destiny."

By making wise choices you can



**Choice not
chance
determines
your destiny**

unlock the potential within you... *The choices you make ultimately control the direction of your life and the course of future events in your life.*

You probably won't achieve your dreams overnight. It will take time and discipline. The great basketball player Michael Jordan always approached everything one step at a time in his quest to achieve his goals. He advises:

Take those small steps... All those steps are like pieces of a puzzle. They all come together to form a picture... Step by step, I can't see any other way of accomplishing anything.¹

This book has been written to be an easy read that you can finish in one go. But to get the best out of it, I recommend that you spend time thinking about each chapter to gain more understanding before moving on to the next one. In this way you allow the content to have more of an impact. When you have finished reading, I encourage you to share what you've learnt with others to help them as well. Remember, you can!

PART 1

Plugging the Holes

1. CHOOSE TO PLAN FOR SUCCESS

The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step

– Lau Tzu

“You’ve got one go in life, so make the most of it.”²

These were the words that inspired multi-millionaire, Richard Branson, to achieve all the great things he has done. Who is he? He is the founder of the Virgin group of companies – Virgin Airlines, Virgin Cola and Virgin Records. Who said those inspiring words to him?

It was his grandmother, just before she died aged 99.

Branson did not have it easy in his early life. He struggled at school because he had dyslexia. But towards the end of his schooling, he decided to start his own student newspaper, “Student”.

The success of his “virgin” business encouraged him to put together a plan with the help of a friend. The plan was to expand their newspaper business by selling advertising to major businesses and to have articles by government officials, movie and music stars, and other celebrities.

This idea paid off handsomely and was his stepping-stone into the music industry. He sold records cheaply by

mail-order through the newspaper. When orders began to flood in, Branson had the foresight to launch his own record label, and that's how Virgin Records was born. The importance of planning is evident in this story of how Richard Branson's multi-million dollar empire began.

No one builds a house without a plan, so why don't we plan our lives as well?

There is a saying that demonstrates how important planning is:

Fail to plan and you plan to fail

✓ **Planning Gives Direction**

Mark Inglis says that the achievement of a dream starts with planning. He says that he likes to admire the tops of mountains and dreams of being there, but just dreaming and wishing will not get him to the summit.

To achieve a dream you need to look at it closely, to plan...Tomorrow never comes if you just wait for it – implement your plan.³

One of the major obstacles that stands in the way of us achieving our dreams is procrastination, and this is caused by what Inglis calls "plain old lack of planning". He goes on to further highlight the importance of planning:

Planning is the groundwork to success. It is the why, the what and the how of our dreams and challenges... the best way to deal with the tough situations in life is to plan around and through them... Plan your work and work your plan.⁴

Planning helps you achieve much more and gives you a clearer vision for your direction. Whenever we start something new we need to work out what is required to achieve it. We need to begin with the end in mind.

From that plan we can list our goals and decide how we are going to achieve them. In the same way as you can concentrate sunlight into a beam with a magnifying glass, a plan directs us and focuses our time and energy, making us more effective. It also helps us identify any possible barriers that might stand in our way and makes us think creatively about how to get around those hurdles.

Often, we find ourselves in a place where we lack direction and with no idea which way to turn. If we wander aimlessly, chances are we will end up somewhere that we didn't want to be. To make the right decisions, we need to clarify how we see the world and the way we think.

✓ **Begin with the End in Mind**

We see the world not as it really is, but as we are conditioned to see it.⁵

The way we view the world (called our “worldview” or outlook on life) affects how we interpret things, how we think and the choices we make.

So if our worldview is out of balance, our choices will be affected as well.

It is important that we examine our own lives. We need to be honest with ourselves. We need to take stock of our lives and evaluate how we are really doing.

World-renowned management expert Peter Drucker said,

Efficiency is doing things right, effectiveness is doing the right things.

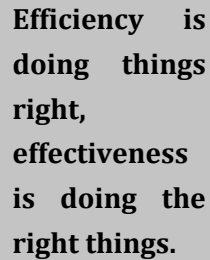
Effective people get to the root of the situation, and the root of the situation here is your thinking. How and what you think is the rudder that steers you in the direction you will take by the choices you make.

Alcoholics Anonymous had a principle called the “Insanity Principle”.

This is when people repeat the same action but expect the outcome to be different each time.

Doing things the same old way but expecting something different to happen is insane!

This book will help you change the way you do things, so that you can get better results. It will help you develop your character – the area of your life that stands the test and shows what you are really made of. At the centre of your being, there is an essential core that makes you who you are.



Efficiency is doing things right, effectiveness is doing the right things.

This is sometimes called “the heart” (not to be confused with the organ that pumps blood around your body).

Many cultures believe that the heart of a person is the place of their deepest thoughts.

As a man thinks in his heart so is he.⁶

Your heart provides motivation for your actions and decisions – as someone once said,

The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart.

Shaping your character also shapes your inner core, allowing you to achieve things that you didn’t think you could achieve.

An excellent way to examine yourself and decide which path to take, is to have a plan for your life.

✓ **Choose to be Effective**

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Planning Gives Direction**

Without a plan we become aimless and don't have direction.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Begin with the End in Mind**

Focus on completing tasks that you start to achieve your goals.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Choose to be Effective**

Effective means getting to the root of the problem – this gets to the source and makes you more effective.

Action I Need to Take:

2. CHOOSE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN LIFE

The person who really wants to achieve something finds a way, whilst the other finds an excuse – Unknown

Excuses are a barrier that stands in the way of you achieving your goals. We have a tendency to blame others for what happens in our lives.

The sooner we come to the realisation that we, and no one else, are accountable for our lives, the sooner we will start to move ahead.

If you really want to achieve something then you will not allow excuses to stand in your way. Your environment and your peers are not an excuse for making wrong choices.

No one promised that the road to success was going to be easy. We have all faced, and still face, obstacles in our life's journey. But you can achieve your goals if you never give up and keep pressing forward. Don't listen to people who say:

1. "You can't do it"
2. "You're too young (or too old)"
3. "You don't have the money, education, talent or skill"

When I was a 20-year-old living in South Africa, I remember overhearing my parents talk about their bookkeeping business. Things were not going well, and my dad suggested that they should sell our house to make ends meet. He was having a problem with his staff and wasn't getting the results he expected from them.

I knew how much the house meant to our family and at that time I had a secure job in an accountancy firm. So I told my dad not to sell the property, and offered to work in the business without pay to help build it up.

This was the start of my career.

Dad was so overwhelmed by my offer that he made me an equal partner in the company. Many people told me that I couldn't save the business because I had no experience. I chose not to listen to their negative comments and continued with what I had to do.

Through hard work and determination I was able to turn the non-profit-making company into a thriving business. I introduced insurance and financial planning as an extension of our accountancy work and after a couple of years we were one of the leading enterprises in our industry. Through this success I was able to mentor and assist our clients in setting up their own businesses.

Don't ever listen to the negative comments of others when they say you are not going to succeed.

Remember – YOU CAN!

You can achieve anything you want to if you put your mind to it and work hard. This quote always motivated me and got me back on track whenever I drifted away from my goal:

We start to see obstacles when we take our eyes off our goal.⁷

There is a famous fable by Aesop that illustrates an important point:

One hot summer's day a fox was strolling through an orchard. He came to a bunch of ripe grapes that were growing on a vine high above his head. He looked at the grapes and thought, "Those are just the thing I need to quench my thirst." So he stepped back a few paces, and then ran forward, taking a jump towards the grapes. But he just missed the bunch. He turned round, counted to three, and jumped again. But he still failed to get high enough. Finally he gave up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying, "The grapes were probably sour anyway."⁸

And the moral of the story?

