



Have you ever wondered why life seems so easy for some people?

They look confident and in control, have great jobs, happy relationships and get the best out of life.

Why do they radiate success?

How did they create such wonderful lives?

And how can you create a dream life of your own?

It's simple ...

Know *WHERE* you want to be.

Know *WHAT* you need to do.

And *DO* it!

In *Your Best Life*, inspiring life coach Domonique Bertolucci shows how to bring these simple statements into being to create a detailed plan of action, build motivation and staying power and make the life you want. With easy-to-follow exercises and action plans Domonique can guide you to change the way you live, overcome obstacles and work through the tough times so you can live **YOUR BEST LIFE**.

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your best life domonique bertolucci HODDER

The ultimate guide to
creating the life you want

your best life

Don't just dream it – live it!

domonique bertolucci

Throughout this book you will come across this icon .
When you see it you can go to my website
www.domoniquebertolucci.com
for more information and additional exercises.

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For my Mum and Dad

And for Paul
for everything, always

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PREFACE

**You only have one
life, so it's important
that you LOVE it!**

**Today is the first day of the rest of your life —
what kind of life do you want it to be?**

Have you ever wondered why life seems easy for some people? They're confident and in control, they have great jobs, happy relationships and love life. Why do these people radiate success? How did they create such dream lives? What is their secret?

The truth is, there is no secret. They are focused on what they need to do and who they need to become to create their dream life. They are following some simple steps and are committed to being the best they can be.

By working out what you want from life, what you need to do and who you need to become to make it happen, then simply going ahead and doing it, you too can create your dream life.

I have written this book to inspire, encourage and motivate you to continually be the best you can be. By maintaining this focus, you too will begin to create the kind of life you have been dreaming of – one that is filled with success and happiness.

If you have a goal, however big or small, you really can achieve it. You might find it hard work and sometimes you might want to give up, but if you persevere, you can live the life you've always dreamed of.

I have always been a positive, motivated person, but there was a time when I didn't feel like I was living my best life. Things were certainly going well and my life looked good on paper: a former model, a well-paid corporate job, a nice house, car and boyfriend. But I felt like I was living someone else's life; my success felt two-dimensional.

I found a personal coach and began to work out what 'success' really meant to me, and how I wanted my life to be. I remembered what my dreams had been and came up with some new ones too. I set about creating the kind of life that somewhere deep inside I knew I had been dreaming about.

It wasn't always easy; there were times when I wanted to give up or take an easier path. But I didn't give up. Every day I concentrated on being the best I could be, and worked hard towards creating a life that felt successful and satisfying.

I went from earning good money in a full-time job to six-figure short-term contracts. I worked for the companies of my choice and the hours I wanted and took the holidays I needed.

I left my boyfriend and met my soul mate. I moved cities and at times it felt like I moved mountains. I lost weight, felt great and knew that I was finally living my best life.

After ten years in the corporate world I took the lessons I had learnt and my personal experiences and qualified as a professional coach. My new business grew quickly and before long I had clients throughout Australia, the UK and the USA.

My next dream was to write this book so I could share what I've learned over the years – to inspire you to discover where you want to be, what you need to do and how to go about doing it. I want you to be able to create the life of your dreams too.

As a coach I have the wonderful opportunity of learning so much from my clients. Of course I've heard it on good authority that most of them learn a few things from me too! This book gives me a chance to share all of this with you.

One of the most important lessons I have learnt is the importance of pursuing *real* success – success that is meaningful and fulfilling.

Real success means success that is meaningful and fulfilling for you.

Very few paths in life are right or wrong, so it's important that you make choices that are right for you. Don't waste your energy pursuing someone else's dreams for your life. Don't do what you think you should be doing or chase ideals you think you should be chasing – real success is rarely just about houses, cars and boats. Instead discover what really matters to you, and design your success based on your own dreams, values and ideals.

I have made several choices that other people might have seen as the wrong ones: I left a man who loved me, I turned down a promotion and I walked away from the pinnacle of corporate success to start a new career in a new country.

