

Everyone is a genius!



Your SWIM!

By Brad Strickland

Everyone is a genius.

Find Your SWIM

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DEDICATED to my mom and dad, Paul and Joan Strickland,
who trained a fish to SWIM.

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Chapter 1 You are a genius. SWIM.

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." {Albert Einstein}

So it's test day in kindergarten....

"Okay, Class. Today we are going to take the first test. This test is the one we have been preparing for. I hope everyone has studied and is ready," the teacher says to the class.

"Mole, you are first to take the hole digging test," says the teacher, "Please begin."

"Brilliant!"

"Amazing!"

"Wonderful!"

"You are a genius!" shout all of the other delighted students.

As the mole effortlessly digs an amazing maze of tunnels, his demeanor transforms as Picasso's would have while painting a painting. He is overcome with the delight of his own work. The smile on his face glows as he digs, amazing his peers as he works in the dirt. Or was he playing? It didn't matter. He passed the test.

Mole! You are a amazing!

Your whole body is designed for digging.

Your whole being is meant for digging.

Your whole essence is digging.

Mole, you are a digger!

"Okay, FISH. It's your turn," says the teacher, "Please begin."

Plop.

"He is so stupid."

"What an idiot," whisper the others.

"It's okay, Fish. You will do better on the next test," says the teacher.

"Ugh," says the little Fish whose heart was just racing moments ago with the excitement of taking the test, but now is crushed with his failure. His heart aches from letting his mom, teachers and classmates down, but most of all, his honor cries on the inside from the humiliation.

As time passes, fish strives to learn the elusive art of digging, but never seems to improve.

The next opportunity to prove his worth arrives in junior high in the form of another test.

“Class, how exciting the test will be today. Squirrel will be going first. Squirrel, when you are ready, please begin the climbing test,” instructs the teacher.

“Brilliant!”

“Amazing!”

“Wonderful!”

“You are a genius!” shout all of the other delighted students.

Squirrel takes off quickly. With complete confidence in his abilities, he practically runs up the tree. Appearing to defy the laws of physics and gravity, He races to the top. Then quickly climbs out to the left on the smallest branches. In an act of mastery, he actually leaps from one branch to another. The class is so impressed, they believe that the squirrel was just playing around. There is no evidence at all that squirrel is working to pass this test. For the squirrel to perform like this, his passion must come only from the heart. And the squirrel heard.

Squirrel! You are amazing!

Your whole body is designed for climbing.

Your whole being is meant for climbing.

Your whole essence is to climb.

Squirrel. You are a climber!

As things settle, the teacher turns to Fish, “Ok Fish. please begin.”

Plop.

Again a failure. And this time there were no whispers from the class.

“He is so stupid. “

“What an idiot.” Said out loud and by several of the class.

The whispers he did hear came from his parents and his teachers. And they hurt even worse.

“He’ll find his niche. This just was an off day. I wish he was more like his brother”. Then finally the teacher spoke up to Fish and said, “Fish that’s okay. you will do better on the next test.” Yes, of course, said Fish. The next test. That’s the one. The teacher knows what she is talking about. It’s the next test that I will do great on. This, of course, is just a front the fish has chosen to use. And it is Fishes first experience with using self denial.

The third test arrives near graduation.

“Okay bird, You are first to take the flying test,” says the teacher. We have all studied and prepared for this test our whole lives. This will be an exciting day! Please begin.

Brilliant!

Amazing!

Wonderful!

Your are a genius! Shouts all of the other delighted students.

The bird takes off. Flying to the highest high straight away. Soaring very low and banking to the left. Now without any effort at all the bird glides to the right. A master display of skill. And then the bird hears,

Bird! You are a amazing!

We didn't know you could fly like that!

Your whole body is designed for flying.

Your whole being is meant to fly.

Your whole essence is flying.

Bird! You were born to fly!

“Well done, Bird,” says the teacher, with excitement in her voice.

As she catches her breath she says, “Ok, Fish you go next. Begin.”

“This test is stupid! I don't even want to take this test,” he shouts inside his mind. Why am I expected to do good on this? I don't even HAVE wings.”

He makes his attempt.

Plop.

“He is so stupid.”

“What an idiot.”, society said in unison.

“He can't do it.”, yells the most insensitive.

That's okay Fish, says the teacher sympathetically. "You will do better on the next test." But didn't you study.”, She quickly questions?

Confirmation.

He is stupid and he can't do anything.

But it didn't stop at his heart this time. This time the failure grew deeper. And for the first time something new happened in Fish's mind. A thing call doubt happen. The first time that self doubt appears is miserable. And tragically the effect spilled over. And out of his own mouth he whispered to himself defeatedly, "Well maybe I can't."

This correlates around the age of 25 and Fish quits trying.

His dream dies.

His childhood hopes fade like an old campfire.

And He begins the life of average, Looking forward only to the weekend and the random vacation. He chooses to keep his hobbies and passion secret. Thoroughly trained to never risk anything again.

If only the first test would have been to SWIM.

He would have heard

Brilliant!

Amazing!

Wonderful!

Your are awesome at this! Your whole body is designed to do this! Your whole being is perfect for swimming!

You truly are incredible!

You are a genius!

Fish! You were meant to swim!

His life would have been dramatically different.

Some people know right away what they are called to do.

One of the most famous is Justin Beiber.

He knew his SWIM so early and it was wonderfully captured on video, The video is famous.

"This is how I drum" video makes everyone comment. "Awe how cute." "Wow, look how he turned out!" "He is a genius!" Whatever you say when you see the video, I believe we all envy a little the fact that his SWIM was so clear. We would all like to have that kind of clarity in our own lives.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFmaDly9qrY>

This of course would be great. It would help so much to know early. What steps should be taken to reach the highest levels. Oh what a dream!

My parents knew very early. They each had a pretty good idea what they would pursue as a child.

My mother knew as a little girl in Haiti that she wanted to be a nurse. All she wanted to do was to help hurting people feel better. And she has. She is a genius of compassion. And giving genuine love to the hurting is her SWIM. The strongest proof of this came from those who saw her in action. "Joan, It looks like you are playing nurse today." This was a common comment she would hear as she went about the hospitals.

And then there is my father. Who at the age of 3 took apart an alarm clock. Then promptly reassembled it. It worked perfectly! A mechanical genius at age 3! It didn't take very long for his skills to be discovered by IBM where he had a 30 year career "playing with machines."

Again the comments he heard were "WOW! Paul how do you do that?" and "It looks like you are having so much fun!" And his reply was always, "Oh I am." with a huge smile on his face. Mind you that he never got a college degree.

And if this is you then good. Maybe you already feel like your work is your play. But for the rest of us we don't believe that we are a genius. The quote from Albert Einstein makes sense, sure. But I didn't believe it. I know I didn't feel like a genius, Until I discovered my SWIM.

Turns out that I have been a spatial genius my whole life! It would have been nice to have known sooner. Then I could have told all of those kids that made fun of me to "SHUT UP!" Spelling tests are not very kind to me. That is NOT where I SWIM!

Here is a quick collection of different forms of intelligence. There are many more. I do like the fact that the "IQ" test in this article points out that there is really no true measurement of intelligence with it.

<http://askville.amazon.com/genius/AnswerViewer.do?requestId=11354917>

It's a pretty good article to quickly check to see where your strength may be. If nothing on the list jumps out at you no biggie. I would not have even been able to read it back when it could have helped me. I wanted to include it just so you can have some exposure to what the establishment has categorized. You can get a nice overview of the following "Genius" categories.

Bodily-Kinesthetic
Interpersonal
Verbal-Linguistic
Logical-Mathematical
Naturalistic
Intrapersonal
Spatial (yeah for spatial!!!)
Musical

Just knowing that these categories were out there would have been nice to have known. But in truth, I always did. Well, I knew I have always done things my way. I have always done things a little different. So I accepted the teasing.

Teasing? Oh yes. I was challenged in school with severe dyslexia. So I failed a lot of stuff. However, I was able to receive my associates degree in just 13 short years. Yeah! I will tell you the whole story of how I found my SWIM later. Right now I want to focus on you.

So good for you Brad. You overcame dyslexia. But really EVERYONE? A genius? Really? I can hear you right now doubting the very title of this book.

Let me assure you that the answer is yes, and not simply by my stating it.

In fact, before you even began to read this book you already knew how unique you were. You understand that there is no one like you.

Even twins are extremely different and unique. Ok, you say, but "Genius" come on! That is pushing it a bit isn't it?

Not according to Mr. Albert Einstein. His quote comes from a brilliant observation that he clearly communicated with his analogy.

Even in Napoleon Hill's book "[Think and Grow Rich](#)" he says that there is a "Giant " within each of us that simply needs to be awaken.

Tony Robbins wrote an entire book to help others do that very thing., "[Awaken the Giant Within](#)"

So really the fact that through your uniqueness there lies a genius is not really the point of this book. But more so to help you discover yours, accept it and then thrive.

So to begin. Me a genius you ask?

Yup.

Let me tell you the story of my discovery. It only took 36 years. So hopefully, I can offer you a shortcut on this. Especially because I have already stated that this is not the point of this book.

I failed spelling tests.

A lot!

So with the recommendation of my reading teacher my mother had me tested. I completely understood the implications of this and what this actually meant.

