

YOUR LIFE IQ

by
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Foreword

YOUR LIFE IQ is based on a lifetime of personal experience, research, and study in the subjects of behavioral sciences, mind-body and vibrational medicine, philosophy and spiritual traditions. This book not only relies on the knowledge of experts, scientists, and other great thinkers, it also evolved from my individual circumstances and experiences. These events created a unique mindset that imposes specific attitudes and philosophies which can hold true for us all. This mindset is a gateway to powerful living.

Born in the spring of 1958, I was raised in New York City by Eastern European parents who survived World War II. Amongst two siblings, I was the middle child—generally overlooked—except for my physical attractiveness. I was neither the prized first child nor the boy and the baby. Instead, I was left to fend for myself emotionally and was handed the role of strength—a role with built-in expectations for me to endure and survive. Taking the challenge head-on, I became tough, resilient, and determined. My parents deserve high praise for their insistence on many extracurricular activities, including the study of music and art. I attended private schools, enjoyed the richness of two cultures, and was put on a path grounded in tradition.

My professional life began on Wall Street in the securities industry. It was a fluke. An employment agency sent me on a job as an assistant that paid better than any other job I had had. I set no goals, but quickly moved up and became a trader of equities and options. Later, I worked as an institutional broker. Wall Street was a place coated in money and power, and those privileges made my life exciting and fun. The world's door had opened and the possibilities were endless. I flourished in this type of environment and hungrily seized all opportunities. My artistic side blossomed, and I created a fine arts company that operated in New York, Paris, and Budapest—and provided the chance to live in Europe. After those experiences, I became a marketing consultant, specializing in strategy and new business development. During that time, I moved to Miami and took my life circumstances and passion into the writing of both fiction and nonfiction books. I became a certified life coach. Although I never married and had no children of my own, there has been no shortage of rich experiences, both in love and with children.

Did the preceding incidents *train* me as an expert in life? Not quite. There was another, less pleasant side to my preparation. My life was also riddled with adversity before I became thirty years old. One week after my fifteenth birthday, my father committed suicide. At nineteen, I was hospitalized with a life-threatening illness. At twenty-three, I was sexually assaulted. By my mid-twenties, a congenital visual disorder was beginning

to surface. At twenty-eight, my visual problem was irreversible. I had Stargardt's disease and was legally blind.

Disillusionment and sheer pain sent me into the depths of introspection. I traveled there frequently, but continued my quest for solutions. Tenacity began to weave into the tender fabric of my soul. As I went forward, I dared that deep dark place to destroy me and unleashed my ability to be obstinate. Amid all the upheavals, I still possessed a fierce desire to survive, a belief that anything was possible, and an iron will. The strong Natalia took care of the vulnerable Natalia, and I became extremely protective of who I was and what was positive about me. That protective shield would have to become stronger. As best I could, I integrated a variety of disciplines for my body, mind and spirit.

By the time I was in my mid-thirties, I had probably absorbed several libraries of books, magazines, and newspapers. I began to notice a lot of overlapping information about the body, mind and spirit. There were some common messages, but specifically through life experience, certain things became very clear to me: Conditioning—particularly perspectives imposed by those who influence us—parents, teachers, friends, and society—could strangle many aspects of living and success. I was relentless in my quest to make sense of it all. Despite optic migraines, I still read (mostly audio or skimming through printed material with visual aids) and explored all topics—and the more difficult, the better. I would understand everything, even if it killed me—since nothing already had. Through my incessant study, I picked up more disciplines. Over time, I began to notice marked improvements in all aspects of my being.

By then, I started to unravel how it was that I was surviving a visual limitation without perceived limitations. In a remarkable irony, my lack of vision became my saving grace. Strangely, this visual problem was one where I was blind in my focusing ability. All I had to rely upon was peripheral sight. That meant I couldn't see details, was constantly disoriented, and had to figure out a way to maneuver energies from other areas of my being, in order to *appear* normal. Happily for me, my initial response was denial—I refused to believe that I was limited at all and bypassed the option of crawling into a hole to rot. Instead, I resorted to *seeing* peripherally, which was always stressful, but I refused to give up. Oddly enough, I was being forced to *see* things from a big picture point of view. Thus, the alignment of the energies of my body, mind and spirit, began to take hold. I discovered miraculous living.