Through it all, my life has been filled with friendship, variety, challenge, happiness and love. That is what *real* success means to me, and throughout this book I will show you how to discover what real success means to you.

My work is all about supporting people as they strive to be the best they can be – in both their personal and professional lives. I work with entrepreneurs, managers, executives, home-makers and students and I find that it doesn't matter what your age or stage in life – if you want to find *real* success and happiness, the same basic principles apply.

As you read this book and complete the exercises, you will start the journey of creating your own dream life. You will develop a strong and positive mindset and learn how to create a plan of action. You will discover strengths you never knew you had, and develop the skills you need to use those strengths to your advantage. You will gain new insight into who you are, what you want and what you need to do to make it all happen.

Although the first time you read this book you will probably benefit most by reading it from cover to cover, I hope that you will continue to refer to it, chapter by chapter, or specific chapters at different times, over the course of your life as your dreams grow and evolve and as you discover new ones.

That is my goal – to write a book that will become your trusted friend, guide and your very own coach.

INTRODUCTION

THE THREE SIMPLE STEPS

Looking back over both my corporate career and my coaching business, I've discovered that the key to achieving any goal in life can be broken into three steps:

know *where* you want to be
know *what* you need to do
and *do* it!

These steps aren't rocket science; they're really quite simple. But at the same time they are also very powerful. Once you understand these steps there is absolutely nothing holding you back from achieving any goal you choose.

In this book I look at each step in detail. Within each step the text is divided into chapters that contain a wealth of information, not just to help you work out what you want, but also to create the skills you will need to help you go out and get it.

You might already know that one of the most important starting points is the right frame of mind – a positive mental attitude. But it takes more than just positivity to go after what you have been dreaming of.

Here is a summary of what you will learn:

STEP 1: KNOW WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

The first step towards creating the life of your dreams is to find out exactly what you want. Too many people chase after what they think is their dream without thinking it through, only to find that they are left cold and empty when they get there.

Step 1 of this book will help you to make sure that the dreams you are working towards are not only right for you but that achieving them will bring you happiness and fulfilment.

In *Chapter 1 Discovering your dreams* you will learn how to capture your dreams. Get back in touch with the lost art of daydreaming and start imagining a more inspiring and satisfying life. What would your life be like if you lived every day to your full potential? This is your chance to be bold. Later in the book you will find out how to make your goals achievable, but for now it's your turn to dream and dream *big!*

Chapter 2 Understanding what matters looks at what is important in life – to you. One of the biggest causes of frustration, stress and a sense of depression is living a life that is inconsistent with your values. But what are your values? You'll discover what makes you tick and what you can happily live without.

Chapter 3 Eliminating limiting beliefs and behaviours – time to do some more work on the most important element in your plan: *you!* This chapter shows you how to examine your thought processes and eradicate your limiting beliefs the things that stop you from making progress. It also looks at unproductive habits and behaviours and shows you how to put in place new ones to help you on the path to your dreams.

Chapter 4 Creating a vision for your future is about fine-tuning your vision working out what you really want and understanding what you are willing to do to get it. Clarify in your mind what you don't want and what you are not willing to compromise or sacrifice to achieve your dreams.

STEP 2: KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Having a dream is not going to get you very far if you don't know precisely what you need to do to achieve it. In **Step 2** you will work out what you need to do and, importantly, who you need to become to create the life of your dreams.

In *Chapter 5 Designing real and specific goals* you will learn how to create SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attractive, Realistic, Time-based – goals and how to make these goals personal and meaningful.

You might even find that your goals are easier to achieve than you think!

Sometimes the hardest thing about achieving your dreams is the work you need to do on the inside: becoming the person you need to be to live your

best life. There might be times when you feel like you can't do it, that perhaps you're not good enough. In *Chapter 6 Developing unshakeable self-confidence*, not only will you learn how to build your confidence and self-esteem, you will develop the strength and courage to pick yourself up and dust yourself off if things don't go your way.