To quickly get to the point, At eight years old I wound up in the basement of a mental hospital in front of a "mind" doctor. After talking with me for awhile he had me take a seat at a table away from my mother. He gave me a blank piece of paper and a pencil and asked me to draw something.

As he spoke to my mother I realized that this could go really bad. So I started to draw. I felt as though I was drawing for my life! I drew a house. Complete with all the details of an architect. The chain link fence was especially detailed. The reason I felt that my whole life depended on this drawing was that it did. Back at school I was being severely teased for my inability to read and write. BUT when it came to art and drawing I had a fan club. The drawings really brought in the praises. So of course I ate that up. (later I found out that this was very similar to the genius of Walt Disney)

So I drew. I shadowed, I textured, I personally knew that it was my best work ever. It was up to this point my masterpiece. Well, as the doctor came over to me with the look of a mourning father, he looked down at my paper. I knew this was a key moment so I was watching his face.

An ocean of intense curiosity and surprise came over his face. He physically changed his posture and appearance in an instance. He looked back at my mom and then at the drawing and then at me. After the surprise of the drawing set in a little, he told my mother that he thought I was fine. I don't know what else had been discussed before the drawing. What techniques, what learning strategies they should employ. But I heard what I wanted. From a doctor no less. "I was fine."

It is too bad that the doctor was not just a little more attuned to discovering genius skills in someone. He might have really sent me in a great direction. But for now I was fine. No matter what the kids at school would say, I was fine according to a doctor. So for 36 years I have been fine. A fish out of water, but fine. And had I been able to pass college English in less than 5 tries I would have gotten my associates degree much sooner than in 13 years.

Well, clearly I am stubborn. 13 years is a long time to stick to it.

I should have quit the first time I failed college English, right?

Or I should have quit when I failed the first test to dig.

Or I should have quit when I couldn't pass the test to climb.

But definitely give up after the flying test. That was the worst test of all.

Thank goodness, that the FOURTH test eventually came.

And at age 36 in an 8 hour day of pre employment testing I found my SWIM. In fact, the test that I took was so fun it felt like a game. The day had been filled with all sorts of tests. One on, ethics, math, perception, and accuracy. Blah, blah, blah. All of them timed and all taken in this private little room in a downtown skyscraper. But the last 2 test were actually fun. I really thought they were a puzzle game they gave me to see what I would do with them.

Well, my day was over and I went to sign out at the main desk. The lady sitting there noticed my name and said, "Brad, the Dr. Big Shot, with his name on the door, would like to meet with you in the conference room."

Oh Really! No job for me. She took me into a large conference room with 16 chairs around a table. I sat there alone for maybe 8 minutes before the doctor entered. I had sat at the head of the table away from the door. When he came in he sat at the far other end. Really comically. Straight out of a movie. Anyway, he opened a folder without looking at me. And started to ask, "The 2nd to the last test?" I said "Yes." smiling slightly, as I remembered how fun it was, and personally challenging it was to complete it in the 5 minutes allowed.

The doctor continued, "The 2nd to the last question?" I said "Yes." again as my smile grew, knowing that that question I answered very fast just to make sure I finished in time.

Well, that is what the doctor asked me about. He asked, "You answered the question then finished the test and then went back an erased your answer replacing it with another answer. I said "Yes."

"Well." now looking up at me for the first time. "You got the answer right." and a smile appeared across his face. Looking intently on me now, he asked me "Did you do that because you wanted to finish or you just thought you had the wrong answer?" " I wanted to finish sir" I replied.

“Well, you scored perfectly on the entire test.” he stated very much like a doctor would.
“I have been giving this test for 20 years. And in all of that time I have never had anyone ever finish it. I just wanted to meet you before you left my office. You are beyond genius in this area and you are very rare.”

I was floored! Shocked! A 36 year old average guy now looking at myself differently!
I shook his hand with a gratitude like I have never experienced before. This is the guy to tell me that I was better than fine. Inside I had honor.

You are just like me.
You didn't want to give up after the first three test.
You want to find the fourth test.

The test to SWIM!

Because that is where you will find your genius.

Chapter 2 The Swim life - when everyday is a dream

"When we talk about the great workers of the world we really mean the great players of the world." {Mark Twain}

"The person who is master in the art of living makes little distinction between their work and play. They hardly know which is which. They simply pursue their vision of excellence and grace in whatever they do, leaving others to decide whether they are working or playing.

To them they are always doing both."
{James A. Michener}

Like Walt Disney with animation.
Bill Gates in computer programming.
Oprah Winfrey leading discussions.
or current examples like
[Danny Macaskill](#) in mountain bike trick riding.

And

[FluteBox and Beardyman](#) - in the art of beatboxing. Crazy skills!

They are living the dream. Their work is their is play. This is known as the "SWIM"

[Gary Vaynerchuk](#) - (who has mad wine skills) tells people to find their SWIM by "Smurf it up!"

He shares this in an almost desperate attempt to move people closer to their genius. What he is talking about is whatever your passion is, be it Smurfs, shopping or shoes you should blog about it. Write about it. Video about it. DO something about it. His passion on this topic is climatically displayed in the thought that in this modern day it is better to do something you love than to be captive to something you hate. Implying that the quality of life that SWIMMING affords far outweighs any money you might be making just for the sake of making money.

This kind of passion to encourage others to reach their own personal best is common, I have found, among the few of us who have done it. Your quality of life is so intense when you are in the zone. Giving and living in your genius is over the top rewarding.

For me, the best I can do is describe it like this.

Imagine everyday waking up like it is Christmas morning! So much excitement on that day I could hardly stand it. The enormous anticipation of great things to come! Great food. Great family. Great gifts. Great love. Great sharing. Great church. Great songs. Great decorations. A great day.

I would wake up WITHOUT an alarm clock. Jump out of bed! Literally! And run to see the tree. Stopping just for a moment to let it soak in. Enjoying my own smile which by itself made

the day a great gift. Then shouting so everyone would know how much fun I was having.

Well, that is exactly how I wake up everyday. I jump out of bed without the alarm. Then run to the tree to see what gifts I will find. Then shouting to everyone how much fun I am having. It really is incredible to love life like this. There is no way to measure it. A quality of life like no other. You just want to share it with everyone. So "Smurf it up!"

Quality of life? Oh my goodness, yes! But not necessarily linked to money.

And that reminds me of the Parable of the fisherman. So nicely told by Tim Ferris in his book [The 4-hour Work Week](#). As you read this, notice how the fisherman has found his SWIM and the young money hungry business man is just simply blind. Blind to why have or need the money, if your life is already where it is meant to be.

The Fisherman's Parable

An American businessman was at the pier of a small coastal Mexican village when a small boat with just one fisherman docked. Inside the small boat were several large yellow fin tuna. The American complimented the Mexican on the quality of his fish and asked how long it took to catch them. The Mexican replied only a little while. The American then asked why didn't he stay out longer and catch more fish?

The Mexican said he had enough to support his family's immediate needs.

The American then asked, but what do you do with the rest of your time?

The Mexican fisherman said, "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take siesta with my wife, Maria, stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar with my amigos, I have a full and busy life, senior."

The American scoffed, "I am a Harvard MBA and could help you. You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds buy a bigger boat, with the proceeds from the bigger boat you could buy several boats, eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. Instead of selling your catch to a middleman you would sell directly to the processor, eventually opening your own cannery. You would control the product, processing and distribution.

You would need to leave this small coastal fishing village and move to Mexico City, then LA and eventually NYC where you will run your expanding enterprise."

The Mexican fisherman asked, "But senior, how long will this all take?"

To which the American replied, "15-20 years."

"But what then, senior?"

The American laughed and said "That's the best part. When the time is right you would announce an IPO and sell your company stock to the public and become very rich, you would make millions."

"Millions, señor? Then what?"

The American said, "Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take siesta with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos."

Here is a video link on youtube of this very parable. There are several of them but I kind of like the style of this one.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7JlI959sIY>

Often I hear people describe the successful SWIMMERS of life as "People who found the work they love" Found? Wow, that's a good word. It really emphasizes the "Value" of this kind of life.

In fact, that word implies the rarity of it all together. How valuable would it be to just play every day and get paid for it. It would be great to "find" this item wouldn't it? Like finding a set of keys to a new car. But in this case the car is really there and it already belongs to you! Do not go through life without at least trying to find these keys!

In fact, the wisdom of King Solomon points out,

"Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should **enjoy** good in his **labor**."

Yeah. And that is from the wisest man who ever lived.

So you have heard of people taking "sabbaticals" right? Well, that to me is the attempt to find your keys. It is a time that someone determines to give it a try. A commitment, non destructive to the existing job, location, and friends in your life. Kind of like taking time to wade into a pool for a SWIM. hmmm, you might consider a sabbatical?

If you found your SWIM it would be worth it. Just like everyone who has found it tells you. They are right.

However, the training to pursue the SWIM life is very small. And only from the few who have gone that route. Sadly, the entire educational system from Pre-K to College is set up to erode your ability to swim. Not just discourage it or subdue it slightly, but to completely erode it from your soul. Unless you are one of the fortunate who the teacher perceives as being a genius.

Not fair!