As I meticulously connected the dots, a holistic framework sprouted. Adding, subtracting, adapting, and changing—had been my middle names and held the key to why these disciplines were working. The result was nearly forty years of testing, experimenting, and weeding through information using common sense—what works, and what doesn't. Although multiple life crises had threatened to throw me off course, I knew I didn't have the luxury of postponing *real* solutions. Perhaps that was why I had to experience such hard punches. But my desire to make a difference by contributing all

that I possibly can, and a vision that had always matched the size of the universe, has invited the wonder that I call life.

Here, I present *YOUR LIFE IQ*. I hope that it will bring new perspectives, insight, and inspiration to how you are now living. May we all bring the best of who we are, day after day, into the remarkable experience we call life.

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I.

THE PHILOSOPHY

At last—a life-changing guide that works. *Your Life IQ* considers all of who we are: body, mind and spirit. The tactic is holistic, not fragmented or halfway. It is not a temporary solution, but an energetic shift in consciousness that will produce a meaningful and happy life. This methodology relies on a big picture approach of balancing your unique energy system to function at its optimum. The core of this powerful philosophy is based on the innate intelligence that exists within each of us—an intelligence—that allows us to successfully navigate our lives. Whatever your dreams and goals, *Your Life IQ* will invigorate your life and produce miraculous changes with simple, common sense principles.

This book is a *new* approach to self-improvement in the Twenty-first Century. Times have changed, and so have our lives. Today's world is bursting with high-tech inventions and complex information. It is a fast-paced environment of multi-tasking—stressful and competitive. There's too much to do and so much to know. Who can keep up? How do we manage our challenging lives while being driven in so many directions? How do we accommodate all that is demanded of us and still find balance and equilibrium? *Your Life IQ* ploughs through these challenges by awakening the most positive forces from within you to align body, mind and spirit. It is all about discovering your untapped resources of energy that provide the ability necessary to attain the life you desire. Finally, it is about cultivating the best of who you are, day after day, to produce the highest quality of life experience.

We've all got it—an inherent intelligence that acts as a power source to propel us in the right direction. And just like our IQ or EQ, it too, can be improved. Whether intellectual or emotional, intelligence is measured in several ways, and can be applied to how well you make decisions in your life. However, since your life IQ is natural and comes from within, we must learn how to access this precious resource by breaking through the many filters of conditioning. It's the moment when we begin to question and evaluate if what we believe in our life should be reconsidered. Or, perhaps we're changing, and we need to learn something more. Once this intelligence is accessed, this special resource unveils your essential qualities—the qualities that make you distinct from all others. It is an exceptional source of energy that inspires us to take action, and when discovered and utilized, your life pursuits can be realized successfully.

There are many ways to measure intelligence, such as processing, reasoning and communicating information. Our life decisions and choices must be approached in a similar way. If navigated efficiently, we move through life with an approach that fills us with ease, and allows us to flourish and thrive—particularly during difficult moments. Do you ever notice how much you struggle when confronted with a problem? There is an

element of time and speed associated with our ability to problem solve. The more difficult the problem, and the more unfamiliar we are with that problem, the more we need to rely on our life IQ. This inherent skill affords us knowledge when facing unfamiliar challenges. It guides us through our inexperience by imposing those “gut” instincts that insist how to get through life crisis. It inspires us with novel thoughts and procedures, so that we are able to choose the right information—even if we are clueless. Imagine what it would be like to access this knowledge twenty-four hours a day.