Chapter 7 Building a detailed plan of action helps you create a step-by-step plan for achieving your goals. This plan will become your blueprint for success, providing you with affirmations to encourage and inspire your progress. You will also identify some key points at which you will well and truly deserve to celebrate your success!

Chapter 8 Managing your resources looks at some of the factors that can stop you from achieving your goals: how you manage time, money, health and fitness, sleep and energy, plus other resources you can call on when building your plan, including help from a friend or loved one, expert advice or creating your own support network.

STEP 3: DO IT!

Without action, there will be no results – **Step 3** is all about *doing it*. You know what you want and you have a plan to achieve it.

In *Chapter 9 Developing amazing self-discipline and staying power* you will learn how to create positive new habits and a mindset in which you can achieve anything that you set out to do.

Going after your dreams can be really scary. *Chapter 10 Facing your fears and calling on your strengths* advises you on facing your fears. It also helps you examine your strengths and look at how you can use them to your advantage along the way.

I'd love to tell you that the road to your dreams is going to be easy, but we all know that there are times in life when we feel like giving up. Sometimes those obstacles might be imagined, but other times they will be very real. *Chapter 11 Working through the tough times* focuses on meeting your challenges head on and staying on track.

Chapter 12 Celebrating your success: saving the best for last, the final chapter is about celebrating success and, equally as important, acknowledging all your successes along the way. After all, living your best life is not just a destination, it's a journey!

MAKING THE MOST OF THIS BOOK

1. Do the exercises

Life is for living, not skimming! The exercises I have set out for you are the same as those I ask my clients to complete. If you breeze through the chapters without setting aside time to work through the exercises the only person you will be short-changing is yourself.

2. Use a file or journal

Keep all your notes and exercises in one place. Some people like the process of physically writing things down, others prefer to type (I know that at least when I type I have half a chance of keeping up with my thoughts!), but whatever your preference, the most important thing is that you capture your thoughts, dreams and ideas in one place. By the end of this book you will have been on an incredible journey of self-discovery, you will have learnt so much about yourself and about the steps you need to take to achieve the most fulfilling and satisfying life. This journal will be your record of that journey.

3. Visit the website

I have created a special section on my website just for readers of this book. So make sure you visit www.domoniquebertolucci.com/yourbestlife where you will find a range of *free* resources including worksheets, tools, templates and extra tips, all designed to give you extra support as you begin to create the life of your dreams.

Whenever you see this icon  there will also be a tool or template specifically created to help you complete that exercise.

4. Be honest

It's only by being completely honest with yourself that you will be able to achieve your true potential. Acknowledge your private and innermost thoughts. Be proud of your dreams and desires. You only get one life, and this is your chance to make sure that you really do LOVE it!

Step 1

KNOW WHERE YOU
WANT TO BE

CHAPTER 1

Discovering your dreams

The first and most important step in creating the life of your dreams is to know what those dreams are. Most people are so busy living their everyday life that they don't know where to begin.

When you were a child you probably spent hours and hours daydreaming and enjoying make-believe adventures – maybe you were a princess in a faraway castle, an adventurer on the high seas or in the darkest jungle. In my favourite adventure I was Wonder Woman saving the world from evil with my magic lasso and bullet-proof bracelets. Saving the world with aluminium bracelets wasn't likely, but the point is, it didn't matter. When we were young, we didn't think twice about suspending reality and moving into a world where anything was possible and everything turned out exactly how we wanted it to.

Somewhere along the way, most of us were told to get our head out of the clouds, to stop being unrealistic, and to become responsible, sensible adults. We sat for exams, got jobs, houses, cars, credit cards and got on with it. Not only did many of us lose sight of our dreams; over time, we forgot how to dream altogether.

By reading this chapter, not only will you learn how to dream again, you will capture and explore your wildest dreams and will be ready to begin creating your own reality.

