

chapter 1

Dream It

“EVERYTHING WE SEE TODAY, MADE BY PAST GENERATIONS, WAS, BEFORE ITS APPEARANCE, A THOUGHT IN THE MIND OF A MAN OR AN IMPULSE IN THE HEART OF A WOMAN.” — KAHLIL GIBRAN

There's a dream — maybe several dreams — inside each of us, just waiting to emerge. But far too often, the realities of daily life take a toll on our dreams. As we struggle to make a living and get by in this complicated world, many of us bury our dreams so deeply that we forget about them. Many of us dismiss our dreams as nothing but fantasies concocted to escape the weight of real life. Some people have even forgotten how to dream!

It doesn't have to be this way. We'll show you how to harness the immense power of dreaming, not to escape your life but to create the reality you want. And it's never too early or too late to get started.

Dreams are not vaporous, fanciful thinking. They are the building blocks of reality. Just about everything we see and hear around us started as somebody's dream. The same wonderful creative force that made spinning galaxies, fragrant roses, and beating hearts equipped us with magnificent tools — including imagination, vision, and the ability to dream.

We use these tools to shape our earthly existence. People dreamt up the homes we live in, the clothes we wear, the music we hear. People dreamt up satellites and computers, vaccines and pacemakers — they didn't just appear out of thin air. People continue to dream up and breathe fresh life into new creations in medicine, business, art, philosophy, education, humanitarianism — you name it, people first dreamt it and then made it so. In the course of fulfilling personal dreams, people bring purpose into their own lives and enrich us all with their inventions and innovations.

Ever wonder how some people manage to reach major milestones, achieve personal success, and create the lives of their dreams? We did, too. So we interviewed more than 120 people, some famous, some you've never heard of, who transformed their dreams into reality. We've dissected their lives to understand what it takes to reach a dream. And we present the inspiring true stories of 37 of these dream achievers so that you may glimpse into their lives and learn the secrets of their success.

You will meet a dedicated grade-school teacher whose dreams inspired her young students to free hundreds of modern-day slaves. You will see how dreaming and doing led a molecular scientist to make a pivotal discovery, opening the way to promising new treatments for AIDS. You'll discover how a one-time high school dropout became the CEO of a prominent engineering firm. You'll learn how a vibrant amputee whose aspirations could not be denied became a champion skier. You will read about people who follow their dreams to create, innovate, and achieve in a wide range of fields and professions.

They are not supermen or superwomen. They are ordinary people who somehow accomplish the extraordinary. Reading their stories will help you apply to your own life the valuable lessons these dreamers and doers have mastered. One of life's most exciting challenges is discovering how to release and fulfill the magnificent dreams stored in our hearts and minds. The successful people whose stories appear in this book have unlocked that secret. They've created the lives of their dreams by daring to achieve their deepest aspirations.

You can, too — we'll show you how. You have within yourself the power to make your dreams come true. You can soar in life! And if the trials and tribulations of daily living have deflated your dreams, burying them deep into the recesses of your mind, we'll show you how to resuscitate them. We'll help you breathe new life into your dreams of old to create your dreams of today.

Remember the popular *Back to the Future* trilogy? In the first film, Michael J. Fox's character, Marty, accidentally travels back in time where he meets his parents as high school students. Marty's actions and choices have a lasting effect on his future parents — and when he finally manages to return to his own time, he finds his family life to be much happier and more fulfilling. In the final film, Doc delivers the trilogy's message: *Your future is yours to write.* Whatever may be swirling around you, you determine the course of your destiny by the choices that you make. A single action can completely alter your future, for better or worse.

What kind of future do you want for yourself, for your loved ones, for generations yet to come? More than anybody else and more than any of the circumstances that surround you, *you* have the largest say in what your future will be.

Your dreams are as unique as your individual fingerprints. Some people have elaborate dreams; others have simpler ones. Your dream could take a few months to fulfill or a lifetime. Ac-



Dream CPR Journal

Keep a journal while you read this book to jot down your thoughts and answers to questions that we will pose from time to time to help you revive your dreams. Your journal doesn't need to be fancy — you're not trying to impress anybody. This journal is just for you.