It's easy to start despising what you think you cannot reach. Just because you don't achieve your goal, don't become cynical and negative about your dreams.

If you really want to achieve your ambitions you will find a way and not an excuse.

✓ **Avoid Excuses**

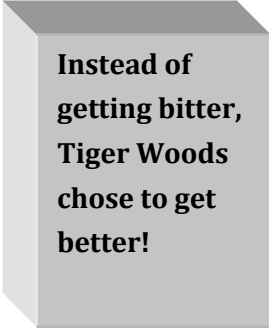
Look at the people that have "made it" in life, or those that we admire or regard as being successful. We often wonder what their secret is or how they got to where they are. In most cases their success can be attributed to their hard work, determination and discipline.

When you look behind these qualities you see what the fuel is that has empowered their life achievements. You too can achieve great things if you choose to fill up on this "fuel". What is this fuel that I'm talking about? CHOICES.

You can "make it" in life if you choose wisely. It is your choices that play a major part in achieving your dreams.

The people that we regard as being successful all made quality choices that helped get them to where they are today. Many of them faced hardships and obstacles along the way, but they didn't make excuses for the challenges they faced and didn't give up on their dreams.

We all admire the golfing talent of world champion golfer Tiger Woods, but what we don't often consider is that Tiger had to endure many obstacles in his younger days to achieve his goals.



Instead of getting bitter, Tiger Woods chose to get better!

Getting into a sport that had traditionally been regarded as the domain of wealthy upper class people was always going to throw challenges to Tiger, especially when he was so good. There were death threats made against him.

When Tiger was growing up there were even some golf clubs that did not allow him to play on their courses because of his skin colour.

These challenges would have made some people give up on their dreams, but not Tiger. He kept on striving towards his goals, and now there is no golf club in this world that would stop Tiger from playing on their course. They would all throw out the red carpet and welcome him with open arms! What a turnaround – from one extreme to another – and achieved because he never gave up.

Instead of getting bitter, Tiger Woods chose to get better!

He made a choice to overcome and not be overcome. This is what he said:

I've been denied many things because of the colour of my skin... that's just the way it was. It doesn't make it right. I just learned to grow with it and grow through it.⁹

Why should we be exempt from our share of challenges? Tiger did not blame anyone or start feeling sorry for himself. He chose to "keep on keeping on". We must choose to take responsibility for our own lives and never give up hope – no matter what we go through. I like this saying,

Men and women are limited not by the place of their birth, not by the colour of their skin, but by the size of their hope.¹⁰

✓ **Choose to be Hopeful**

Sometimes we settle for less because we don't realise that there is more in store for us. Take for example the story of the immigrant who went to America on board a ship 100 years ago. He had managed to scrape together the price of the ticket for himself and his family, with nothing left over.

Aboard the ship, the man and his family survived on peanuts for the first few days, but they could smell the food that was being served in the ship's restaurant...

After a few days the tempting aroma from the restaurant was unbearable and he asked the ship steward how much it would cost to eat in the restaurant? The steward smiled and said that the immigrant had already paid for the meals which were already included in the price of the boarding tickets.¹¹

The immigrant was feeding his family peanuts when they could have been dining on restaurant cuisine. No matter what we go through in life we should learn not to adopt a “beggar” mentality. What type of peanuts have you been settling for? Have you allowed your mind to feast on the peanuts of failure when you have so many possibilities available for you?

Don’t allow yourself to be put down. Choose to stop settling for less – that mind-set will eventually begin to restrict the good things that you can achieve. Even though you may be in a bit of difficulty or state of need, never believe that this situation is your final destiny. Always remember that you can choose your attitude and your thoughts, so never limit your chances of overcoming your problems.

Choose to take responsibility for your own life and try not to blame others, no matter what the circumstances. Expect your situation to change for the better. This process

starts first with your thinking, begin to see yourself doing well:

You may be living in poverty at the moment, but don't ever let poverty live in you.¹²

✓ **Don't Limit Your Expectations**

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Avoid Excuses**

When we make excuses, we give up on our dreams and goals. Avoid excuses and focus on obtaining a solution.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Choose to be Hopeful**

don't lose hope in difficult situations. By being hopeful you allow yourself to stay alert to possibilities.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Don't Limit Your Expectations**

Your choices could limit the opportunities that might be present for you.

Action I Need to Take:

3. CHOOSE TO STOP FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF

The past is a rudder to guide you, not an anchor to drag you.

We must learn from the past but not live in the past.

– Dr Warren Wiersbe

Often, when we find ourselves under stress or going through difficult times, we start to feel sorry for ourselves.

But the problem with this is that it causes us to focus on our difficulties rather than the solution, and it will stop us making progress.

By accepting what has happened and choosing not to let it get us down, we have a better chance of being able to see the direction we need to take in order to overcome our predicament.

We can also learn to let go of things from our past that weigh us down. We need to accept the fact that the past cannot be changed – you have to stop feeling sorry for yourself and press on.

Someone emailed me this interesting tale that illustrates the importance of not feeling sorry for yourself despite the struggle you may be facing:

A farmer's donkey fell down into a well and cried piteously for hours. Finally the farmer decided the animal was old and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it to retrieve the donkey. He invited all his neighbours to come over and help him shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey realised what was happening and cried horribly. Then, he quieted down.

The farmer curiously looked down the well and was astonished. With every shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up.

As the farmer's neighbours continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and trotted off!

While this is probably a fictitious story, the message it conveys is very true indeed. In life there will be situations where you are going to get 'dirt' shovelled on you. The way out of these situations is to do what the donkey did: shake off the dirt and take a step up. In situations like these it is easy to get caught up in self-pity and negativity, but that attitude will not get you out of the pit, it will only keep you down longer.

The significant thing about this illustration is that the donkey used what was going to bury him to build a platform. Using that platform, he was able to step out of his predicament. But first he had to stop crying and focus on the way out. The trials and obstacles that come your way will strengthen you. Each trial is a stepping-stone to success. We can get out of the deepest wells by never giving up.

The two saddest words in any language are “*if only*”.¹³

“If only I had more money”, “If only I’d had a better childhood”, “If only I had more talent”, “If only I hadn’t made so many mistakes”... These words don’t change your current situation, they keep you looking backwards.

They waste your time and become an excuse for not getting past your setbacks in life. We should replace “*if only*” with “*next time*”, which creates hope. If you’ve been through tough times or made mistakes, acknowledge them and then move on. We will talk more about this in the next chapter.

✓ **Choose “Next Time”**

We must never forget that there is always a “next time”, there is always hope for the future. Never feel sorry

for yourself or expect others to feel sorry for you. Sometimes we expect everything to be handed to us on a silver tray – we feel like the world owes us something. This is not true.

What you want you need to work hard for – you need to earn it. No farmer sits on his behind and expects his crops to be planted and harvested automatically without work. He sows the seed and reaps the benefits. I like what John F Kennedy said:

Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.

This is the same attitude we should adopt in our work situation. So what if your job is tough and the manager or boss is always on your case? This is never an excuse for you to slack off or perform below your true potential. Remember what you sow you will reap.

Every action has a reaction.