FINDING THE TIME TO DREAM

They may no longer be filled with superheroes and death-defying adventures, but do you know what is in your dreams today? One of the great casualties of modern life is that people no longer have enough spare time to think, let alone dream. Lives are filled with mobile telephones, emails, gym classes, late nights, early starts, and a whole range of family and relationship commitments. Technology means you are simply never on your own anymore. Even quiet times can be interrupted by a call on your mobile or filled with music from your iPod.

If you are to begin creating the life of your dreams then your first priority must be finding the time to dream. If like most people in the 21st century you lead a busy life, finding the time and space to dream can be quite a challenge, but one that you need to commit to if you want to fill your life with *real* success and happiness.

Start by finding some quality 'me' time each and every day. Think of the things that you enjoy doing. Allow yourself time each day to do one thing that really will be just for you. It could be a luxury like a massage, or it might be as simple as taking a 20-minute coffee break with your favourite book or magazine.

**Allow yourself time each day
to do one thing that really is just for you.**

Finding 'me time' doesn't have to result in a major shift in your routine or create a sense of 'one more thing that I have to do today'. It's just about taking the time to get back in touch with *you*. You might decide to create some 'me' time by walking all or part of the way to work each day or you could even start using your gym membership!

To gain the full benefit of your 'me' time, you need to ensure that at least some of it is spent in total silence. While music may be a pleasure for some people, for many it is just one more distraction. Turn off the TV or radio and simply relax in your own company. You might even want to learn to meditate or take a relaxation class, but most importantly, just breathe and enjoy being you.

One of the biggest challenges in finding some time to yourself can be all the commitments you have to others – husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, children, friends and co-workers – but with some careful planning, not only can you create your own 'me' time, you can also support others in finding theirs too.

When you do find yourself somewhere miles away, in the depths of a daydream, *don't* tell yourself to snap out of it. Instead, enjoy the moment and try to see where that dream takes you – of course this advice comes with a warning if driving a car or using machinery!

Although daydreams are often a mixed-up concoction of thoughts and ideas, examining them can lead to a better understanding of who you are and what you really want out of life. The best way to do this is to keep a journal. Make a note of your thoughts, feelings and dreams. Don't censor yourself, just

write down whatever comes to mind. A journal is a private document; you never have to show it to anyone. But just like your daydreams, capturing your innermost thoughts and feelings on paper, and taking time to examine them, can teach you a lot about yourself. By taking note of your thoughts and feelings you might find the key to your dreams.

Your dreams are your own. Don't feel embarrassed or try to hide them. Simply enjoy exploring them for the secrets they hold.

Exercise

Think back over all the things you wanted to do with your life when you were younger. A good place to start is the ages between six and sixteen. It is likely that during these years, before college, work and 'real life' set in, you were bold in your fantasies about the future.

Make a note of all the ideas you can remember having. Just like a brainstorming exercise, this doesn't need to be in any order or make much sense to anyone but you. When you have captured everything you can remember, look back over your notes and see what patterns, themes and discoveries emerge.

When I did this exercise, one of the things I discovered was that all my childhood dreams had involved being in the public eye in some way... Wonder Woman, a movie star, a barrister, and even the prime minister for a brief moment! Look back at your dreams and discover the secrets they hold for you.



ENJOY THE LIFE YOU HAVE TODAY

It is easy to think about all the things you would like to change about yourself or your life. You might want to lose weight, get a better job, find a new partner or leave the one you're with. But it's important that all this thinking about the future does not stop you from enjoying your life as much as you possibly can today.

Just because there are aspects of your life you would like to change as you work towards creating your dream, it doesn't mean your life today is a disaster. Make a point of seeing the positive in every experience and start celebrating the good things about your life right now.

That 'life is a journey and not a destination' might be a cliché, but that doesn't mean it isn't true. A fundamental part of finding and living your *best life* is to enjoy it, each and every step of the way.

Exercise

It's important to acknowledge what is good in your life, and what you would like to change. Start by listing six things you value and appreciate about yourself and three things you would like to change, then six things you value and appreciate about your life and three things you would like to change.