Have fun with your journal: There are no right or wrong answers, no set number of items that you must come up with when we ask you to make a list. What's important is that you take the time to answer each question or compile each list to your satisfaction. Above all, write from your heart.

complishing a dream is rarely an easy, straightforward matter. But with the inspiration, encouragement, and practical guidance we offer in *Dream It, Do It*, the pathway to fulfilling your dreams will emerge and become navigable.

Like any journey, your dream quest begins with a single step. And the first step toward making your dreams come true is discovering — or perhaps we should say, *rediscovering* — the ten essential elements of Dream CPR.

chapter 2

Dream CPR

“DON’T BE AFRAID OF THE SPACE
BETWEEN YOUR DREAMS AND REALITY. IF
YOU CAN DREAM IT, YOU CAN MAKE IT
SO.” — BELVA DAVIS

After spending three years closely examining scores of dream achievers, we must tell you right up front: Nobody pretends that it's easy to fulfill dreams. There is no single magic formula that will make all our dreams come true.

However, our analysis of dream achievers identified ten attributes that help people from all walks of life make their dreams come true. We've found that dream achievers master at least one of the essential elements we've identified. Most dream achievers master several.

We call these the “Ten Essential Elements of Dream CPR.” Just as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, saves lives by restoring a person's heartbeat and breathing, the essential elements of Dream CPR can revive your dreams of long ago. With Dream CPR, you'll be able to breathe new life into your aspirations and restore the pulse of your most heartfelt ambitions.

In Dream CPR:



REPRESENTS THE ELEMENTS
CONFIDENCE, COURAGE, COMMITMENT,
AND CREATIVITY.



STANDS FOR THE ELEMENTS PURPOSE,
PASSION, AND PERSISTENCE.



DENOTES THE ELEMENTS RESILIENCE,
RISK, AND RESPONSIBILITY.

Despite what we've been taught, we don't have to be rich, famous, or distinguished to make our dreams come true. It takes qualities of far greater substance than these transient conditions to fulfill a dream. Consider the case of two ordinary brothers who achieved an extraordinary dream a century ago. Every space-age hero, from moonwalker Neil Armstrong to astronaut Sally Ride, owes a debt of gratitude to these two guys.

The brothers didn't have a lot of money to finance their big dream — both built and fixed bicycles for a living. They didn't have college degrees; in fact, neither graduated from high school. They pursued their dream in relative obscurity. Nobody with clout promoted or financed them. Some of their acquaintances thought they were out of their minds to attempt such an "impossible" feat.

Yet somehow, Wilbur and Orville Wright turned their audacious dream of powered human flight into reality. The Wright Brothers were first to design, build, and fly an engine-powered airplane without crashing. The now-historic, 12-second first flight Orville successfully completed over North Carolina's sandy shores on a windy December morn in 1903 ushered in the dawn of modern aviation. That maiden voyage altered the course of hu-

manity, paving the way for commercial air travel, space exploration, and even satellite communications.

How did the Wright Brothers do it? Imbued in their character were the “Ten Essential Elements of Dream CPR.”

They had **confidence** in their unique set of skills and strengths. They may not have been trained scientists or engineers, but they knew they were meticulous, detail-oriented problem solvers with mechanical aptitude and a keen ability to apply whatever they gleaned from books.

They also had ample **creativity** to design and build an airplane when none before had worked.

The brothers made a firm **commitment** to seeing their dream to fruition.

And they possessed tremendous **courage** to become human guinea pigs aboard their unproven flying contraptions!

The brothers shared a strong **passion** for achieving human flight — a fire first ignited by the unusual, helicopter-like toy they received as children.

Wilbur and Orville were elevated by a sense of **purpose** — by trying to achieve powered human flight, they were working toward something much bigger than themselves.

Persistence propelled them forward even when they were faced with far more work than they originally anticipated, like building their own airplane engine when others refused to construct one to meet their unconventional specifications.

Despite repeated failure, their **resilience** enabled them to bounce back stronger than ever with new ideas and solutions.

Their desire to achieve human flight was so strong that they were willing to **risk** everything — their savings, their reputation, even their personal safety — to attain success.

And despite the ridicule and doubts from others, Orville and Wilbur never abandoned their sense of **responsibility** — they knew that if ultimately they were to succeed, it was up to them to stay the course and go the distance.