✓ **Choose To Stop Feeling Sorry For Yourself**

Take for example the builder who worked for thirty years for one boss and was nearing retirement:

He was disappointed that after all these years his employer had not rewarded him with anything substantial for his retirement despite his loyal service.

Just as he completed his last building project for his employer he was summoned and told to build one last house and then he could retire. The employee was reluctant but decided to use this opportunity to teach his boss a lesson. The employee completed the house in record time by taking shortcuts in the construction and by using inferior products and workmanship. The employer was not aware of this and though the house looked good on the surface it was badly built. When the employee handed over the keys of this newly built house to his employer he was stunned when he was given the keys back and told, "Thank you for your thirty years of loyal service. This house is a gift for your retirement and loyal years of service. I asked you to construct it because I know that you always build houses as if they are your own."

Ouch! A painful lesson learnt!

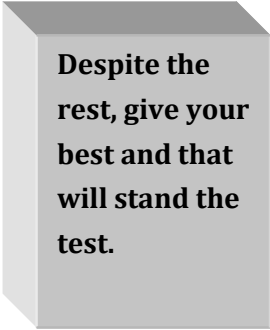
Even though you may not like the way things are going at work, don't hold back – give your best. You are not getting even with your employer by performing below your best – you are actually stunting your own growth and development. Don't get in with the crowd that has a bad attitude to work. Despite the rest, give your best and that will always stand the test.

✓ **Don't Hold Back, Give Your Best**

A great example of someone who chose not to indulge in self-pity is 'Colonel' Harland Sanders, the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC®).¹⁴ His father was a miner and died when Harland was 5 years old. His mother worked long hours in a shirt factory, and left him to cook for his younger siblings. These tough times prepared him for his future success – but success didn't come quickly.

He worked as a fireman, steamboat driver, insurance salesman, railroad worker, farmer and served in the army. Then he ran a service station, where he served fried chicken to his customers and perfected his recipe.

A new interstate highway bypassed the town where he had his service station and he was forced to close the business. He was 62 years old by this time. Most people would have given up – but not Colonel Sanders. He was on a benefit and was tired of getting a “hand out”.



Despite the rest, give your best and that will stand the test.

He wanted to earn his money. So he went out on the road, cooking chicken for restaurant owners and selling them franchises. Many restaurants turned his idea down

but this did not deter him, he did not give up. And the rest is history.

Through the choice to persist and not allow his old age to hinder him, Colonel Sanders went on to establish one of the biggest and most popular fast-food brands in the world. So you feel that you are too *young* to achieve much?

At age 25, Sergey Brin and Larry Page co-founded the internet search company Google. Currently they each have an estimated net worth in the region of US\$14 billion, placing them twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh in the list of the richest people in the world.¹⁵

Sergey and Larry chose not to allow their age to prevent them from achieving their ambitions.

✓ **Don't Allow Your Age to be an Excuse**

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Choose “Next Time”**

Remember that there is always a “next time” ..

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Choose To Stop Feeling Sorry For Yourself**

When we feel sorry for ourselves it ties us to the past and distracts us from embracing the opportunities that lie ahead.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Don’t Hold Back, Give Your Best**

Don’t ever hold back – always perform at your very best.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Don’t Allow Your Age To Be an Excuse**

If you look for excuses you will find them. Never let your age stand in the way of achieving your dreams.

Action I Need to Take:

TESTIMONIES

THE LIONS

At the end of November 2012, I asked Myan Subrayan to facilitate and establish our Mission, Vision and Values Statement for 2013, and to lay a spiritual foundation. He did this with passion and fun. His message (as in this book) inspired me to get him to motivate us at the Lions Rugby. Having just been relegated out of Super Rugby, I knew the team needed motivation as they were at a low point. Using, You Can, he embarked on a series of motivation sessions that



helped motivate and inspire us to never give up believing that we could be promoted back to Super Rugby. He was practical and relevant to our team and he shared life experiences that were relevant to where we were at the time. It was important that the players grew mentally and were emotionally strong. This “mental toughness” is a big contributor to their performance on the field. I believe that everyone took a lot from his sessions and they were certainly lifted and charged up to face what was a very tough season out of Super Rugby. Myan helped us stay focused and aligned the team to our mission, vision and values. Because Myan has overcome his own challenges, and tough times, he is uniquely positioned and equipped to motivate others and share real life experiences to encourage them to stay positive. His story is much needed to bring hope to South Africa and beyond - **Johan Ackermann (Former Head Coach of Lions & Springbok)**

As the captain of the team, my job was to keep the guys positive - not an easy task, when they were down. One Monday, Coach Ackers called us in and said there was a guy coming to talk to us. My first reaction was 'here we go again.' Back then, everybody had something to say! That's when I met Myan Subrayan. I can remember the mock interview we had for fun, where he put me on the chair in front of the whole squad and created the scenario that we had now been promoted back. He then continued to interview me as to my thoughts on how it felt being back in Super Rugby. His motivation played a big part in helping us get back into Super Rugby, as he helped get a team that was down and out into believing that they can become the best again. Meeting Myan, an Indian passionate about rugby, was certainly not a co-incidence. I learnt that things in life happen for a reason. Through his sessions, I became a better leader and the team started to believe in our goal to get back into Super 15 for 2014. Thanks Myan for the great work you did. I've learned many things from you that I'll take with me for the rest of my life!

- **JC Janse Van Rensburg (Captain 2013)**

Myan's sessions always gave us hope – teaching that your attitude determines your altitude! The mission and vision we did always gave us something to return to, measure ourselves and assess our progress to where we wanted to be. And that we must remember that bad things happen to good people too. From our biggest rejections comes, our greatest resurrections. Thanks a lot for all you did for the Lions and for me personally, and for the person you are

- **CJ Van Der Linde (Former Bok Prop)**

TESTIMONIES

In rugby there can sometimes be a lot of disappointment, and especially in 2013 when the Lions were relegated. There were many challenges during this year and things weren't always easy. Myan reminded us that you can always believe that the best is yet to come, and his solid foundation helped us through that difficult season. The way he supported the team was inspiring, even joking that the *Curry Cup* belonged to his Indian people, motivated us. He always managed to bring a lighter atmosphere to the team and always tried to uplift the guys no matter what situation we faced - **Franco Vd Merwe**



THE SHARKS

Myan is someone that gives hope and has a real heart for people. His experience locally and internationally gives him authority as a speaker. You'll be assured to have a good laugh amidst a powerful and principled message! **Jacque Botes**

Myan has a talent with words that I have seen in very few. Anyone can learn something from what he shares and apply it to their own lives - **Louis Ludik**



I have heard Myan speak on a few occasions. His passion and the humorous manner in which he speaks are very refreshing. He shares both interesting stories and wisdom, keeping his listeners interested - **Patrick Lambie**

I heard Myan speak at our team motivation session. When I left there I felt refreshed and ready for my next challenge - **Wiehan Herbst**

THE CHEETAHS

Within a few minutes of listening to Myan, I was inspired by his unwavering determination in the face of great difficulty. His message of hope, 'the best lies ahead' is exactly what this nation needs. He has shared the company of great sporting icons and written books about their lives. I've been blessed and I'm sure you will be when you hear Myan - **Caylib Oosthuizen**



I first met Myan at a time when I was down – a day after I missed an important kick. His message lifted and motivated me to believe in myself and my abilities again. Myan is an unbelievable person, and most importantly, a man of character - **Elgar Watts**

TESTIMONIES

Myan's positive attitude towards life really encouraged me. He has motivated me many times before games and inspired me to be a better person and rugby player

- **Cornal Hendricks**

THE BULLS

I tore my ACL (knee) twice in a year – playing for the Boks and the Bulls in 2014. I was heartbroken and needed somebody I could talk to. That's when I met Myan. He helped me a lot when I was down, and I drew from his wisdom to get through that tough time. He has played a big role in encouraging me mentally and spiritually, and I believe he was sent at the right time into my life - *Arno Botha*

CHAD LE CLOS

Since writing my book in 2014, Myan, has become good friends with me and my family. He is someone we can count on at any time for sound advice. Competitive swimming is a tough mental sport, so I am glad that I have Myan in my camp to motivate and encourage me.