But thanks to men like [Sir Ken Robinson](#) and his book the "[The Element](#)" the academic world

is now aware of their shortcomings. Additionally, the business world is becoming aware that there are SWIMMERS, FLIERS, CLIMBERS, and DIGGERS working for their companies. I see this in the rise of the E.I.T. job positions. These are the Entrepreneur In Training / Residence. Here is a position that didn't exist when I was growing up. For the business world it is a start. However, to obtain this job, you have to have already displayed some level of success that you do have mad skills. That you have found your SWIM. But to the credit of progressive companies like Google, that give their engineers and programmers personal project space, time, and resources. They are opening the door to their employees to find their SWIM. Kind of an internal sabbatical situation.

Wonderful.

In fact, ancient wisdom warns of not eroding the genius of your employees. And encourages them to help your employees SWIM, which will be a benefit for for the company in the long run..

"You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer *is* worthy of his wages." {instructions to Timothy on being a boss from Mr. Paul}

So clearly, if your team is working hard let them use your tools, software, location or whatever, to better themselves or discover new abilities. Maybe even their SWIM.

But, sadly for the children and students trapped in the education machine I really don't see ANYTHING changing. No one gives up power. Not even for the betterment of others. Pitiful. So if you are trapped, it is temporary. Hang on! Formal education won't last forever. But it is mandatory. So please guard yourself and make the most of it. And don't let your dreams die!

So I will not curse the darkness any longer without lighting a candle. In the following chapters I hope to propel you to your new ocean. The place in life where you really shine. And I will give it to you fast and quick. There really is no time to waste when it comes to living the dream life. Every shortcut, cheat code and idea I have on this topic is coming next. Let's find the keys. Let's find your SWIM.

Chapter 3 Find your Swim - Tactics, strategies and exercises to turn your dream machine on.

“You know you are on the road to success if you would do your job and not be paid for it.”

{Oprah Winfrey}

What Oprah said in that statement is one of the strongest clues to discovering your SWIM. Pay or no pay you would do it. Sometimes just being told that the possibility of being a genius is all it takes for you to find out.

But here are a few other hints to consider. A few ways that your SWIM can be discovered.

Ask yourself these questions about finding your SWIM.

1. Has anyone ever said to you " You make that look easy?" - this is a characteristic of Olympic Athletes. Clearly living the dream and it is clearly on display.
2. Answer this question, What would you want me to advertise on the radio twice a day for 2 weeks during drive time. I'll do it for FREE. Just give me the answer.
Or put another way, You are going on Oprah tomorrow. What will you talk about?
3. What magazines do you thumb through, but never purchase? You might be drawn to those topics and subjects, but because of the "You can't do it!" brainwashing beat downs, you have always been hesitant to take the next step. Buy the magazine. Read every word. Soak it in. Absorb it. If it is in the direction of your SWIM it will be energizing.
4. Ever mentioned a book to someone? If it comes out naturally, it might be a direction to look at. Note: mentioning a movie doesn't count. Mentioning a movie is too cliché for SWIM discovery. Like talking about the weather.
5. What do you retain easily? Meaning, when you are shown a new thing you can remember most of the facts and details about it. That's because it grabs your genius attention. Albert Einstein could retain 13% of most anything he was exposed to. While the average person can only retain 3% to 7%. So if we can retain more than 13% it would have to be fairly important to us. Especially on a subconscious level. Whether we are consciously aware of its importance to us or not.
6. What is it that you do that when you are heavily active in it that you lose track of time?.
You just enjoy whatever it is you are doing at the time, that you get annoyed when you have to leave or quit.
7. What would I do for free? Are you thinking about it that way? Notice the next time you hear yourself saying, "Oh here, let me do that for you." or " Hey, the next time you do such and such call me. I would love to help."
8. What do you combine with the word "LOVE"?

I love crafts.
I love dogs
I love swimming.
I love travel
I love writing.
I love organization
I love Smurfs

Dean Jackson and Joe Polish say "[I Love marketing](#)" It's there SWIM. They rock at marketing!

There you go. Use the word "love" to find your SWIM.

9. Have you ever made money easily?. That might be your swim. Don't resist it or self sabotage, just because something comes easy to you. Try to see if you can do it again. Your swim doesn't have to be hard. And on that same note, it definitely does not need to remain a mystery! Find out where it is and SWIM. Live a life NOW! with the highest satisfaction. Share, give and be more. SWIM.

Did that list help? Do you already know? GREAT!

Sorry that list was not more eloquent. But really getting the concepts and methods in your head quick was my top priority.

But back to Oprah, Her life is an absolute dream to so many. The ultimate SWIM some would say. So because of that, we should look at her quote again. It may offer a small hint as to what YOU should be doing. I know when I read it I can tell that life must be truly wonderful at that level. So let's look at it again,

"You know you are on the road to success if you would do your job and not be paid for it."

{Oprah Winfrey}

"road to" that is the important part. Bet you didn't see it the first time you read it.

My daughter has many abilities to earn herself a great income. But when she has the time and daddy's money she likes to do landscaping and gardening. This is something that she would do for everyone for free. She just loves it. Mind you that she is only 14.

It actually becomes a bit more obvious when you look at the reverse situations. When you are doing something that you have no business doing. Like a fish out of water. A fish in a tree.

Especially when a fish that was swimming just fine goes and tries to climb a tree. This is because they have been great in their SWIM for so long that they now believe they are great at anything. Or they are just being stupid.

In honesty, I am always impressed by the attempt. And I do applaud going for it so as to not have the regrets of an unattempted bucket list item. So with that said, consider the following:

Here are some clear reverse situations.

Jimmy Carter - As a peanut farmer he was SWIMMING. But as a president he was out of his element. A true heart for America, but clueless in how to get anything done in ugly Hollywood.

Michael Jordan - Baseball - Really? Do I need to elaborate at all here?

Schwarzenegger - Again, Really? Stick to body building & movies, the people love ya when you do that. The politics thing? Not so much.

So yup. It sounds and looks kind of funny, but knowing how it looks can be helpful to you as well.

It is a bit hard to see Beethoven running a welding school or the Pope laying carpet. It's just that clear, they would not be in their element.

[There is something quite entertaining about this whole concept really. I suppose that is why they are called "Fish out of water" movies. They are regularly funny movies and a pretty good formula to stick to. But I shiver at the idea of living your whole life as an "out of water" experience.

If this is you then reread this book immediately! Find your SWIM!]

So what about you? You know when it just doesn't feel right. You get in a position that is awkward. Words just can't describe it. It's not your SWIM. But you knew that already. Hopefully, pointing it out like this will help you not to spend too much time on it. Like Jordan and the 2 years he won't get back from baseball. I'm sure it was fun and rewarding on many levels. Like buying a sports car. So in that respect, after a life of personally SWIMMING at the highest level you can do what you want? Another reason to SWIM.

So back to looking at the reverse of things to find your SWIM...

Consider the things you hate as a possible direction for your SWIM to appear. What I mean is, if you have ever said "I hate traffic" Then perhaps that is because somewhere inside of you lies a wonderful improvement of some sort. Think of the last time you said you hate

something.

I hate it when my ice melts
I hate democrats / republicans
I hate cleaning dog poop
I hate losing my keys.
I hate selling.

Maybe your dislike of these will drive you to SWIM.

Go. Do. Try. Invent. Experiment, Research! DO! (oh I said that already)

But don't think for a minute that I am saying you are automatically special. What I am saying is that you will become special when you have done something that is special. The "road to" part. You are NOT extraordinary just because you were born. But you can become someone extra ordinary and truly extraordinary. What I am talking about in regards to your SWIM, is to embrace the idea that you are specifically designed to do something very well. And to reach your full potential requires that you discover what it is. However, society wants to train everyone to think that they are special by default to protect their feelings. To help every one's self esteem. BLAH! Not in my book. You will need to do something, be something, or become something special to actually be special. Graduating from 3rd grade to 4th grade won't do it.

Chapter 4 Found it. How do I get there? (the path)

“Do not wait for your ship to come in. Swim out to it.” {Unknown}

“Go! Fight! Win!” {Edna Mode}

Sometimes your ocean hasn't been invented yet. For example, when I was a kid the idea of becoming a 3D animator simply didn't exist. So there are jobs that are being created at this very moment that you may be extraordinary at. Or even better, you have skills that have yet to be defined! You will swim in new water. What we call the pioneers.

You will learn of these new waters from others and through your own trial and error. (this means failure)

Because of this trial and error you never know how close you might be. Consider the [Kleenex](#) tissue box. I know a product can not have a genius, but the story will help to make this point. As a product it was marketed just to take the excess make-up off. Thus “Clean Excess Make-up” or “Kleenex”. It was just a matter of time for it to find its best purpose. A handkerchief.

Another trial and error story. This time a man and a product. Haim Saban the owner of the Power Rangers had to wait 7 years before he could get anyone to play his show. That is a bunch of no's! That is a bunch of trial and errors. Most people would give up or quit. But if it is your SWIM, and you love it, and you think it is great, then it really does not take that much effort to stick with it. Most likely Haim would have kept trying for free no matter how long it took.

Another way to find your path is to use part of a path that has already been started.

And in that case you can use a coach or a guide.

Tiger Woods does - Every round at every swing.

Michael Jordan did - At court side. EVERY game.

These guys are both freaking brilliant! So do they NEED a coach? NO! (well you wouldn't think so.) Okay, so why were their coaches there? Because they do NEED a coach. The best SWIMMERS in life know this. Find you a coach.

Still not convinced? Really? A guide saves time and expense.