Like other successful people, the Wright Brothers never stopped dreaming. And they never stopped *doing* — ever striving to turn their dream into reality.

The Elements of Dream CPR

“I KNOW QUITE CERTAINLY THAT I MYSELF HAVE NO SPECIAL TALENT; CURIOSITY, OBSESSION AND DOGGED ENDURANCE, COMBINED WITH SELF-CRITICISM, HAVE BROUGHT ME TO MY IDEAS.”

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

The timeless qualities that served the Wright Brothers so well comprise Dream CPR, which we developed to help you breathe life back into your dreams. Dreamers and doers the caliber of the Wright Brothers are not just figures from the past. Successful dreamers are alive and well today. In fact, anyone can tap into these elements and, with the right guidance, make them their own.

CONFIDENCE: TRUST YOURSELF

Confidence amounts to believing in, trusting in, and relying upon yourself, including your judgment, your powers, and your abilities. It enables each of us to walk a path uniquely ours. You may have the support of mentors, role models, and teachers along the way, but nobody else, no matter how much you trust them, can tell you what your dreams are. Our dreams come from within us, and confidence lets us trust that we can make them come true. With confidence, we can trust our judgment like businesswoman Nancy Archuleta (Chapter 3) did: A former high-school dropout and teen mom, Nancy built a multimillion-dollar engineering company from the ground up.

COURAGE: SUMMON YOUR STRENGTH

Courage is the ability to face challenges. Courage gives us strength to hold on to our dreams in the midst of trying times. It gives us strength to overcome our own fears in the face of illness,

a painful loss, or financial uncertainty. It's not always easy to be one of just a few people — or the only person — with a particular idea or vision, but courage gives us strength to continue forward with our plans. In 1954 , it took courage for a Native American girl to leave her home on the reservation and go to college; everybody around her told her she would fail. But Marigold Linton (Chapter 4) tapped into her courage to defy the naysayers. She not only earned a bachelor's degree, she went on to complete a doctorate degree and become a university professor.

COMMITMENT: STAY FOCUSED

Commitment — the act of devoting oneself fully to a goal — is what carries our dreams to fruition. It helps us focus on something that matters to us. Sometimes we become distracted, side-tracked, or discouraged while pursuing our dreams, so it's important to develop a high level of commitment to making our dreams come true right from the start. Elementary school teacher Barbara Vogel (Chapter 5) maintained such a steadfast commitment to her students that no critics or detractors could stand in her way. Barbara's unwavering support of her students' ambitious campaign has freed thousands of modern-day slaves halfway around the world.

CREATIVITY: IMAGINE YOUR REALITY

This is the marvelous quality that enables us to imagine and build — in short, to use our skills and talents to create. Without creativity, we'd be stuck: we'd never see anything new under the sun. With creativity, we have a powerful tool to first imagine the reality we want and then develop a plan to get there. The most creative people become some of our greatest innovators like Bill Nye (Chapter 6), who left a successful mechanical engineering career to establish himself in comedy. This unusual move led to the creation of "Bill Nye the Science Guy," a role he enjoys immensely. Today, he's in a position to help create a science-literate society and work on some of the most exciting scientific projects in the world.

PURPOSE: REACH HIGHER

Purpose is the reason why we strive for a particular goal. Going after a dream enables us to rise above the routine of everyday matters and reach for something higher, to find a greater purpose for our lives. After escaping her war-torn native Vietnam, Binh Rybacki (Chapter 7) rebuilt a stable life for herself in the United States as a computer specialist. But that wasn't enough for her — she felt compelled to help others in her homeland. Thus Binh found her purpose, and today she cares for thousands of orphaned children across the sea through her nonprofit organization. Purpose makes our dreams valuable and essential, no matter how unusual or unconventional they may seem.

PASSION: LOVE WHAT YOU DO

Passion — a compelling enthusiasm for an activity or purpose — defines and fuels our dreams. It is one of the most effective tools we have for creating a happy, meaningful, and fulfilling life. If you have ever felt such tremendous enthusiasm and desire for something that you would gladly spend all your waking hours working on it, that you would happily do without pay, then you have found your passion. Michael Clarke Duncan (Chapter 8) was a ditch-digger and bouncer with a passion for acting.