DELRON BUCKLEY

Playing professional soccer in Germany for 18 years I have worked with many mental coaches. Meeting Myan, since my return to South Africa in 2012, I can confidently say that he is up there with the best of them. He had a significant impact with the players at Maritzburg Utd in 2013, and is my personal life coach and friend.

I value his input into my life and live by the principles of You Can.

FROM 4 WHEELS HYUNDAI

4 Wheels Hyundai, are proud to be associated with Myan Subrayan as he brings *Hope 4 SA*. We are glad to have him speak to and motivate our staff. If you are in need of a new or used car do contact us!

- **Danie de Kock (Dealer Principal)**
ddekock@4wheels.co.za
www.4wheels.co.za



TESTIMONIES

WARRIORS CRICKET EASTERN CAPE

Our time with Myan was very fruitful. He challenged us to look within and that the greatest competition is within. His biggest impact was to remind us of what it meant to be a "Warrior".

- Malibongwe Maketa
Ex-Head Coach



Warriors Cricket
2016/7

AMATUKS FOOTBALL

As head coach of *Amatuks Football* we appreciate Myan's role in developing a strong mental approach to all aspects in our team.

- Shaun Bartlett
Head Coach



Amatuks Football

SHIMLAS RUGBY (UFS)

The team enjoyed Myan's sessions and commented favourably on its positive influence

- Jaco Swanepoel, Head of Rugby (UFS)



Shimlas
Rugby, 2016/7

DOLPHINS CRICKET (KZN)

Myan's positive outlook is enlightening and informative - from his first session with us to our 1 on 1's. Apart from being a life coach to me and fellow players he has become a friend – Keshav Maharaj



Dolphins Cricket,
2017/8

4. CHOOSE TO LET GO OF PAST FAILURES AND FOCUS AHEAD

You can clutch the past so tightly to your chest that it leaves
your arms too full to embrace the present.

– Jan Glidewell

One of the biggest obstacles that can stand between you and success is when you let your past stand in the way of your future. In order to progress you have to let go of your past hurts or failures and embrace what is currently happening in your life.

Towards the end of 2000 when my business was really booming in South Africa, I had an experience that changed my life forever.

One afternoon, on an otherwise normal day, I was held up at gunpoint by men demanding money. I was recently married and had a new 5-month-old daughter. I had a lot to live for, and thank God I was unharmed.

But that incident really made me think deeply about things. Even though I was a successful businessman, I realised that there was more to life than just making money. I realised that you can get so caught up in making

a living that you have no time to really live. I decided to sell up my business and pursue a passion I had to become a teacher. My wife and I also decided to immigrate to New Zealand. My family and friends thought I had gone crazy, and voiced their dissatisfaction at my decision on many occasions.

“How can you give up a successful business and leave?”

But we had made our minds up and there was no turning back. When we arrived in New Zealand, I had envisaged that I would invest the proceeds of the sale of my business and live off the interest while I studied full-time to be a teacher. But the sale of my business crumbled.

The purchasers did not honour the agreement. I was in New Zealand with my wife and 8-month-old baby and had no money. I had also made the mistake of providing surety for loans on behalf of friends and family. When they didn't honour their debts, I had to settle the payments out of my own pocket.

I contacted my lawyer in South Africa who advised that if I wanted to proceed with legal action to recover my

losses, I would need to return to South Africa. If you have been through the hassle of immigrating, you know that it is not straightforward to just pack up and go back.

Because of the physical stress and mental strain I was under, for the first and last time in my life I experienced a panic/anxiety attack. The doctors told me that I was also suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder as a result of the armed hold-up.

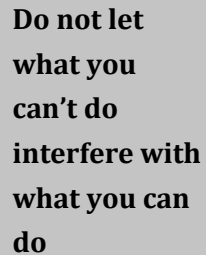
Through the support and prayers of our family and friends I pulled myself together. My wife and I decided that even though we had given up a lot in South Africa, we would let go of the past and make a life for ourselves in New Zealand.

We knew that with hard work and determination we could restore all that we had lost. I decided not to dwell on the failed business deal and losses nor focus on my near-death experience.

I had to stop feeling sorry for myself and get off the phone to "0800 CRY BABY". Self-pity is dangerous.

I chose not to worry about things I had no control over and instead focussed on what I *could* do. I love what NBA

Hall of Fame coach John Wooden said, “Do not let what you can’t do interfere with what you can do.”



**Do not let
what you
can't do
interfere with
what you can
do**

What I *could* do was concentrate on my new life in New Zealand and appreciate my wife and daughter. I worked part-time as a fast food attendant flipping burgers, and studied full-time. Life was difficult, and it was a big change from having my own business to doing this type of work, but I was prepared to start at the bottom and work my way up. I knew that perseverance would get me to where I wanted to be.

I graduated top of my class after my three-year teacher studies, and now I have my own business – coaching, training and inspiring people to achieve their dreams. I remind them that the quicker they can put their past behind them, the quicker they can begin to move ahead.

You may feel like you have no control over what happens to you, but consider the 90/10 Principle – 10% of life consists of what happens to you and the other 90% is determined by how you react.¹⁶ This means that we have

no control over 10% of what happens to us – events that are out of our control. The other 90% is in your control as it is determined by how you respond or react.

Your future is now. You cannot change your past, but you can make a better future for yourself and your loved ones by choosing how you respond to your past. Maybe you've been through bad relationships and difficulties in life. Leave behind your hurts and failures by choosing to put them behind you, and focus your efforts on what is happening now.

You may have had a difficult past, but there is always hope for the future.

In 2003, Aron Ralston was hiking in the Utah Canyons. He was caught in a rock-fall and had his right arm pinned by an 800-pound boulder. After five days of agonising pain and after running out of water, he realised his chances of survival were bleak.

Aron chose to free himself by amputating his arm with a pocket-knife, and then began hiking to safety. After surviving the ordeal, he told his parents there were four possibilities: he could be found by someone, he could try

to move the boulder with his climbing gear, he could chip away at the rock, or he could cut off his right forearm with a pocket-knife. To Aron, the fifth alternative – dying – was not on the list.

I think this is an excellent illustration on the importance of letting go of past failures and disappointments. As painful as it may be, we need to let go of those things that are weighing us down, or else we remain trapped under the boulder of our past.

If we are to survive, we have to make a choice – we either remain trapped, or we do what it takes to be free. When we choose not to cut away our past hurts we can be choosing the “fifth option”, the one that Aron did not even consider – death.

Your dreams and ambitions will die if you stay where you are.

✓ **Cut off the Hurt from Your Past**

If we don't get cut free from our past it can eventually lead to anger, and anger tends to cloud our judgment, resulting in rash, unwise and, in some cases, fatal choices.