Most people find it much easier to fill the list of changes they would like to make than the list of things they are happy with. Creating the right balance between striving for the future and enjoying today is important, so this is why for every item you add to the 'change' list, I have asked you to add two to the 'value and appreciate' list.

IF YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IT, YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO SEE IT

By now you probably have a good list of things you would like to change about your life. But do you know exactly what you would like these changes to be? If I gave you a magic wand or offered you a genie in a bottle, would you know what to wish for? It's one thing to know that you want changes, and quite another to know what you would like those changes to be.

So many people strive for change in their lives without knowing what they actually want and end up creating a constant sense of loss and disappointment. They might be successful but they don't feel satisfied. If you are to start living your best life, not only do you need to acknowledge all the things you value, appreciate and enjoy about your life, you also need to know precisely what you would like to improve or enhance in your life.

From now on, when you find yourself thinking that your life could be better, take the time to discover exactly what you would like to change and what would need to be different. If you don't take time to answer these questions then all you are doing is whingeing – and that's hardly constructive, is it!

START WITH A PERFECT WORLD

You might have heard the expression 'you create your own reality'. I certainly believe it's true. If you are going to begin creating your own reality, start by imagining that the world is a perfect place.

Yes, I know – life is not perfect. 'Reality' is filled with inconveniences and constraints, obligations and disappointments, but I believe that the phrase 'you're not being realistic' is toxic. It poisons people's ideas, hopes and dreams,

snuffing them out before they can be fully explored. No, the original idea might not be possible, but if you don't explore it fully, how will you know how much could in fact become your reality?

In my professional experience, when you ask people what they believe is realistic, their expectations are far too narrow. Not only do they allow for inevitable constraints, they actually create pessimistic expectations of the potential outcome.

I want you to set reality aside for the moment and begin the vision of your dream life from the point of view of a perfect world. This allows you to imagine what life would be like if things went 100 per cent your way, 100 per cent of the time. It allows you to begin to enjoy thinking about things you once might not have believed possible.

Don't worry, I'm not suggesting that you become delusional, I'm just suggesting that the perfect world vantage point is the best possible starting point. Once you begin capturing (in your journal!) your dreams, ideas and fantasies you will have plenty of time to explore how to create your new reality. You will find that starting with the perfect world allows your dreams to be bigger and bolder than they might otherwise have been.

George's story

George is the managing director of a successful company. He sought coaching to work on his communication and motivation skills – he wanted to improve his communication with some new employees he had acquired as a result of a merger.

During our coaching sessions it became apparent that although George was successful and happy with the status quo, he also

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harboured a secret dream of taking a sabbatical in Europe. When I challenged him to explore his dreams further he realised that he had always wanted to own an award-winning vineyard, but had thought that this was far-fetched and unrealistic.

George used our coaching sessions to build on his already substantial management and leadership skills, paying particular attention to communicating with employees who came from a different background and culture to his own. Staff motivation increased and George was able to relax about the new employees fitting in.

Early in the coaching process George discovered that a sabbatical in Europe, after 20 years of service, was not actually unreasonable. It was achievable with a bit of careful planning and forethought. He has now set the date for his sabbatical and is focusing on both a development plan for existing staff and a recruitment initiative to ensure that his business runs smoothly in his absence.

George has also realised that the idea of a vineyard does not have to be a pipe dream and he is investigating the idea to find out if it is something he would really like to do, or just an idealised vision. He has set a provisional goal of owning and managing this new venture in ten years' time – when he retires from his current role. Should his research provide positive answers, he wants to make sure he is already on track.

Exercise

I want you to imagine your perfect world. Begin by describing the basic things in your life: your home, your work and your appearance. As you get comfortable with suspending reality, I want you to really go for it.

Think of every single aspect of your life and imagine how it might be if the world was a perfect place and nothing could hold you back in pursuit of your dreams.