Throughout our lives, we contribute a special essence to all that we do, but are you aware of its magnitude and impact on your success? This life-changing guide outlines a framework for life fulfillment that begins with you as an individual—the complete you. We can no longer ignore the caretaking of the entirety of who we are as human beings. The process of developing your life IQ unleashes your inner core, a place where equilibrium awaits you. We have all been equipped with an internal compass that can direct us in every aspect of our lives. Your compass is as individual as your fingerprints, packaged into a unique system of abilities, talents, goals, and dreams. Your essence is like no one else’s, and once you unravel this inner core, a magical awareness will unlock the power to consciously create the life you desire. All aspects of living will exude confidence and strength to enhance and magnify your life experience.

Whatever your walk in life, it’s a level playing field out there. Whether you are the CEO of a multi-national corporation, or struggling to put food on the table, whether you are famous or anonymous—we all have bodies, minds, and spirits to take care of. We have good and bad experiences, we have love, and we learn and grow. Regardless of circumstances, what will be your lasting imprint? Will you be happy? Do you think it doesn’t make a difference? It does, and your presence on earth validates your importance as a participant. Will you take an active role, or allow others to maneuver your experiences?

This book also will explore the role of conditioning in your life, and why it can impede the success you desire. *Your Life IQ* will require an open mind, flexibility, and patience. It is a life-long commitment to never giving up, and a dedication to being the best you can ever be. This unparalleled process will reward you with remarkable realities that will produce countless victories and triumphs. To succeed, we will take practical steps and apply disciplines that will become as automatic as living and breathing—all to draw out our truest potential.

Born from nearly forty years of personal experience, research, and study in the subjects of the body (nutrition, health, and exercise), mind (psychology and mind-body medicine) spirit (Eastern and Western religions, metaphysics, and philosophy), this book is the bottom line to powerful living, a straightforward and sensible approach to quality living and life experience. It should be regarded as a starting point, as well as a supplement to achieving excellence throughout your lifetime. This is a one-stop

reference guide to creating balance by discovering and using your inherent ability to navigate your own life successfully.

To increase your life IQ, we need to embark on a process that will trigger a shift in perspective to allow you to integrate the power of body, mind and spirit. It relies on certain information, certain disciplines, but most importantly, this book introduces a methodology that infuses common sense—which is why this framework can work for everyone.

Body is about your health and how you take care of the vessel that makes you efficient and energy driven. We will explore the basics of body health for you to determine your personal needs when considering body wellness. *Mind* is the way you integrate yourself and/or your work, and how you participate in society. Then, we will explore the perspectives that exist in the mind. Are they positive or negative in outlook and approach? What are the differences, and how do we improve? *Spirit* refers to the oneness with all that is living, and how you honor the driving force of your heart and soul. How do you honor who you truly are? And how does the integration of self affect your mission in body? We will discover how to balance our unique energy system—not someone else's—so that our body, mind and spirit work in concert to achieve your special idea of life fulfillment. We also will address the dynamic qualities of holistic energy and wellness, and why balancing this energy holds to key to extraordinary living.

These energetic components breed responsibility to self, others, and the world. How you take care of the body, mind and spirit, determines the level of equilibrium and quality of experience in your life. If one of these components is not in good standing, it affects the others, making you out of “balance.” Like the legs of a chair, if one is broken, the chair tilts or collapses. These energetic components all are sources of energy, and it is solely your decision to choose whether it is positive or negative, energy plus or energy minus.

These sources of energy must be unified or they will disperse, creating disconnection from the self. If this happens, good energy suffers and is wasted because it makes up for the disconnection, rather than working optimally. Unless there is balance, one thing always is offsetting the other. By nature, we are resilient creatures and we're built to handle lots of *offsetting*. However, without properly caring for body, mind and spirit, we operate at disadvantageous levels that generally are masked as discomfort. This discomfort can go on well enough for years—until an illness strikes.

All three components are SYNERGISTIC, meaning that each depends on the other, and all are interrelated. Western thinking has generally looked for specific, isolated reasons for problems and illnesses. The approach is fragmented. Such thinking tends to overlook other contributing factors that might well be responsible, if not the source of the problem. That is why an abundance of reading material, experts, and drugs exist.