Medical tests prove that “driving competitiveness, aggressiveness, impatience and anger”¹⁷ can cause harmful changes in our internal organs – especially the heart. These are all emotions that can be caused by choosing to hold onto past hurts.

You have the power to choose whether or not bad experiences will get you down. Maybe someone has hurt you in your past and you are currently carrying that burden. My advice is to cut it off and move on. But how can you do this? Try forgiving people that hurt you. If you don’t, you may be causing yourself more harm than you think. I like this saying that clearly highlights the dangers of unforgiveness:

When you forgive “you set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was yourself”.¹⁸

✓ **Choose to Forgive**

To prove this point further consider the life of the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, who endured much suffering through Apartheid.¹⁹ He was imprisoned for twenty seven years, taken away from his family and friends, persecuted and cut off from

mainstream society, because he believed that all people should be treated equally and fairly.

Mandela was subjected to terrible prison conditions for eighteen years. His former jailer, James Gregory, described the cellblocks as having an “unmistakable stench of sweat and urine”, and said that prisoners were given food that would have been unfit for dogs.²⁰ If there was anyone who had a legitimate reason, based on his environment, to make a choice to instigate vengeance on his captors, then Mandela was that man. But history tells another story.

On his release from prison and after he became President of South Africa, Mandela chose to forgive the people responsible for his horrid and unfair treatment.

✓ **Don't Blame Others for Your Choices**

We actually put ourselves in bondage if we do not cut away the past and move on. Do you want to progress ahead in life? Then choose to forgive. Don't get bitter by your past, but get better by choosing to forgive.

Sometimes we make choices without realising it. At times when we should have done something, but haven't, we have actually made a choice by our inaction. You are the one who ultimately determines how you react to a situation.

When you have to make a choice and don't make it, that is in itself a choice.²¹

✓ **Your Inaction is a Choice**

You always have the power to decide what action to take. The punch line is, "Ultimately life boils down to the choices that you make." All that other people can do is provide you with advice, but you are the one that makes the actual decision.

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Cut off the hurt from your past**

Make a decision today that you will not carry around with you any of your past hurts or failures.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Choose to Forgive**

Forgiveness allows us to leave the burdens of the past behind and focus ahead on our future.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Don't Blame Others for Your Choices**

Go against society's trend of blaming others for your bad choices in life. Know that you are solely responsible for your own decisions.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Your Inaction is a Choice**

Choosing not to make a decision is a choice in itself.

Action I Need to Take:

PART 2

Removing the Water

5. CHOOSE TO BE POSITIVE

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

To reach your fullest potential in life you must choose to rid yourself of negative thinking. Continually thinking thoughts of failure can only lead to a “defeatist mentality”.

It is quite impossible to achieve victory in life if you go about thinking thoughts of defeat.

Oprah Winfrey faced much opposition on her way to achieving her dream of becoming a talk show host. This is how she describes her challenge:

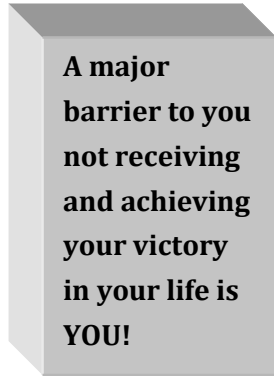
Everybody with the exception of my best friend told me it wouldn't work”, Oprah recalled. “They said I was black, female and overweight...and the talk show formula was on its way out.²²

How wrong they were telling her that she did not have what it took to be successful in the talk show world and that she was doomed to fail.

Undaunted by these negative comments, Oprah made a decision to not allow negative comments to put her down and states that excelling in life is a choice:

I believe the choice to be excellent begins with aligning your thoughts and words with the intention to require more from yourself.

You can choose to achieve great things, however there's only one person who has the power to make you succeed. That person is you. In my experience of being a mentor and life coach I have discovered that a major barrier to you not receiving and achieving victory in your life is YOU! You are the captain of your life and you ultimately choose the direction you sail.



A major barrier to you not receiving and achieving your victory in your life is YOU!

You can choose to be your biggest asset or your worst liability!

We need to be an asset to ourselves by choosing to align our thoughts with good possibilities and avoiding negative thoughts or pessimistic thinking. Choose to be positive by believing that you can achieve great things if you start to make wise choices in your life.

As human beings, we are creatures of vision, living out our lives based on our perspective and vision for life. As I mentioned earlier, we make choices based on the way we

understand and see things.²³ For example, if we are negative or pessimistic then we tend to approach the world expecting the worst. However, if we always look for the best, then we will be prepared to embrace opportunities that will make us better.

Having a positive attitude towards life is proven to improve our overall well-being and promote good health. In the Gulf War of 1991 many Israelis died as a result of Iraq's missile attacks. However the vast majority of them did not die because they were hit by the missiles. Rather, they died from heart failure brought on by the fear, anxiety and stress associated with the attacks. They died because of their perception of the situation, which caused emotional stress. "It was the psychological impact of the SCUD missiles, not their physical impact that claimed the majority of the victims".²⁴

Research shows that people with a pessimistic, negative attitude are more prone to disease and die younger on average than optimists. Pessimists are more prone to getting sick because their immune systems function at a lower level, whilst optimists were noted for recovering from surgery sooner.²⁵

✓ **Don't Be Negative or Expect the Worst**

What this research tells us is that the crisis that we go through or face is not the main problem. How we approach or face the crisis is the real issue. How do you see problems in your life? Do you get stressed out and worried and feel like there is no way out? Do you know that if you are doing this you can actually be shortening your life and causing yourself to fall ill?

Remember that, whatever you may be facing or going through, there is always hope. Within every problem is a solution waiting to be found, but it may take time to reveal itself. The great scientist Albert Einstein said:

The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.

What this tells us is that we have to start thinking bigger than our current problem and not be restricted in imagining a solution.

What does imagination have to do with this?

I remember watching an interview between actor Samuel L Jackson and TV chat show host, David Letterman. Jackson was all excited because he had just played golf with Tiger Woods, so Letterman asked him how it was. Jackson replied that he had finally figured out

Tiger's secret – it was his imagination. Letterman enquired what he meant by “imagination”. Jackson explained that some of the golf shots that Tiger plays are so amazing that when we look at them we say, “I can't imagine doing that.”

Jackson went on to say that because we don't have the imagination to think of the shots we can't play them. In order for Tiger to play the great shots that he does, he first has to be able to imagine them.

According to psychologists it is our ability to dream and imagine that sets us apart from other creatures. “Our imagination encourages us to aspire, hope, express ourselves, long for fulfilment of dreams, wish, and plan”.²⁶ What are your dreams? Never give up on them, because there is always hope.

So, instead of getting stressed out by a situation, think up or imagine a solution to the problem.

Start to imagine yourself overcoming the obstacles that are in your way.

✓ **Keep your imagination alive**

Think, dream and hope for the best. I understand what it feels like to be in a situation that seems almost too hard to bear. When you live under an unjust system that

discriminates against you and puts you down, as I did in South Africa, you tend to hit rock bottom pretty quickly. But once you reach that point, whatever your particular circumstances, you start to realise that the only way is up. You start to focus not on your current situation, but on what you might be able to achieve. My experiences taught me to see the glass as being half full and never half empty, to always have a positive perspective on life.

Seeing problems in this light is crucial. If you can do this, when difficulties come you will not be overcome by them – rather, you will overcome them. Always persevere.

Learn to make the best of every situation.