Take time to enjoy this exercise, it should be a lot of fun. You might want to complete it over a couple of days, regularly coming back to your fantasy life and seeing what you would like to add to it. It will give you an excellent starting point from which to create your new reality.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DREAMS AND FANTASIES

You really can have anything you want in life, if you are willing to work for it. However, just because you find an idea desirable, it doesn't mean you would enjoy it, with all its consequences, if it was part of your everyday life.

You really can have anything you want in life, if you are willing to work for it.

In George's perfect world, he didn't have one special woman in his life. In his perfect world he actually had a glamorous woman in every port, to entertain him as he enjoyed his world travels. But in reality, not only was George happily married, he really wanted it to stay that way!

Therein lies the beauty of the perfect-world approach. It allows you to fully explore your imaginary life, then decide which bits of it you would like to incorporate into reality and which bits you are happy to keep as fantasies.

Explore your perfect world and determine which elements are dreams – things you really would like to have at some point in your life – and which elements are fantasies – yes, you'd have them if that genie did come along, but if the genie doesn't appear then you can definitely live without them.

Another way to think of it is to consider the level of regret you'd feel if you never experienced elements of your perfect world. What can you live without and what would leave you on your deathbed with questions of 'what if'?

Just because you don't need the full experience of something in your life doesn't mean that you can't enjoy elements of it. You might decide you don't actually need to be an Academy-Award-winning actress, but that doesn't mean that joining your local theatre group won't be a rewarding and enriching experience. Having a fantasy isn't unhealthy, as long as you recognise it for what it is.

When you've finished the next exercise you will begin to see what your dream life might actually look like.

Exercise

Using the perfect-world exercise as your starting point, make a list of the dreams you would like to see become a part of your reality. Although I don't want you to worry about being 100 per cent 'realistic' yet, make sure you leave out all the elements that really are just fantasies.

Describe your dream life in as much detail as possible. You might find it helpful to group your thoughts under the following headings: health and fitness, financial security, relationships, family and friends, social life, recreation time, working life, holidays, and so on. You could write this as a list, or if you are feeling creative you could write a story about a day in your dream life.

THE POWER OF POSITIVITY

A client once asked me, 'If I do all of this, am I not just setting myself up for a big disappointment? Won't I just be depressed when my dreams don't come true?'

It was a valid question, but one that was based on her own negative outlook and a fear of failure. If you find yourself questioning things in this way, remind yourself that you are a unique and special human being, and that you really do deserve to live your very best life.

I'm not promising that every single one of your dreams will become a reality, but if you know what your dreams are, you will have a much better chance of creating a reality that includes them.

Creating the life of your dreams might not always be easy, but you do need to believe it is possible. You need to believe that you can make it happen and, most importantly, that you really do deserve it.

START LIVING YOUR DREAM LIFE – RIGHT NOW

As the saying goes, Rome wasn't built in a day, and creating the life of your dreams won't be an overnight task either. It takes time to make changes in your life, for your hard work to show results and dreams to become reality.

One of the best ways to accelerate the process is to look at the essence of your dreams and start investigating ways to incorporate that essence into your everyday life. Perhaps you long to live in Paris? Why not join the Alliance Française and start absorbing the French language and culture. Maybe you want to lose weight and completely change your image? Start with a new hair style and colour. You want to be a best-selling author? Start attending book readings and 'meet the author' evenings.

It takes time to make changes in your life, for your hard work to show results and dreams to become reality.

For each and every one of your dreams there will be simple steps you can take to make the essence of that dream a part of your everyday life. The more

often you get to enjoy dreams right now, the easier it will be to work towards bringing them to fruition.

You might find it takes a little creative thinking, but with all the practice you have had imagining what your dream life might be like, I am sure you're up to the task!

Annabel's story

Growing up, Annabel had dreamed of being an actor or movie star. She loved drama and had a starring role in all her high school productions. An intelligent teenager, she was encouraged to put this intellect to 'good use' and go to university. She decided to study law as she was fascinated by the glamorous characters on the television show *LA Law*.