This is not to say that there isn't a need for specificity, but we must reprogram our thinking to a more holistic approach of integrating all of who we are when assessing a problem or illness. The good news is that with major scientific advances and globalization, Western thinking has begun to incorporate the wisdom of Eastern philosophy and its medicine. This wisdom functions with the understanding that body, mind and spirit all contribute to why we become sick, and unless we strive to view our problems from a holistic point of view, we will not solve what ails us. Also, we must understand that holistic wellness includes not only the dimensions of the body, mind and spirit, but external dimensions such as occupational, financial, social and environmental.

On the individual level, all three components of body, mind and spirit are universal forces that help us evolve and contribute to evolutionary impulses around the world. Simply, this means that all three components are sources of energy—powerful enough to make a difference in everything and everyone we encounter. Consider that all that we do over the course of a lifetime contributes to changes that take place everywhere we go. Every moment of the day, you are making an impact by your choices, and by the attitudes you exude. Do we follow, observe, participate, detach, or surrender and isolate? How do we know which way to go?

Our internal compass always will direct us, but we must be “tuned in” in order to use its clarity. *Your Life IQ* lays the groundwork for developing and maintaining balance in all three components—the entirety of who we are. Success, regardless of how we define it, equates to the pursuit of happiness with the highest quality of life experience. Within this powerful process, we're reaching for success in all aspects of our life. This compact book of common sense practices is a hands-on guide that can be used time and time again, and will help us stay on course as we pursue our life goals.

II.

BELIEFS & CONDITIONING

Anything is possible. Do you believe it?

What do you believe about life, people and the world we live in? What do you believe about yourself? When it comes to life and life choices, there is one very important thing to keep in mind and reflect upon frequently: Anything is possible. This phrase of positive vibration is an attitude of the spirit. It makes everyone smile just to imagine the possibilities. But do you believe it—do you live your life believing that what you want is possible?

How do beliefs and conditioning play a role when facing challenges? It helps to understand that conditioning is all that is learned. What we learn is influenced by family, friends, society, religion, teachers, and our experiences. These influences mold our beliefs. Beliefs affect our thoughts and feelings in the areas of interest, opinions, values, passion, and goals. These factors drive our behavior, and therefore, our choices. No matter who you are, you have been making decisions according to what you believe to be true. You also have been exploring options to better your life. All along the way, your beliefs led your decision-making. Beliefs create a kind of trust of how life works. These beliefs create a coherent picture of our life realities. They also produce multiple boundaries that give us a type of confidence that confirms our choices. But what happens when our lives don't go according to our plan? What happens when we suddenly lose control over life circumstances and events?

In whatever you do and whatever you choose, you must expand into the thinking that there is no *right* way to do anything. There is no *singular* approach to any choice, unless of course, you are purposefully hurting others. This doesn't mean that you abandon your principles or responsibility about how you choose to make decisions, but it does mean that you begin to consider the rigid boundaries of your beliefs. Those boundaries are there, and when something in our life is not working, the search for solutions becomes complicated and outright frustrating. We spin in circles, and many times, cannot find answers. Unfortunately, there are no secret formulas to life and success, despite how many worthwhile books we can get our hands on. Why? There are far too many people, far too many circumstances, and far too many experiences that affect us individually, so that integrating a particular formula is at best, a guideline, but not a solution.

What does this actually mean? It means that there are millions of ways to approach life and decision-making. Professionally speaking, for instance, you can decide to become a lawyer, a postal carrier, a salesperson, a doctor, or a sculptor. Perhaps you'll decide to become an actor or a superstar. Maybe you'll decide to do research that will take you all

over the world. On the personal side, you can marry anyone of your choosing, remain single, or decide to remain childless. Or can you? Are you sure conditioning—and what you believe—hasn't played a role in your decision making? And are you aware that you may harbor beliefs that have held you back from what you truly want to live?