Because success leaves fingerprints. And signposts are even better than footprints. Let's say you have to make a journey through the jungle. Not a nice jungle either. One that has poison

darts set up everywhere. And pits with hungry alligators. There are even pits with snakes and rivers full of piranhas. Yuck! But that is not all. The jungle is in a country where you don't speak the language and kidnapping foreigners is common.

Can I interest you in a guide? Heck ya! I don't even want to go to this stupid jungle! Well, hopefully you won't have too. But you will face some obstacles and challenges as you search for your SWIM. This is where a guide becomes a huge asset.

So speaking of signposts, what are we looking for? What do they look like? Just like the other signposts for life in general? Don't go into debt. Don't eat too much. Don't hang around those guys. It's similar to parental guidance. My mentors have made mistakes. Some bigger than others. So if I can listen to them, then I should be able to avoid making the same mistakes. Right? Like how would Walt Disney rebound from a failure. Or [Russell Conwell](#) pressing me to not quit just one step short. If I can "get it" then I will reach my SWIM that much faster.

"Yes but a coach is expensive. Or hard to find the right one." you say. What do you think books are?

How about the "ultimate" sign? The one that says you have made it?

When people say, "You got lucky."

This is such a strong statement that we can use it again to work backwards from. How would your life look, if people say you got lucky? What would you have done? Where would you have gone to hear something like this? What would it take for your neighbor to say, "Well, you got lucky." Of course you didn't. But the well intentioned uninformed neighbor never saw the work that got you to your SWIM. So again, what would your life look like?

"Diligence is the mother of good luck." {Benjamin Franklin}

So if you say, "You got lucky" to a great pianist, Oh really? I practice 3 hours a day and perform every night!

Or you say, "You got lucky" to the founder of McDonald's, Ray Kroc. "Oh really? I sold paper cups and equipment for 20 years until I found my SWIM. And it was in a line that was out the door and across the parking lot of a little restaurant that I DIDN'T own!"

Or you say to me "You got lucky". Oh really? I built playhouses and mobile cottages independently for 15 years before the "My Castle Party" idea ever showed up. It just looks like I got lucky.

The Wright brothers got lucky on their idea of the whole flying thing, right?

How long was peanut butter and chocolate kept separate before Reese's made the combination look lucky?

This is another great signpost to come across. When everyone says "I should have thought of that!" or "What a great idea! It's so obvious." Well, I hear it all the time. Not luck.

Persistence. I SWIM because I persist. Success just followed. It caught up to my passions and genius. I have been designing, building and partying for free all this time. And like I said, success has caught up with me.

So, ready? Try.

This means action

The secret here is to "do" Don't be afraid.

Sometimes you find your SWIM through discovery.

Like walking into a gymnasium, Or a jazz bar and you discover a place where you know you can SWIM. Where you can belong. So if, for you to discover your swim is through discovery. Then be patient. You will be drawn to it when you see it.

Here is a list of how I kept myself motivated until I found my SWIM. And just so you know, my SWIM came through "trial and error" and "discovery".

1. To begin, I gave up watching TV in my 20's. (well, mainly the news. No matter how many hours I spend with them they won't be sending me a check)
2. Reading. (about others and marketing) I started reading every spare minute I could find.

Think about it. If you were going to sit down with Donald Trump he would not have the time to give you his best. But through a book I can sit with him and he can express his thoughts very clearly. Sharing them without distractions or stuttering. And he would only put in his book what he thought was his best advice. This actually helps keep me from getting second rate information. Or unnecessary information like "How is the weather today?" I don't care! Just help me avoid 1 or 2 mistakes.

I should tell you why I started reading. Because I hated it in school! But now the value is so clear. Just like the old technique to help people start reading. Rip a few pages out of the book each day so that the book becomes a manageable bite size task that a beginner can handle...Well, **I would do it!**

So here it is. The little story of how Tommy Butler saved my life.

It was about 2 years after graduation I found myself alone at the mall. Going about watching people and window shopping. I ran into Tommy Butler. He was a fairly new friend of mine.

We met in class our senior year. Well, it had been a while and it was fun to be reunited. I decide to join him. He said he was just on his way to the bookstore so we started walking that way. We shared stories of what had been going on since high school and reports of other students that we both knew. It wasn't long before we got to the bookstore. We walked in together and I went right to where I had gone many times before. And that was to my immediate right. That is where the magazines were kept. I lost track of time as I flipped through one magazine after another and I thought I should check on Tommy. So I looked to my left and my right. No Tommy. Hmmm. I thought he would be right here. He must be out in the mall I thought. So I walked straight out and searched over the crowds for Tommy. Well, I didn't see him. So I walked a few steps and looked as far left and then as far right as I could.

Bummer. No Tommy. I was just starting to get a bit mad at him for leaving me as I started turning around slowly. Then it hit me! There was a big sign over the store that said "books" and I thought "NO WAY! Tommy is not "inside" the bookstore is he? So I cautiously started to enter the store. Almost scared of what I might find out. This time though I didn't turn to the magazines. I went straight down the center aisle. Looking above the bookshelves I saw signs. Some read, "Travel", "Romance", "Mystery" that sort of thing. I was getting close to the back of the store when a surge of anxiety washed over me. Oh no! What if Tommy was in the "Business" section of the store? Really! He is getting ahead of me in this "LIFE" thing I thought. Well, you guessed it. There he was with his back to me and holding a book open. I instantly realized his position in the world compared to mine so I approached with respect. I asked him, "Tommy, what book are you looking at?" He answered without even raising his eyes, "I'm trying to decide if I should buy this book." I replied, "It's a paperback. It's like 3 bucks. Just buy it." What came next still teaches me lessons even today. He said, "No, You have to be careful of what you put in your mind." Woah! I never heard anything like that from a classmate before! Instantly, again I realized that if he had this built in filter system then whatever books he would recommend would have already been deemed worthy. So softly I asked him as a child not knowing really what to ask, "Which one is your favorite?" "Well, that depends on what subject." He started. At this point in his answer my brain stretched out again as not only did I learn about the different categories in the book store, but the smaller categories in the "Business" section. Tommy continued, "On Real Estate, I like this one. And on the Stock Market, I like this one, and on Sales I like this one." As he spoke I grabbed the paperback of each. He kind of looked at me as if I was weird. Ok I was. But there is no way I was going to not know what he already knew. We headed to the cash register and I was excited, full of energy. I was not too late. I was going to catch up to Tommy and all of the other American men my age already pursuing careers.

Tonight I will read.

It took me 2 months to read the first book.

And when I finished I realized how much of the “path” I could cover from other people’s trial and errors. I just knew I would have to overcome my reluctance to reading completely if I were to accomplish it. Just like in “[The Richest Man in Babylon](#)” where you are encouraged to make “work” your best friend. It is now just as important to me to make “reading” my best friend as well.

One last comment on reading. I know that if you do meet Donald Trump and he sizes you up to be successful in your area of SWIM, and you have just a few moments of time together, he will ask you, “What 3 books are you reading right now?” He knows about short cuts. He wants to know what might have gotten passed him unnoticed. What he is thinking is, if another leader is reading it then maybe he should also. So what would your answer be? What 3 books would you say?

3. Planning & listing the steps. (man this really motivated me) I learned this from reading.
4. Writing down my goals THEN pricing them!
5. Sunrise & Sunset (outside!) Schwarzenegger's motto while he repeatedly won Mr. Universe was “Stay hungry” Something I have never forgotten and I like it! I have a similar perspective after a victory. “Stay in Awe” When I am in Awe my mental state is electric, vibrant and alive.
6. The idea that I would help others. Especially the ones who have no chance in their mind. I would get excited about the idea that I could relate to them and offer them hope and a path. I guess it is just the idea that if I could find my swim then so could so many others. I love that idea. It would be like giving people free cars. Or better yet, releasing them from prison. Or best of all bring them back to life!
7. The idea of reducing my wife's work load - She really is my strongest reason for the money side of all this. She has allowed me to pursue my SWIM. Our entire married life she has been very understanding to my creativeness, so I look forward to properly saying thank you.
8. MUSIC! - Movies - Restaurants - Marinas - Racetracks!
I keep in reserve several of these things that I can grab for in case of an emergency. Like a spirit first aid kit. There are down times. So anything I can do to get over them quicker the better. I use them sparingly as I find new items of motivation. This is to protect their potency on me. Being in the zone is the goal so if there is something that helps me get there then I use it.
9. Travel - This is so powerful for me that it is kind of a combination of the whole list.

“The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page.” {Saint Augustine}

10. The discovery of "Blitz" working. = Attack the "to do" list, put in massive focused effort with a defined amount of time. Once the blitz is over you built something of a little success.

Momentum is easier to keep than it is to start. Working this way is a real motivator for me! Tony Robbins talks about “Mass Amounts of Effort”. And he is right. To change the course of a ship or to launch a rocket takes Mass Amounts of Effort. So working this way and knowing I have limited myself has motivated me to get more done in less time almost daily. I love it.

Ian Fleming the author of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (and a little spy series) worked this very same way. At his home in Jamaica he would wake up early and type several thousand words before 10am each day. Then he would snorkel and swim in the ocean. Then later that evening he would enjoy a nice meal with friends. Wow, that really sounds like the “Fisherman's” parable doesn't it? It typically would take Ian 2 months to write a new James Bond novel like this. Then for the rest of the year he would travel to promote it. What a way to live.