When the world gives you lemons, take them and make lemonade.

✓ **See the Best in Every Situation**

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Don't Be Negative Or Expect The Worst**

There is a high probability that you will receive what you think you will receive. So be careful of your thoughts and choose them wisely.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Keep Your Imagination Alive: Think, Dream And**

hope for the best!

Don't stop believing for the best. Keep your dreams alive by imagining yourself fulfilling them.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **See The Best In Every Situation**

Don't be upset when things seem to go against you. Choose to be positive and look for the solutions and possibilities in the midst of your setbacks.

Action I Need to Take:

6. CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE

The only disability in life is a bad attitude.

– Scott Hamilton

Of the thousands of choices you make every day, the most important one that you make is to choose your attitude – or how you respond to situations. When we have a “bad day” it is not so much what happens in the day that determines whether it is good or bad, but rather our attitude.

We choose to either have a bad or good day.

Our attitude plays a huge part in how we approach life. A positive attitude allows us to see past the obstacles that life has placed in our path and allows us to stay focussed on achieving our goals.

In South Africa the social system that used to exist there bred hatred on both sides of the social divide: in the people perpetuating it as well as those subjected to it. I lived in a country that had laws that denied me certain rights because of my skin colour.

I had to live in a particular area and go to a school reserved only for people with the same colour skin as me. Our suburb and school were far less well equipped than those set aside for people of European descent. I was not

allowed to vote, and the government neglected me, along with whole sections of South African society.

I have shared this with you to highlight that growing up under Apartheid we had ample reason to feel sorry for ourselves or turn to crime but we chose not to. Instead we pressed on in life despite this oppression. I started a financial consultancy business at the age of 20 and went on to achieve a number of awards. I could have adopted a negative attitude and believed the lies that Apartheid was trying to tell me, but I chose not to.

✓ **Your Attitude is a Crucial Choice You Make for Your Future.**

I chose to believe that I was born for a purpose and that I could achieve great things if I put my mind to it. I had to take responsibility for my own life. We may believe that others are responsible for putting us down or making us feel bad, but we need to realise that,

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.²⁷

We like to believe that environmental and peer pressure are the main influences in our lives, but as human beings we are not “completely and unavoidably

influenced by [our] surroundings". Though a person may feel that he or she has lost everything in life, there is one thing that cannot be taken away:

The last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances...²⁸

This observation was made by Viktor Frankl, who suffered horrendous torture and inhumane treatment in the Nazi concentration camps of World War 2. He arrived at his conclusion after witnessing the responses of fellow prisoners to torture and adverse conditions.

Men comforted each other and even gave away their last pieces of bread despite their own hunger. These actions led him to believe that:

The sort of person the prisoner became was the result of an inner decision and not the result of camp influences alone.

The psychologist Pavlov believed that we have no choice in our responses because we are conditioned to behave in a certain way. But Frankl pointed out that Pavlov was wrong. Pavlov missed one crucial step in the process between stimulus and response in humans:

Between stimulus and response is our greatest power – the freedom to choose.²⁹

✓ **You Have the Freedom to Choose**

Choosing your attitude ultimately shapes your character and determines your destiny. By choosing your attitude you are able to determine how far you can progress in life. As revealed in this powerful statement:

Your Attitude determines Your Altitude.³⁰

Soccer superstar David Beckham is a good example of this truth. From a young age he told people that he was going to play for Manchester United. Undaunted by the competition and the odds that were stacked against him, Beckham had a positive attitude from the beginning. This stood him in good stead for the future as he achieved and surpassed his dream, playing for Manchester United and captaining England. Beckham added hard work to his positive attitude, as he says:

Undaunted by the opposition and the odds Beckham had a good attitude.

In the back of my mind I just had to trust that, if I got on and worked hard, United would hear about me. What else could I do?³¹

Life is about *you* making the wise choices. While it is true that peer pressure and circumstances do play a role in

influencing your life, ultimately you are the one that chooses to give in or allow circumstances to dictate your course of action.

Our human nature tends to cause us to magnify our problems. We go through life

seeing ourselves as victims rather than seeing the victory that we can possess.

✓ **Attitude Results in Action.**

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ Your Attitude is a Crucial Choice You Make for Your Future

Choosing the right attitude in response to your circumstances is important in determining the outcome to your future.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ You Have the Freedom to Choose

The freedom to choose is our greatest ability. Don't ever feel compelled to believe that you have no choice in the matter... because ultimately you do.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ Attitude Results in Action

Having a positive attitude is only the starting point in achieving your goals. To be successful, your attitude must result in the right action.

Action I Need to Take:

7. CHOOSE YOUR CHARACTER

Ability will get you to the top - character will keep you there – John Wooden

The word ‘character’ originates from the Greek word “to chisel”.³² Our character is formed by how we respond to situations and people. Why is character so important? Because it defines who you are and how you act. When we are faced with challenges we can either choose to do the right thing or the wrong thing. Making wise choices develops your character, but making the wrong choices leads to compromise. “The development of character is at the heart of our development.”³³

In 2011 I wrote the autobiography of Springbok rugby player, Pierre Spies, ³⁴ whom many regard as a man of good character. Just two weeks before the 2007 Rugby World Cup, Spies who was selected in the Springbok squad, began coughing up blood in the training session.

Tests revealed that he had blood clots in his lungs. Doctors were not optimistic for him and he was subsequently withdrawn from the Springbok squad. They also said that Spies may never play rugby again.

Undaunted by this discouraging news, Spies never gave up hope that he would return to rugby. He made a

miraculous recovery and was able to get back into the Springbok squad that next year, and also went on to win the Super 14 Rugby titles in 2009 and 2010 with his team, *The Bulls*. He also made the Springbok squad for the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand.

Spies bases a lot of his recovery on his faith, and his success on the rugby field is often attributed to the “never give up” winning mind-set that he developed in battling his ill health and the many challenges he has endured. His accomplishments and feats of athletic brilliance have been so great that he was accused of using performance enhancing drugs, but these allegations have been proven to be unfounded.

His team mate and friend, Victor Matfield had this to say about Pierre Spies taking ill,

This experience would have been enough to devastate anyone, but not Pierre Spies. The way he maintained a positive attitude, despite seeing his dream to play in the World Cup fall apart in front of him, was simply inspiring to the rest of us in the team.³⁵

When things are going against us, our true character is revealed and shaped. Pierre Spies is a fitting example of someone who showed all of his character in overcoming

major health problems. Your character is initially determined by your thinking, and this leads to a process that results in you achieving your ambitions. There's an old saying:

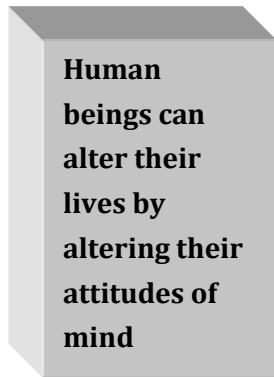
Thoughts lead to action; Actions lead to habits; Habits shape your character; Your character determines your destiny.

✓ **Character Counts**

So if you want to change or improve your character and destiny, it starts with your mind! Research shows that the state of a person's mind hugely impacts their overall health.

The mind "plays a part in a multitude of disease processes, ranging from commonplace bacteria and viral infections to heart disease and even cancer."³⁶

This is largely due to high stress levels that can lead to the weakening of our body's defences (immune system) which increases our chances of picking up infections and viruses.