We all have a variety of options, particularly in the United States, but what undoubtedly kicks in to limit our thinking is our conditioning. Conditioning is what we were taught to believe, and it creates those deep-rooted voices stuck in your head that begin to say, "Well, I don't know if I should be an artist. I won't make much money, and it's too difficult to succeed in that profession." In the personal realm, those voices might say, "If I marry him/her, will my parents approve?" "What will my friends think?" "Is he or she from the correct social background?" Those voices may also impose so much fear that you panic about your age and rush to marry. These voices might also cause you to think, "I'm miserable with my life. I'm stuck in a bad relationship, my job's too stressful, and I can't change my life—I have too many obligations." Or, have you heard the most defeated voice of all, which says, "It's too late for me," "I can't do anything about it," or "That's the way life goes."

How often do you want to speak up—but don't—because of an existing emotional pattern that probably got started somewhere in childhood? How often do you concede when you desperately are seeking approval? Are you a people pleaser? How often do you just go along with whatever your friends say, while busily struggling and wishing you had the courage to disagree? How often do you feel undeserving of a big dream, sitting astonished in failure, rather than acknowledging that you just don't feel good enough?

Some of you might now reply, "Oh, come on, that stuff doesn't matter anymore. We live in a day and age where opportunity and freedom of choice are available to everyone." Perhaps, but you don't know *exactly* what's available to you and how difficult it might be to attain, until you are faced with the conflict of trying. And there will be conflict. Conditioning will hinder your efforts by unveiling a mindset that is littered with limitations and discouraging voices. They are the voices of what you believe, and those beliefs influence your decisions. The quality of your choices will reflect what you believe, and if at all limiting or negative, what you want will be harder to attain, and possibly, may become unattainable. If opportunity and success were there for the asking, we'd all be happy, satisfied, and contented, without a care in the world. If you're lucky enough to have lived your life making decisions with the utmost clarity and integrity, we applaud you! However, no matter where we are in our ability to stand up for what we believe, life most certainly will test our resolve by presenting greater and greater challenges. Will you survive?

Every single one of us has an individual essence—an intelligence—that influences, motivates, and sets a particular comfort level in all that we do. When we are not in balance, we become uncomfortable and plagued with thoughts that

oppose the instincts that tell us how we truly feel. In other words, we are not being honest with our essence—that aspect of our being, that if ignored, will most assuredly invite dissatisfaction, discomfort, and unhappiness. It is critical not to cave into someone else's idea of what's right for us. **What is right for us is discovered over a lifetime.** In this growth, we experience personal evolution.

Besides our individual development, humanity as a whole is in an evolutionary process. Simply, this means that from decade to decade, from century to century, from millennium to millennium, we are changing, adapting, and learning. As we can see, many peoples, cultures, languages, and lifestyles exist, and there is no single correct way to live or do anything. History clearly demonstrates that change—particularly change of mindset—is inevitable. If there were one *best* way, we'd all be happily following that glorious path!

Some of us practice religion, some of us don't. Some of us work nine to five and in an office, some work half days and at home, and others do not work at all. Then there are those who assume that being married is more secure than being single, while others find marriage too constricting and limiting. We all make our choices. One choice over the other does not necessarily assure balance. Hopefully, while we walk the path of life, we are honest about those choices; this honesty is the one ingredient necessary in keeping all three components of body, mind and spirit, in balance.

We need to accept that since birth, *all* of us have been told how to think and feel, and have been conditioned into taking on what others thought was acceptable. Generally assuming the best of intentions, our parents taught us all they knew, and guided us to the best of their abilities. Some of us didn't even have that. Through a wide range of subjects, educators tried to inspire and direct us. Religious leaders defined our morality and spirituality. Like the force of a tidal wave, our society has flooded us with conditioning. It mass-markets celebrities, reality TV, and other homogenized versions of what we ought to be—and also dictates what will make us happy, emphasizing the pursuit of material wealth. Every single environment and person we have encountered throughout our lives has left an imprint of influence, and gave us perspective. Unfortunately, not all influences have been positive, and not all influences were *right* for us. What we need to remember is that all influences served to give us **perspective**, which **is merely a particular viewpoint.**