It would be hard to write a chapter about “Find your Path” without discussing a huge phenomenon that is going on right now. And that is the numerous singing and talent show competitions on television. They are an absolute hit with the biggest ratings. So why?

Well, if everyone would like to have their path pointed out real easy and I have already said it is something you find. Which by definition is something you search for. And “search for” equals work for most of us. Then these competition shows offer the audience 3 personal things.

- 1) They are a clear path.
- 2) They are available.
- 3) They are easy.

To sum that up, If you have world class talent (today) then this is a clear path. However, very few actually have talent at this level even if we want to believe we do. And that is why these shows have open auditions to everyone. It creates the “Give it a try” atmosphere with many of the contestants stating “What have I got to lose?” And that is awesome. They are willing to risk humiliation for the chance to find their SWIM life. The mind set is “why not try this path? I'm still searching for my SWIM”

Don't you wish there were competitions for every genius category. Oh wait, there are. Enter a competition.

The final idea for finding your path in this chapter is partnering, teaming up, or joint venturing. Also known as a tribe. There really is strength in numbers. And it takes strength to build anything of value or “rebuild” as we cover in the next chapter. If you surround yourself with other people on a similar path or better yet SWIMMING successfully already. Then there is no way you can't arrive to your awesome life sooner. How is this possible you ask?. Well duh.

If you let someone else drive the car for a while that doesn't need the map anymore, then you will get to where you want to be sooner. One of the easiest ways right now to spend time with a

tribe is on the Internet. Specifically through video.

But why does “who you spend your time with” really matter? Oh come on. If someone you are with says, “Hey! I found some gold over here!” What are you going to do about it? Check it out, of course! But if you are with a bunch of people who are not even looking for gold or know what it looks like in the first place, then love ‘em, but spend no time with them.

Everyone knows a team of two is far more powerful than the individuals by themselves. So get on with it. Find some new friends. Ones that are not dead inside.

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. {instructions on teamwork from Mr. Paul}

So find a tribe.

Colleges use to be a place to find a tribe. But now tribes are stronger on the internet. This is emphasized in the TED Conference talk given by the curator of the TED Conference, [Chris Anderson](#). Chris points out the speed of which unicyclist have transformed their sport. It has been astonishing. This is from a bunch of people (a tribe) that find each other through video. They encourage each other and teach others for free, because of the common passion they share. Formerly this was done in a college setting. However, it is now done via videos available everywhere. No college will ever be able to teach unicycling to the level of the tribe.

So neither will it be able to teach anything at the speed of the tribe. Colleges use to be known for their strong tribe cultures. Everyone knows this. And that is a large reason you would want to go to a particular school, based on the tribe...

A medical school tribe

A law school tribe

An engineering school tribe

Etc.

Chris Anderson points out that this is happening in many areas. Saxophone playing, breakdancing, medical breakthroughs, etc.

So what tribes do you enjoy hanging out in? Could be your SWIM.

Go find a video tribe. I have.

Personally, I have had a huge interest in freon based steam engines my whole life. This is due to the fact that my mechanical genius father loves them and has passed his love to me.

Thanks to online video tribes, the concept has, and is, growing and developing without any college support or, for that matter, any government involvement, at lightning speed.

So a very nice and available fuel source is tribes and videos.

With the right guide, mentor, teacher or tribe you should be able to navigate the mean old jungle. But there is still risk. It is just part of taking action. By now I know you are willing to take a step. Maybe just the smallest one, but I know you can do it. The risk that may be holding you back a bit, is simply not that bad. Especially considering it may propel you to reaching your SWIM.

“What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.” {just about everyone}

This is uncomfortable in so many ways. I don't even want to try something that might kill me? What is the point of this saying? Well, it is metaphoric. That the level of risk in an area of life may “feel” like you are dying when in reality you are not. The “risk” to you is an uncomfortable moment. A point of personal friction. But friction is REQUIRED. It is the element that causes a match to reach its potential. The crucial combustible moment.

Example: To create a combustible moment, you will have to do something that you haven't done before. Just like a match is only useful when it is stuck.

Sometimes it is dealing with habits or sometimes you may:

Risk moving

Risk money

Risk embarrassment

Risk learning

Maybe risk ???

Consider all of the singing competition shows. They are full of people willing to risk “Embarrassment” for the music life lottery. They can't sing at all, but they are so willing to stand in front of the world and try. Why is this? Obviously, the lure of easy money and fame. Thus the lotto. What is inspiring about these shows is that they DO find amazing talent with the format. What would be great is to have the same kind of format for all the many different areas of life. We could find amazing Economist, Teachers, Firemen, and the list goes on.

Like [Landau Eugene Murphy, Jr.](#) Amazing! “I’m the happiest man on the planet!” “I just wish the journey didn’t have to be so rough.”

Because the contestants want so badly to have a life of satisfaction they are literally taking a shot in the dark in hopes that their “SWIM” is singing. Can't blame them. Nothing ventured nothing gained. Right?

While I'm still on the “risking embarrassment” to find your combustible moment.

Consider what Danny Deutsche in his book "[The Big Idea](#)" does to encourage frightened hopeful entrepreneurs.

In his advice to a fashion consultant he recommended doing it for free.

That's right FREE! For the first 10 clients do it for free and then charge the 11th.

So what's the risk? Well, the same as the singers.

What if her fashion style just isn't something that someone wants? In fact, she might get laughed at. Or worse, booed. No one wants that.

But the upside is that if her love for fashion has given her skills that completely stand out, she will have 10 raving fans and list of client success stories to start her "for profit" fashion consulting business with. Brilliant!

Gary Vaynerchuk says it this way, "Do what you love for free." And in his case it took over a year for people to see this guy SWIMMING in wine. (ok that sounded funny)

His www.winelibrary.com/ web show lost money for a very long time. Put another way, His combustible moment was perfect. His fuel was great. But the fact that no one was watching the fire didn't bother him. He was doing what he loved and getting an audience wasn't the most important thing. (He knew he would. He just didn't know how long it would take.)

Even in Peter J Daniels instruction on starting a window cleaning or car detailing business he suggest doing 3 or 4 for free then asking for a referral. And at this point you charge a fee based on the satisfaction of the free customers. Again, You are risking embarrassment in that you may do a bad job. Or that people won't want your services. Or the realization that you have more to LEARN.

For example: Market timing. It is pretty hard to clean windows on a rainy day. Or sell snow balls to Eskimos. I call this a risk, because no one likes to find out they don't really know enough yet.

Mel Gibson auditioned for his role in Mad Max with a busted up face from a fight the night before. He jumped out of the hospital bed to go to the audition. He got the part.

In this case, the fire was already lit. He was desperate to apply it to a larger pile of fuel.

Another form of friction might be your calendar,
your wallet,
your friends.

A HUGE form of friction is Habit Force. Change your habits - change your life.

Save more.

Complement more.

Shut up more.

Eat less.

Talk less.

Complain less.

What habits would cause a combustible moment if they changed abruptly?

Find a match.

Strike it.

Fuel it.

Reach your SWIM and

Get warm. Get loved. Get purpose. Get fit.

In writing this book I hope I have pointed that out clearly.

Here is a little list of others who have found their SWIM:

Tim Ferriss - SWIM - Efficiency GURU Loved efficiency in his own life and loves to share it with others.

Bernie Madoff - SWIM - Scam artist king. And he wanted everyone to know it. He wanted his trophy as the greatest scammer of all times to be known. Even if that included jail for the rest of his life. (a bit sick)

Martin Ayanegui - SWIM - Christmas tree decorating. Martin is a personal friend of mine.

He is the one who called and asked me to be on "[The Little Couple](#)" with him. As a student attending college from Mexico he was trying to get his U.S. citizenship. He sat in his lawyer's office quietly waiting for the very busy lawyer. The lawyer was complaining out loud to no one in particular about how busy he was and his list of things that he needed to do. Well one of those things was to put up the office Christmas tree. Martin had noticed the boxes in the lobby. As the evening continued hours went by. Martin took the initiative and decorated the tree and then left. The lawyer never saw him that night. Well the next day Martin gets a phone call from the lawyer asking him, "What have you done?" Martin was afraid he had done something wrong but was quickly relieved when the lawyer started dousing him with praise and complements. Well the compliments turned into a request to decorate the lawyer's personal home. See the lawyer had a big Christmas party planned but the house was not decorated yet. Martin said he would be happy to. Well a year went by and Martin had pretty much forgotten the whole thing until the phone calls started to come in. "Hey, Lawyer. All of these people from your party are asking me to decorate their houses. What should I do?" Martin inquired. "Do it and charge them." he replied. "Charge them? Charge them what?" he

questioned. "Charge them \$500 bucks. You are worth it." he said firmly. "WOW! Ok. I will." Martin affirmed.

Don't underestimate any of this. Martin is a genius when it comes to decorating. And I loved the day he called me and said he bought his first Ferrari. He lives extremely well and takes care of many people. But it all started by doing what he loved for FREE.

Dr. John Morgan - SWIM - Introducing Jesus. With the "debt free" philosophy he has built Sagemont Church and continues to grow it with the founding principles of "a look, a word and a touch" And now based on his successful SWIM he shares and teaches other churches how to get out of debt and stay that way.