With no theatrical background and nothing but a burning desire to act, he set out for Hollywood and beat the odds to reach his dream of becoming a movie actor — earning an Academy Award nomination along the way.

PERSISTENCE: KEEP TRYING

Persistence keeps us moving in the right direction. It's the quiet driving force that keeps us going even when we feel like quitting. Persistence means continuing firmly with a course of action despite obstacles and resistance. When the Wright Bro-

ers could not find anyone to build the engine they needed to get off the ground safely, they persisted by building their own. Persistence and determination got journalist Barbara Walters (Chapter 9) to the top of television news at a time when network news was an exclusive boys' club, despite starting out as a writer with a speech impediment and no on-camera experience. With persistence, Barbara created her own breaks to become one of the most widely known and highly respected journalists on television.



RESILIENCE: BOUNCE BACK

Resilience, the ability to recover from adversity, makes us survivors. When pursuing a dream, sometimes we will get knocked flat on our backs. Or somewhere along the road, our dream might be snatched right out of our hands. When that happens, we can't afford to stay stuck in sorrow and defeat. We have to get back up and reclaim our dream. Writer and poet Maya Angelou (Chapter 10) has overcome great adversity, including racial discrimination and sexual assault that left her in a long self-imposed silence. But her resilience enabled her to march forward with grace, hope, and courage — to find her voice and become one of the most eloquent writers of our times.

RISK: TAKE A LEAP OF FAITH

The adage "nothing ventured, nothing gained" rings so true. Risk-taking opens greater possibilities. Following our dreams almost always requires us to take chances. There is no guarantee that we will succeed in our venture. But if we don't try, we will never know how far we can go. More than 20 years ago, electrical engineer David Howard (Chapter 11) began to dream about running his own computer business. But with kids to raise, a mortgage to pay, and a tough market to crack, the timing never seemed right — until the day he decided to take a leap of faith and become an independent consultant. That, in turn, led David to start his own successful software company.

RESPONSIBILITY: CHOOSE WISELY

Responsibility means we are accountable for something within our power. Each of us has dreams, and only we — not our teachers, friends, or family members — are responsible for what we do with these dreams. We each have a unique set of qualities and gifts, some that we were born with and others that we develop over time. What we do with these gifts is our choice. After enjoying a rewarding career in film and television, actor Dennis Weaver (Chapter 12) could have simply retired and lived a comfortable, secluded life. Instead, he chooses to use his many gifts, including his ability to speak to crowds with ease, his public appeal, and his integrity, to motivate people to develop environmentally friendly business solutions.

Becoming a Dream Achiever

“ FOLLOW YOUR HEART, AND IT WILL TAKE YOU WHERE YOU NEED TO GO. IF YOU APPROACH ANYTHING THAT YOU FEEL VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT WITH THE PERSPECTIVE OF LOVE AND CARING FOR OTHERS, IT CAN HAPPEN.” — JANETTE FENNELL, SAFETY ADVOCATE (CHAPTER 9)

Whether the dream achievers we interviewed are famous, like Harrison Ford and Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter, or known only within their professional circles, we found at least one Dream CPR element incorporated into every fiber of their being. For Harrison Ford, that element is confidence, although he definitely exhibits many other essential elements as well. For the Carters, it's purpose, but they've certainly also mastered courage, commitment, passion, persistence, resilience, risk, and responsibility.

The more Dream CPR essential elements you learn to master, the better equipped you will be to achieve your dreams. As you read the real-life accounts of dream achievers, you'll see that achieving dreams is a noble venture that doesn't require us to be selfish or self-absorbed. In fact, the most successful dream

achievers are quite selfless — their stories show how achieving dreams leads to greater fulfillment, joy, and harmony for individuals, communities, and, ultimately, for society as a whole. Learning to integrate the Dream CPR essential elements more fully into our lives is one of the greatest gifts we can give to ourselves, our loved ones, and all of humankind.

Remember, there is no single path to attaining dreams: We all must create our own individual road maps. But the stories presented here will guide you toward reviving your long-lost dreams and help you breathe life into your new ones. These stories will help you gain your footing as you set out on your exciting journey to becoming a successful dream achiever. We'll start by building the confidence so necessary for taking that first step.



Dream CPR Journal

List everything that you like to do.

Ask yourself: If I had only six months to live, what would I do today?