Human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind

Our mind is so powerful that “under certain conditions [it] can consciously ask the body to change and the body will comply.”³⁷ It is this link between the mind and our body that makes a crucial difference between being healthy and being ill.

These fascinating scientific facts show how powerful the mind can be. By using our mind’s abilities we can alter our destiny by adjusting the way we think. William James observed:

The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.

Our minds are potent instruments that can either make or break our character. So if you feel that you are in need of change, remember to choose what you think. What are the things that you choose to influence your thinking?

✓ **Change your Mind, Change your Future**

A major component of the mind is the brain. It is the most complex mechanism in the world, and the most influential organ of the body.³⁸ Dr Gerhard Dirks, holder of fifty patents on the IBM computer, gained most of his ideas from studying the human brain. But there is no computer in the world that can achieve what our brain

can. But, like a computer, it is only worth what you programme into it.

We can “programme” our brain and how our mind operates through what we see and hear. This affects how we think and impacts all three aspects of the mind: intellect, emotion, and will. Since the eyes and ears are the brain’s most important channels for receiving information, how you use them establishes how you think.

So what thoughts are you allowing to be fed into your mind? What you put in is usually what you get out. Your thinking greatly influences the way you live. It therefore continues to hold true that “as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.”³⁹

✓ Allow Only Healthy Thoughts into your Mind

We need to fill our minds with the right thoughts - thoughts of victory and not defeat, thoughts of success and not failure. Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Character Counts**

Character development is at the heart of who we are. Without strong character we are at the mercy of our emotions, which often lead to rash decisions and regret. Character strengthens, compromise weakens us.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Change your Mind Change your Future**

Our thinking is the starting point for character development. Be aware of what you think and know that you can alter your destiny by altering the way you think.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Only Allow Healthy Thoughts into Your Mind**

Always focus on the positives in your life. Don't allow negative thoughts to enter your mind.

Action I Need to Take:

8. CHOOSE TO CHANGE FOR THE BEST

I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying. – Michael Jordan

One of the common reasons for us not wanting to change is fear. We become afraid of change because we are afraid of failing. Never be afraid of failing because:

There is no failure except in no longer trying.⁴⁰

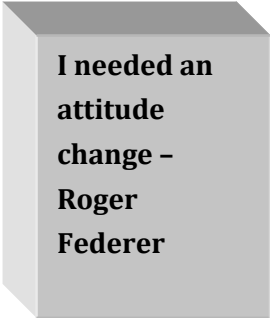
Take control of matters rather than sitting back and letting things happen. Never give up in your attempts to change. We may have made poor choices in our lives, but that is not an excuse to give up. You can begin where you are. You can change your situation by making a sequence of wise choices.

It may not change your situation straight away – it can take time – but choose to keep on doing the right thing. If you make wise choices and don't compromise, I can assure you that you will soon find yourself closer to achieving your goals.

Someone who had to change the way he was doing things in order to succeed is tennis world champion, Roger Federer. Most of us think of Federer as a calm, softly spoken, well-mannered person, but what we don't know is that he had a problem with his temper when he

first started playing tennis. He would often smash his racquet into the ground when he lost or was upset. His temper was so bad that Federer received warnings from match officials and his uncontrolled outbursts were standing in the way of him reaching his full potential.

Even though Federer was immensely talented he had a weakness. He knew that he was destined for greatness but he also knew that if he was to successfully achieve his goals, he had to change his behaviour. So he made a conscientious decision to work on controlling his attitude. He says,



**I needed an
attitude
change -
Roger
Federer**

What made me upset was not just losing the match but my attitude...I needed an attitude change.⁴¹

Federer's new positive outlook made people around him believe that he would accomplish great things. He was now able to learn from defeat and bounce back from it. "Federer's willingness to learn matched his ability to learn."

As Federer himself has said, "If I don't want to lose, I have to put in the work" and "I always learned more from losses, not wins."⁴² Federer's example should inspire us to be prepared to learn from our mistakes and correct them.

Don't be afraid of change and don't be afraid to change the way you approach certain situations.

✓ **Don't Be Afraid to Change**

You can change – you have the choice. Complacency is one of the biggest barriers to us not receiving more in our lives. We become so comfortable with where we are, that we miss out on the bigger opportunities that come our way. Sometimes settling for the “good” in life can prevent us from receiving the “best”.

Author Spencer Johnson highlights the fact that complacency can make us blind to what we need to change.⁴³ He says that we need to keep our mind on the possibilities that can be gained by change instead of concentrating on what can be lost. When we start to believe that “change can lead to something better”, we are more open and ready to embrace the numerous opportunities that are awaiting us. Johnson provides us with more insightful thought on change:

...if you do not adapt in time, you might as well not adapt at all... the biggest inhibitor to change lies within yourself, and that nothing gets better until you change.⁴⁴

If you want to progress in life, sometimes it means you have to change the way you do things. The irony is that people want the benefits of change but they don't want to change the way they have been doing things. If you always do what you have always done then it stands to reason that you will always get what you have always got.

If you plant tomato seeds then you will get tomatoes in return. If you planted tomato seeds you obviously cannot expect to get potatoes. It is a universal principle that what you plant is what will grow.

If you are planting thoughts of failure, always thinking things like "I won't make it in life, I am a useless, I can't do it", then you get what you thought you would get - failure. Usually you don't get more than what you expect. So if you expect to fail then you probably will.

You need to change your thinking to something like this: "While things may not have worked out for me in the past, I am hoping for better. I am not going to allow myself to live in the past - I am focusing on my future". Your past is history but what you do now will determine your future.

Focus on your future, as that is where you will be spending the rest of your life.

✓ **Choose to Focus Ahead**

You always have the opportunity to make a fresh start. Things may not have worked out for you in the past – you may have been hurt, had unkind words spoken to you, been stepped on and overlooked. Shake the dirt off and keep stepping up. Be excited, expectant and on the lookout for opportune moments.

Learn to always be hopeful: Never give up! Though you may be down, you're never out. Always be expectant for good things to come your way and never forget that your choices will determine your destiny. The quality of your choices will determine the quality of your life.

Here is an acronym based on the word "CHANGE":

Chances Happening Anytime Now, Get Excited!

✓ **The Best is Yet to Come**

Remember, you can!

CHOICES TO CONSIDER

✓ **Don't Be Afraid to Change**

Sometimes, in order to make progress, we need to make changes. Don't be afraid to make beneficial changes.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **Choose to Focus Ahead**

Living in the past prevents you seeing and receiving opportunities that may come your way.

Action I Need to Take:

✓ **The Best is Yet to Come**

Don't entertain negative thoughts. Always be expectant for better things. Expect the best.

Action I Need to Take:

9. FINAL WORD

We need to get our minds focused on possibilities and not on problems. No matter what you are going through, have been through, or are going to go through, if there is one thing you do have control of, it is to choose your attitude. The primary difficulty is not the particular problem that we face, but the way we perceive it.

Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't... You are right.⁴⁵

You can achieve great things if you want to, but you must choose to believe that fact. It always seems easier to give up, throw in the towel, and begin to feel like a victim. But the truth is that we are winners if we choose to never give up trying. Sure you may have not succeeded the first time, but that's no reason to stop trying.

I believe that the decision to change or grow lies exclusively with you. The ball is in your court. We can discuss ways to improve your life, but ultimately it will boil down to the choices you make.

The power of choice is always your responsibility, nobody else's.

✓ You and Only You are Responsible for Your Choices in Life

We will never be able to make headway in life if we are not prepared to take responsibility. The choices we make (or don't) are pivotal in determining how well we do in life.