Alfred & Helen Hartman [my grandparents] - SWIM - "Love for the little children of Haiti" Gave 30 years of their lives to the country of Haiti. I have to insert just one story here. They went to Haiti for FREE. No church support until 5 years later. However, a successful businessman told my grandfather that he would put \$25 a month in a savings account for their retirement until they could take over that responsibility. And he did it. My grandfather was able to take it over 5 years later. But you MUST hear the rest of this story. There are 9 grandchildren including me. When I turned 10 I was given a \$5,00.00 dollar savings bond. Just like all the other 8 grandchildren. Expressing a positive example to me.

Pick up your game! Write it down right now. What are you going to leave to your grandchildren.

Note: I always thought this was normal. Now that I am grown I know that it is extraordinary! And I am very honored to have experienced it first hand.

Joey Matthew - SWIM - Videographer Carried a camera around everywhere. His very own wedding video was so unique and inspirational that it created request that led to the top paying jobs.

Steven Spielberg - SWIM - Movie Producer He knew so early in life that he would sneak onto the movie lot just to be around the industry.

John Wayne - SWIM - Storytelling He loved telling stories so much, he even had a passion for the equipment being used. He knew all about the different cameras and lenses and lighting that could be used to get the "story" across just right.

Mark Beavers - SWIM - Compassion A personal friend of mine and inspiration. Through his efforts to help a mentally retarded adult live a dignified life. He gave the man a roof over his head and rides to where he needed to go. Mark learned that the services he was providing out of love was reimbursable through state and national funds. He grew his passion for others

into a large operation with more thought and care for the families than any other provider. The money was a nice byproduct of the work.

Chapter 5 I'm drowning! I'm crushed! I'm hurting! I'm Bankrupt! - How to restore your spirit. Just a spark starts a fire.

"Fall seven times, stand up eight." {Japanese Proverb}

Let's rebuild your dream machine, Because sometimes it's not just turned off. It's broken.

That is good news. You're in great company! Mary Kay, Col. Sanders of KFC and Henry Ford are just a few. There have been so many more people that have rebuilt themselves *and quickly* that the resources for you to do the same are already out there. Let me offer a running start to what might work best for you. Repairing something is difficult, because getting the parts can be hard. Here is a parts list for repairing your dream machine. Get it, Fix it and SWIM! No excuses. And if your dream machine is cranking right now at full throttle, then consider this list as a resource for all the people that will start to approach you. Oh, you don't think you will be approached and asked questions? HA! Enthusiasm creates fans! So audiences WILL form and being a leader is part of SWIMMING. So this list will be a big help to you later.

- 1) The power of reading. (fuel to overcome obstacles)
- 2) Association (birds of a feather / share common traits)
- 3) Habit Force (change a few habits) (trick yourself to success)
- 4) Goal Setting (a defined target) (you will never hit the dartboard if you don't hang it on the wall.)

"A goal is not always meant to be reached, it often serves simply as something to aim at." {Bruce Lee}

- 5) Money Skills (this is linked to Habit Force) (The 5 laws of Gold from [The Richest Man in Babylon](#))

I keep using this list over and over. It is what helped me overcome my first bankruptcy. This list and a discussion I had with a man who had been through worse. I will call him Pete. Pete married into the family so I didn't really know anything about him. I met him in his own hot tub in Dallas. A nice guy who appeared to be on top of the world. I learned that he had been through a really tough time. He had his company foreclosed on and everything was auctioned off. We are talking about millions here. Not only that, but the buyers of his stuff were his competitors who literally laughed at him. Trust me when I say that this is just barely getting into his disaster. Well, this was all behind him when I sat in the hot tub with him. I was also in the middle of my bankruptcy disaster, so I loved the idea of learning some short cuts from this guy. He obviously had recovered and was thriving again. So I asked him, "What did

you do first?" He told me he got a junky little apartment and a job at Taco Bell. hmmm, I had not even considered falling that low yet. That seemed beneath me. I was not really wanting to be that humbled. I was hoping for a more dignified answer. He continued to tell me that he started to save every penny like a mad man. "Money is power.", he said. "You can't do anything without it.", he continued. He kept his whole plan a secret. Even his dad didn't know he had any money. \$5 dollars turned into \$500 and with tightly saving, it soon reached \$1000. At this point some opportunity showed up. "Man, I need to sell my truck bad!" he heard a coworker say. "How much right now?" he asked. "Right now? I would take a grand!" the co worker replied. "Done." Pete said. The truck was worth \$3000. Up until that point he just saved and waited for an opportunity to show up. Once he sold the truck a second deal came along. And then another. The word got out that if you wanted to do some business then you could call Pete. Because he had cash. And not just in car buying but in all sorts of things. I just want to point out that the second thousand dollars came much quicker than the first. And same with the second ten thousand.

This is what John McCormack calls "Italian Math" in his book "[Self Made in America](#)" John also points out that once you have a little hidden cash of money to work with it starts to lift your spirits. He calls it "attitude money" I remember that myself. That when my stack of dollars got to \$10,000 I felt like I was going to really recover.

That is how Pete did it. It took a little while to go from \$0 to \$1000 but he did it from what he controlled. His own pay check. Other than that he couldn't control anything. Not his pay raises. Nor the speed of which he got raises. He definitely couldn't control the bank and their actions. He could only control the money that came into his hands and his actions.

And after reading the "[7 Cures to a Lean Purse](#)" in The Richest Man in Babylon and hearing Pete's story, it is exactly how I did it. It was the path with a clear first step. It is how I rebuilt myself that led me to my own SWIM. I started to rebuild from nothing but a decision. The decision? The next time I make ANY money I was going to pay myself FIRST! The "Start thy purse to fattening" cure number one. So I began with a \$75 gate repair job. From that first job I saved exactly \$7.50. Even my own wife didn't know I did it. Which wasn't brilliant, but that is for another book. And it worked! Even though I had to move my family back into my parents house in my 30's the power I felt from the \$7.50 was amazing. I actually controlled something. I would look at it during the day. When I got to add the next \$20 to it, it really started to strengthen my spirit. This little seed of money had one purpose. To grow! And as it grew I would grow with it.

A warning: We do crazy things when we don't find our SWIM!

Tony Robbins points out that these "Crazy Things" are a "search for significance" WOAH! So

this is what takes over a teenagers mind! (ok me included) So why do we do these crazy things? Because the down side to not having your SWIM is too damaging and dangerous. If you believe you are just mediocre you will never attempt anything. And eventually it will become a self fulfilling prophecy. Just like an elephant believes it can't break the rope around its foot because he gave up as a baby elephant when it couldn't break the rope around its foot. Belief is powerful.

Spirit First Aid Kit

Build a Spirit First Aid kit that works just for you!

Don't overuse it though! Don't let this be a crutch. Have a fuel source, but keep the first aid kit in reserve. So its potency will stay strong.

Here is what to include in it.

Favorite songs that motivate you.

Favorite movies.

A Restaurant that makes you feel special, a favorite meal.

An associate/friend that can lift your spirit just talking to them. (do not do the "oh woe is me" scenario. No one likes to be vomited on!)

Museums, the theater, high end shopping - or specialty stores like Bass Pro Shops or the Porsche dealerships. Or any "place" that lifts your spirit. Maybe a certain neighborhood.

a few quotes or sayings that get to you. Even highlighted parts of a book, that inspire you.

An item. Maybe a watch, a trophy. Whatever...

Activities - I like going to a race track and hanging out in the pits. I also like walking the docks at a nice marina. I might do these twice a year.

Then finally, put on your Spirit First Aid Kit a list of reasons why it is important that you keep your spirits up. And keep a good attitude.

Here is an example:

My wife is #1!

My kids! I will take a bullet for them.

My family name.

I want the respect of Idiot #1 (the idea that success is the best revenge) (ok maybe that's evil)

My parents.

And more.

That's a start. You get the idea. It really works well. However, there are times that are beyond a Spirit First Aid Kit. And maybe you need an emergency room. If you get that discouraged then physical activity helps reduce anxiety. Mow the yard. Twice if you have to. Go for a jog.

Do the dishes. Stay active until the emotions are under control. Emotions are subject to

action.

Chapter 6 Dry off every now and then - The value of balance.

"I slip from workaholic to bum real easy." {Matthew Broderick}

Hot/Cold, Fast/Slow, Night/Day, Male/Female - Balance is the way of the universe.

I once had a car tire develop a blister. It looked pretty funny. I first noticed it when I heard a slight noise as I drove. vrump vrump vrump.

So I pulled over and saw this bubble about the size of bottle cap. No big deal, I will just drive the few miles to the tire store and get it replaced. So I began to drive. But now the sound was VRUMPED VRUMPED VRUMPED. How in the world did the sound change that much? I asked.

So I pulled over again this time to find the blister was the size of a golf ball and downright silly to look at. Ok, no big deal again I thought. Sure that is the natural progression of something like this. I still can reach the tire shop I thought to myself and away I went. In less than a block the car had completely developed a "BOUNCE". Seriously, I could not believe that a golf ball size blister was lifting the car! Vrump bump Vrump bump. Ok, this is serious. Am I in danger? This tire has now lost most of its usefulness. Once again I pull over to investigate.

Only 3 more blocks, That's it! Since I first heard the noise till now has only been 3 blocks of travel. Well, to my shock there was now a blister the size of 4 golf balls lined up side by side.