Now in her late thirties and living in New York, the part Annabel enjoyed most about her work as a lawyer was when she was in court addressing the jury with her closing arguments. She secretly felt like the lead actor in a Shakespearean tragedy. As much as she enjoyed this aspect of her job, the rest of her work left her cold. After the intense high of being in a courtroom, win or lose, Annabel always came away feeling a little down.

She came to see me because she couldn't help feeling that something was missing from her life. She wondered what she might have been doing if she hadn't chosen this path, or whether she had wasted the opportunities of her youth. One thing she did know was that somewhere along the way she had lost sight of her dreams.

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I encouraged Annabel to stop thinking about the past and to focus on her future. What did she want it to look like? When she thought about her dream life, she was always on stage, enjoying the applause of her audience or accepting an award for best actress. She was always surrounded by creative people who were passionate about theatre, film and the arts.

She decided it was time to bring more of her dreams into her everyday life. She posted an ad in her law society magazine, looking for other lawyers who might be interested in forming an amateur theatre troupe. She was inundated with responses! It seemed that a lot of lawyers were frustrated performers.

When Annabel began rehearsing for what was her first performance since high school, she felt truly alive. It didn't matter that she wasn't getting paid; her dreams hadn't been about the money, they had been about performing.

Enlivened by this change in her life, she decided it was time for a career change too. Although she still enjoyed the income and security of life as a lawyer, she found a job in a firm that specialised in entertainment law. Annabel was determined that she would spend her working time surrounded by people who shared her passions.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE FUTURE

They say there are only two things in life to be afraid of – success and failure. Discovering your dreams can be quite overwhelming and may leave you with conflicting emotions. You are imagining how much your life might change if you were to begin living your best life, but the process of imagining this change can be quite confronting.

One of the best things about not having a magic wand or a genie is that you can work on creating your dreams over time. As they draw closer, you might find that they need adjusting or that other people might need to adjust to you.

Your dreams are yours. You and only you can decide how much or how little of them you need in your life.

Exercise

Make a list of your biggest fears. This might be a mix of both success- and failure-based fears. Next to each fear I want you to begin formulating your strategy for addressing it. Don't worry about describing your fears in detail – that will only reinforce them – just make sure you capture them all.

Perhaps there is something specific you can do to alleviate your fear, or maybe you simply need to accept it and forge ahead, without letting it hold you back in any way.

Overcoming your fears is discussed in detail in Chapter 9, but for now I just want you to get them out of your heart and onto paper.

If at any time you decide that you don't like the consequences of your dream, or that in fact it was just a fantasy, you are free to change your mind. Acknowledge your fears and look at them as an opportunity to learn more about yourself. Begin seeing your fears as challenges along your journey, not barriers preventing you from getting started.

BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT!

You really are worth it. There is absolutely no reason why, if you are willing to work hard, you can't fill your life with all the success and happiness you desire. You really can live the life you've always dreamed of!

After completing the exercises in this chapter you should have a much clearer idea of what the life of your dreams looks like – the first and most important step in achieving it.

KEY LESSONS – DISCOVERING YOUR DREAMS

1. Find time to dream – it will be a valuable investment in your future.
2. If you want to create the life of your dreams, you need to acknowledge all the positive things about your present life. Make sure you are enjoying today, not just striving for tomorrow.
3. When you think about changing your life, be as specific as possible about what and how you would like it to change.
4. Remember, you create your own reality, so start with a perfect world and work back from there.
5. There is a big difference between dreams and fantasies. Fantasies are perfectly healthy, as long as you recognise them for what they are.
6. To achieve your dream life, you need a positive mental attitude. You have to believe that not only can you achieve it, you really do deserve it.
7. Find a way to include your dreams in your reality. The more often you get to enjoy dreams now, the easier it will be to work towards bringing them to fruition.
8. Don't be afraid of your dreams – you deserve to live your best life!