By making wise choices we not only influence ourselves for further enrichment, but also influence the people around us now and in the future.

I wholeheartedly believe that you can achieve great things if you eliminate negative thinking and choose to adopt a "can do" attitude. Never entertain thoughts or speak words of doubt or failure. Our thoughts and words are actually seeds that we sow.

What type of seeds are you sowing with your thoughts or words when you speak? Are they seeds of success or seeds of failure?

This book is just a starting point on your journey. Remember to plan first. A plan gives you direction for your life, so you have an idea of where you should be heading. Without a plan you will be directionless and aimless.

In the story *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice comes to a fork in the road and asks the Cheshire Cat which road she should take.

“That all depends on where you’re heading,” says the cat.

“I have no idea,” replies Alice.

“In that case,” says the cat, “it doesn’t matter which road you take.”

Making the right choices is only effective if you have a point of reference that guides your decision-making. I use the Bible as a reference to help guide my decisions. The things I believe about myself are underpinned by what it says.

We all need to have something that keeps us honest, and offers us correction and guidance. I accept that we are all different and as such have differing views and opinions, so the choice is yours to make as to what you use as a reference – but make sure it is solid and reliable!

Don’t forget the *Eight Choices* I have talked about in this book. Go over them again whenever you can so that you don’t forget them.

Start off each day by committing to the following:
My dreams and goals are accomplished through the power of the choices that I make. Today I choose to make decisions that will help me achieve my dreams. This day I:

1. Choose to Plan First
2. Choose to Take Responsibility for My Own Life
3. Choose to Stop Feeling Sorry for Myself
4. Choose to Let Go of Past Failures and Focus Ahead
5. Choose to Be Positive
6. Choose My Attitude
7. Choose My Character
8. Choose to Change for the Best

Choose to be grateful for what you have, rather than complaining for what you don't have. With the right attitude and choices in place, *you can* get to where you want to be.

Some people complain because there are thorns amongst the roses, while others are grateful for roses amongst the thorns.

REMEMBER - YOU CAN!

YOU CAN COMMITMENT

8 CHOICES FOR A MORE REWARDING LIFE

Having read You Can, I commit to the below 8 choices for a more rewarding life.

TICK BOX TO CONFIRM

- 1. Plan for Success**
- 2. Take Responsibility for Your Own Life**
- 3. Stop Feeling Sorry for Yourself**
- 4. Let Go of Past Failures and Focus Ahead**
- 5. Choose to Be Positive**
- 6. Choose Your Attitude**
- 7. Choose Your Character**
- 8. Choose to Change for the Best**

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| |
| THANK YOU |

Signed this day: _____

Signature _____

Do contact me to share your commitment and comments on You Can!

myan@myansubrayan.co.za / www.myansubrayan.co.za

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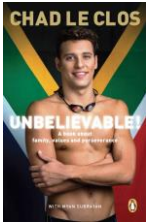
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FINAL WORD

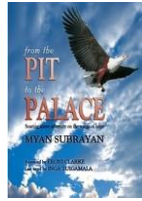
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OTHER BOOKS BY MYAN SUBRAYAN



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Foreword by Victor Matfield, contributions from Springboks: Morné Steyn, Bryan Habana and Juan Smith



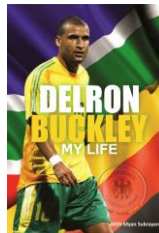
'n BOER MAAK 'n PLAN MAAR JY HET 'n INDIËR NODIG OM DIT TE VERKOOP

Humorously written in Afrikaans to inspire and encourage South Africans with a message of hope.



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DELRON BUCKLEY: MY LIFE

Achieving 76 caps, for South Africa, he played at the 1998, 2002 World Cups and 2000 Olympics. His football talent saved him from drugs and gangs. An inspiring story of a young man who despite the difficulties he faced, rose to become a respected and recognisable figure in world football.



TESTIMONIES TO INSPIRE

Testimonies of Rugby Stars:

Jannie de Beer, Pierre Spies, Inga Tuigamala, Eroni Clarke, Bull Allen, Jason Robinson, Nick Farr Jones, Chiliboy Ralepella, Morné Steyn, Juan Smith.



JANNIE DE BEER: HIGH FIVE

Amazing story of Jannie de Beer's life and testimony. From his humble beginnings to the heights of kicking the record 5 drop goals in 1999 World Cup against England.

Foreword by Nick Mallett

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INTRODUCING

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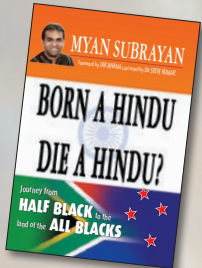
**LIFE COACH
AUTHOR
SPEAKER**



Myan's Testimony is rich with Godly Wisdom encompassing his :

- Conversion from Hinduism
- Challenges faced as a migrant
- Experience in business – the highs and lows
- Facing up to depression and burnout

A message of Hope and Overcoming for people from all walks of life.

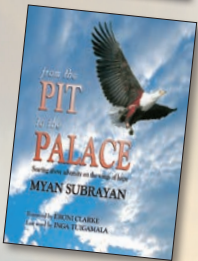


Myan's story is one of God's power at work. An excellent communicator speaking to different cultures/ages. I recommend him as a speaker.

Gary Grut, NZ Manager - ex. Baptist Youth Ministries

Myan shared his past insights that were relevant and hit the mark. He has become a great friend to Promise Keepers and we enjoy his support and encouragement.

Paul Subritzky, ex. National Director of Promise Keepers



Myan's testimony strongly impacted and challenged us - I highly commend him to you.

Brent Douglas - Senior Pastor Encounter Christian Centre.

Myan will inspire and encourage you in your walk with Christ.

Geoff Wiklund - ex. Senior Pastor Eden AOG

Myan is an inspirational speaker and dear friend.

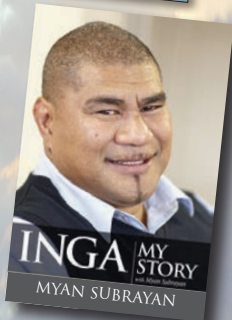
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Myan is available to speak at your church or event.

Email: myansubrayan@gmail.com

Call/text: 022 097 0534

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YOU CAN

My dream came true when I stood on the roof of the world – the first double amputee to reach the summit of Mount Everest. We all have our own Everest's to conquer and dreams to achieve. Myan has conveyed thoughts in this book that I believe can help you achieve your dreams

MARK INGLIS, Entrepreneur & Motivational Speaker

'Wise words that helped me when I was down, and encouraged me mentally to keep going.'

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Ever wondered about the secret behind the success of Tiger Woods, Oprah Winfrey, David Beckham or Roger Federer?

The choices that you make today will determine and affect your future. The quality of your life is determined by how you decide to approach life. This book will present and help you to consider powerful choices.

In drawing from his experiences and those of others, Myan Subrayan provides simple yet profound advice that can change your life.

This book gives you the keys to live that rewarding life you have always wanted – not tomorrow, not one day, but today!



Myan Subrayan is a corporate trainer, speaker and writer, working with elite sportsmen & professional teams as a life coach. He has written current Springbok and Bulls captain, Pierre Spies: More than Rugby, and former All Black, Inga Tuigamala's Inga: My Story, and also writes for JOY en JUIG magazines.

For more info on Myan or to use his services visit www.hope2overcome.org

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