Completely scary to look at! It actually paralyzed me for a short time while I pondered what I should do. No progress forward. No progress backwards. Just stuck. My reasoning just didn't improve any, so I got back into the car and determined even greater than before to reach my goal. "Tire shop or bust!" I said out loud. Well, as you can imagine the car not only bounced along slightly out of control, but completely dangerous. To the fact that others were now warning me! Ah ha! Another block! Success right? Well, maybe in some weird measurement of failure, but ok, press on. My life had actually come to a crawl as I literally limped my way to my destination. And that is when it happened. BOOM! the loudest pop I have ever heard. Yup, like a balloon that reached its limits. But considering this was car tire rubber the release of air was extraordinary. Really, it was impressive. The very loud startling sound distracted me the instant the tire blew and I nearly wrecked the car! That would have been the worst tragedy of all. Especially had I injured anyone else.. Mind you, I was only going 4 miles per hour.

I share this story because I once saw a diagram illustrating one's life as a tire.

The diagram had the tire divided up similar to a clock. With the words "Work" on one side and directly across the words "play" on the other side. Other words like, Family, God, Country, hobbies, education, health, charity were placed in between them.

It worked. I got it. It made so much sense to me. My personal motto for some time has been "Work hard - Play hard" , but recently revised to "Work hard, play hard and laugh even harder!"

In fact, this simple diagram has been a check and balance for me as I pursue life. In another book, I read how the Russians had won many gold medals in the Olympics in the 1970's. They had incorporated hours of rest with hours of intense training. And in the same book Jack Nicholson contributed his great golf skills with being able to mentally leave the game right after his swings. So he could rest from the intense focus he would conjure at every touch of the ball. Fascinating! And now being equipped with this insight I have noticed the same thing in my best work. For some time I realized that I could get more done in the first 2 hours of everyday than the rest of the day combined. In fact, I started capitalizing on this principle. I personally call it blitz working. Taking from the football term for an all out focus attack on the quarterback. I would basically set a task (a large task) then blitz. No phones, kids, etc., no matter what. At the end of the 2 hours I'd be done. Accomplished or not the blitz was over. And now back to a manageable pace. It has worked for me great. The same in the world of play. We pick out a vacation spot. Get the brochures, plan the events and then work the blitz. Work overtime, save a little extra here and there and voila! We are playing hard!

So balance - why?

Too many stories of celebrity disasters.

Executive depression and just plain unhealthy workaholics.

And worse is the legions of unfulfilled dreams from complete laziness.

No action at all. Doing just the minimum in life. Living for the weekend but dead all week long.

This out of balance style of living is so common, because so few believe that they can SWIM.

If your life is truly out of balance it can never reach momentum. No momentum, no speed.

This is obvious stuff! Get your life balanced.

There are several more analogies I can insert here. But I think I will just use a real world example instead. Chick-fil-a closes on Sundays. It has the most fierce competition, but continues to thrive. When an entire company shows up every Monday rested and ready to serve their guest as they do. You really don't stand a chance. Oh sure, you can try to do a "knock-off / wannabe" country chicken sandwich. But it won't work. Your staff has NOTHING to look forward to weekly as a team. But Chick-fil-a does. One of those corporate "do what you want on Sundays" "find your SWIM" encouragements. Chick-fil-a has a brilliant lead over every other fast food restaurant and it is closed on Sundays. Enough said.

Bonus Chapter: SWIMMING in Holy Water

“If a man finds his SWIM to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.” {Martin Luther King}

[Spoiler alert!] Skip this section. I recorded these thoughts for people who actually know me. Feel free to skip. No feelings hurt. But if we ever meet, become friends, and choose to team up on life projects together then you should know this stuff. Also if the idea of having a God created soul is offensive to you then just go to the next chapter. **[End spoiler alert]**

I can hear you right now. “Money is the root of all evil.
So why should I pursue this work/play dream life that I get paid to live. I don’t want money to make me evil.”

Well SWIMMING is not always about money.

There are many examples like,
Mother Teresa
Gandi
My Grandparents

A relationship with God or a lack of a relationship with God can be a real hindrance to a fulfilled life.

For one,
If you have a relationship with God then you become subject to all sorts of do’s and don’ts that men say you have to stick to. Not only that, but you have to deal with all of these “off limits” and downright mind tricks created and wrongly taught by society on this topic. On top of that, whatever weirdness on the subject that is out there, is perpetually misinformed by the media, professors and the general public. And they never have a genuine interest in you obtaining your personal best. Even preachers and well meaning religious “people” get this wrong more often than not.

Here are a few things I’ve had to deal with that are just plain wrong.

For examples: *A Holy life is always full of suffering.*

or

I should give everything I have to the poor.

or

You will loose your family and soul if you pursue greatness or money.

What a lie! What a great lie actually. If you want people to just die as lemmings never accomplishing anything for their fellow man. Never shinning in the world. A lie that is an easy excuse, easy to accept and easy to pass along. But downright evil to instill into your OWN children!

REALLY ?

Joe Polish says, "That the best way to help the poor is to not become one!"

And

Peter Daniels says, "If you want to help the poor, start some corporations and give people jobs!"

He also says, "The best helping hand is the one at the end of your arm!"

Now on the opposite side if you don't have a relationship with God you are missing out on an enormous source of energy. I will list just a few.

Ancient wisdom.

A purpose.

The gift of Joy.

And most important - Hope!

But on the upside you get to think that you are your own God. That you are smarter than everyone else. The captain of your own destiny. A genetic evolution of perfection. You are the ultimate natural selection. And thus viewed by scientist as knowledgeable. (Well, not all scientist)

(ugh! Now that I have written those down I really would not want ANY of them. I'm not seeing the allure.)

And still with either choice of how you approach God you get to deal with adversarial views of the opposite opinion. What a waste of energy and time. No wonder it can be easier to just ignore it all and die on the inside. Who wants to SWIM anyways?

However you deal with God is your relationship. So yup... In this world you are damned if you talk to God and damned if you don't. I can understand both points of view. Just don't let too many people affect your relationship with him. Keep it personal. Ignore him or embrace him. Deny his very existence or walk with hope. Whichever suits you, may you find your SWIM.

In my personal life I thrive off of the hope. Love the joy I have. Accept the miracles. And

embrace all of the ancient wisdom I can get.

So God, "How's it going?"

That didn't seem like much did it? But for everything I get in return it doesn't really seem fair. All I did was acknowledge Him. Nothing more than waving to a friend across a crowded party room. Hey God! I see you! And "What's up?"

Get in return? What do you mean, Brad?

Awe ok,

If I would like a little insight into my DREAM / SWIM life, then that is all he ask me to do.

"acknowledge". He kind of knows the path better than anyone when it comes to finding my SWIM. So I found out I would rather have his insights and advice than anyone else's.

From the ancient wisdom;

"In all your ways acknowledge God, And He shall direct your paths." {King Solomon}

I think the key word there is "acknowledge" No bowing down, no massive alter, nothing crazy.

Just being mindful he is there and wanting his input with a "What's up?" And then He will help make things go straight! Awesome. I would like to avoid any dead ends or wrong turns.

Cool. Easy decision for me. I'm going to go with it. I think I will spend the rest of my life saying thank you.

Because when I finally expire, Whatever I have done with my life is what I traded my life for. I choose to be my best. I choose to SWIM.

Especially in regards to my wife and relationships, but that's a different book!

My goal for this chapter was not to persuade you one way or another, in regards to God. But to encourage the few who see things the way I see them. And for those few I hope that one day you will cross the streets of gold to say thanks. "I'm here because you showed me a life of joy. You pursued life in a manner as to win the race. You walked with God. You showed me how to SWIM."

So, for what this may do for your SWIM, here is a gathering of thoughts that have helped me and inspired me.

"Let your light shine so that men may see your good deeds and praise your God."

(instructions on how to work by Jesus recorded by Mr. Mathew)

“SHINE” that’s a good word. Are you shining? You should be. You will be. Because “stars” shine.

“SEE” that’s another good word. That suggests that you are doing something that can be seen. Something worth seeing. Like a well swept street.

So this relationship with God has some perks right. One is on your death day. It’s Heaven. An amazing place that we accept is there completely by faith. Right? You do believe it is there don’t you? Prove it! Prove you believe it is there with you actions. Your life. Your faith.

Do you see that the “faith” you have, IS the proof. Hmmm, Then obviously, if you are honest, you can see there will be many opportunities in your life to take steps of faith. At least the most important part of your life. The “what do you do for a living ” part. Right? So you believe you are saved by faith, but you live grasping to every bit of security you can cling too! Lck! I hate hypocritical living! Risk something in pursuit of your SWIM. Take a step of faith. If for no other reason, than to have at least a little evidence that you believe in faith. Because without evidence that you took some risk based on your faith no one would know you have ANY! And no one would give you credit or believe you! So when you try to suggest a wonderful life that will climax in your arrival in heaven as a reward of faith. Pooh! No one believes it.

“That in doing good you will shut the mouths of ignorant men.”
{instructions on how to conduct yourself in the workplace from Mr. Peter}

Boy, I know some of them! There are a bunch of idiots out there. But it does me no good to talk to them.

“But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.” {instructions and suggestions to Titus from Mr. Paul}

aaaah. I’m into profit. So I guess I will avoid the arguments then?

or

“Do not give dogs your top secret cheat codes. And do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces. {Brad Strickland version of instructions on giving advice from Jesus recorded by Mr. Matthew.}

I simply hate the idea of helping people. I am paranoid. I lost a friend early in life. He had just become a Texas State Trooper. He stopped while off duty to help at a crash scene. It was 2:00 am as he approached one of the victims. She told him that she was fine but the other guy was crazy. When he approached the other victim he turned around and shot him in the face at 2 feet away. Not fair.

I try to be “moved” to help people. In my mind everyone is a dog that will take your help and then turn on you. I know that this is not the “help mankind” way, but we have all been stung before.

When I help someone (Because I do. I love giving.) I look for signs of teeth. As in being a wolf. The first sign to me is laziness, complaints or whining over circumstance. Well, actually any of these would be enough.

“of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.” {instructions on spotting dogs from Jesus}

When my haters see me in action they do have to shut their mouths. Sometimes in silent awe. I love it. I love my work so much that it baffles others just to watch me in action.

“It looked like you were having so much fun that I just HAD to come and watch you work.” { a former boss}

But there is a time before you get the chance to perform that is harsh. It is during this time period that those who hate you can be challenging. Haters say all sorts of stuff. All talk and no action. And there talk is cheap because they don't do anything. Complaints, criticisms and “cursing the darkness” with all of the focused on you. Well I really like what Coco Chanel said about this.

“I don't care what you think about me. I don't think about you at all.” {Coco Chanel}

Okay moving on. Back to SWIMMING in Holy Water.

“Give and it will be given to you sifted, patted down and overflowing into your lap.”
{Instructions from Jesus about giving.} [Note: a perfect formula for an entrepreneurial start up.]

I really want this one!

Joe Polish loves to use this also. He constantly points out the “law of reciprocity”. One of my favorite marketing books “Pink Spoon Marketing” is completely based on this also. The idea that the “FREE” sample of ice cream in a little pink spoon brings in big returns in ice cream sales.

I love the visual that these instructions create. Me sitting there with a straight back and both hands held out close together. While someone is stacking bricks of \$100 dollar bills in my hands as high as they can. But not stopping until a few bricks fall into my lap. NICE! So what have I got to give? My time? Advice? Love? Encouragement? Man whatever I have I need to get this scenario stated! I need to be giving it out.

“Live so well that even your enemies must praise your God. “ {Mr. Peter}

I hate that guy, but man he can design!
I hate that woman, but her ledgers are ALWAYS perfect.
I hate that doctor, but he researches tirelessly for a cure for my son.
I hate that man, but when he sweeps a street it's perfection.
Getting it?

“Do everything as unto the Lord. “ { Mr Paul writing to some holy and faithful people }

I have had to explain to a couple of bosses I've had, that I do my work to the level I do, because I treat my work as if God himself were going to double check it. I do that as my way of saying thank you for letting me live.

“In the same way, let your light shine in front of others. Then they will see the good things you do. And they will praise your Father who is in heaven.” {Instruction on how to SWIM from Jesus}

Basically, whatever you do in life do it with passion and do a little better than your best.

So sorry I have to include this entire parable. But I really want to point out the first guy!
And so for the few who have never heard this story.... Enjoy.

Oh! A few things to help make the story a little clearer.

- 1) A talent.... hmm think about it like 10 grand.
- 2) “a long time” think about this as a 2 years period.
- 3) “servants” = employees.

Alright. That's it. Begin.

The Parable

Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his

property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Ohooooooo that's NOT good! "weeping and gnashing of teeth." YUCK!

WOW. I'm not even interested in talking about that guy! Who I am interested in talking about is the first guy who doubled up! Seriously, he did it "at once"! WHAT?

"At Once"?

How do you do ANYTHING "at once"?

Well, I love this first guy and have thought about him and his actions for awhile. So here is what he must have done.

The First Guy.

First thing, Anticipate.

He had to be anticipating greatness in his life. A knowing that the boss would one day hand him the opportunity. So obviously he has been in this position before.

We could learn from him. We could start anticipating greatness in our own lives.

Second, Prepared.

This dude was prepared. Obviously, to the point of simply going to a filing cabinet and pulling out the appropriate folder. One mark \$10,000 another \$50,000 or even \$100,000

Maybe even organized by time frames or summer/winter opportunities. These folders must have contained all the info to complete the task. Info like team members, Suppliers, Logos, websites, real estate locations, software, etc. Not only did he have these folders ready he had executed these plans before. Maybe on behalf of his mentor/boss or maybe just in his head.

Either way when he contacted the team there was no hesitation on their parts. In other words they knew this guy made things happen. Whatever buy low, sell high routine he was doing.

Third Action.

The action was immediate. No waiting. No paralysis by analysis here. As if he had done it a dozen times before. Complete comfort in the lead role. Total confidence in his chosen folder.

Confidence only comes from knowledge. Complete knowledge. He knew he wouldn't fail. He was so quick that he didn't even take all of the allotted time. This is the guy we all want to be.

His complete knowledge reminds me of Mrs. Spanx. [Sara Blakely] Once she discovered her SWIM she dove into educating herself to the level of expert in the manufacturing of pantyhose. Just like an older neighbor of mine once did the same thing with metallurgy. He was the accountant and the boss said to get everything ready to close down. That he was ready to retire. Because my neighbor knew the books and that the company made a profit, he quickly spoke up and said he would like to buy it. The boss said fine. So he went to the library and got the 4 biggest books on the subject and spent the next five days reading them. When he emerged he felt ready to guide the ship. There was still more to learn, but he knew he knew more than the staff and the customers. Like Tony Robbins said, "What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail."

Well that is it.

Bonus Chapter 2 Almost SWIMMING

Just read "Acres of Diamonds" by Russell Conwell

The whole book is about lost opportunities. Lost opportunities with your skills, desires, passions and obviously your life SWIM. It's free on the Gutenberg.org website.

And now a passage from "[Acres of Diamonds](#)"

But I need another illustration. I found it in Massachusetts, and I am sorry I did because that is the state I came from. This young man in Massachusetts furnishes just another phase of my thought. He went to Yale College and studied mines and mining, and became adept as a mining engineer. He was employed by the authorities of the university to train students who were behind in their classes. During his senior year he earned \$15 a week for doing that work. When he graduated they raised his pay from \$15 to \$45 a week, and offered him a professorship, and as soon as they did he went right home to his mother.

_ "If they had raised that boy's pay from \$15 to \$15.60 he would have stayed and been proud of the place, but when they put it up to \$45 at one leap, he said, "Mother, I won't work for \$45 a week. The idea of a man with a brain like mine working for \$45 a week!_ Let's go out in California and stake out gold-mines and silver-mines, and be immensely rich."

Said his mother, "Now, Charlie, it is just as well to be happy as it is to be rich."

"Yes," said Charlie, "but it is just as well to be rich and happy, too." And they were both right about it. As he was an only son and she a widow, of course he had his way. They always do.

They sold out in Massachusetts, and instead of going to California they went to Wisconsin, where he went into the employ of the Superior Copper Mining Company at \$15 a week again, but with the proviso in his contract that he should have an interest in any mines he should discover for the company. I don't believe he ever discovered a mine, and if I am looking in the face of any stockholder of that copper company you wish he had

discovered something or other. I have friends who are not here because they could not afford a ticket, who did have stock in that company at the time this young man was employed there. This young man went out there, and I have not heard a word from him. I don't know what became of him, and I don't know whether he found any mines or not, but I don't believe he ever did.

But I do know the other end of the line. He had scarcely gotten out of the old homestead before the succeeding owner went out to dig potatoes. The potatoes were already growing in the ground when he bought the farm, and as the old farmer was bringing in a basket of potatoes it hugged very tight between the ends of the stone fence. You know in Massachusetts our farms are nearly all stone wall. There you are obliged to be very economical of front gateways in order to have some place to put the stone. When that basket hugged so tight he set it down on the ground, and then dragged on one side, and pulled on the other side, and as he was dragging that basket through, this farmer noticed in the upper and outer corner of that stone wall, right next to the gate, a block of native silver eight inches square. That professor of mines, mining, and mineralogy who knew so much about the subject that he would not work for \$45 a week, when he sold that homestead in Massachusetts sat right on that silver to make the bargain. He was born on that homestead, was brought up there, and had gone back and forth rubbing the stone with his sleeve until it reflected his countenance, and seemed to say, "Here is a hundred thousand dollars right down here just for the taking." But he would not take it. It was in a home in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and there was no silver there, all away off--well, I don't know where, and he did not, but somewhere else, and he was a professor of mineralogy.

My friends, that mistake is very universally made...

And now you should read the entire book!

I hope that you get the message. Who you are and where you are is all you need. Hopefully, by now you understand what your SWIM is and that you really can change your whole life. It starts with just moving in that direction and going as far as you can that day, that hour, that fifteen minutes. The rewards in life will follow. They can be an inner happiness, worldly riches, abundance of friends, a great name with influence, or all of them.

"the money was a happy byproduct of the work, not the motive for it." {Walt Disney}

I have completely experienced what Walt and Russell Conwell are saying. It happened to me with my first college drafting instructor Mr. Horton. Of course, I loved drafting and so I sat right in front of his desk. Over the semester we became friends and he started to challenge me on life issues. Just a little bit, not too crazy or anything, but more than I had ever had from any other teacher. Well, the next semester came around and I took Drafting 2 which he taught also. So as before, my mentor taught me drafting along with challenging me on eternal things. This guy is really cool for being a stuffy college professor I thought. At the end of that semester Mr. Horton asked me if I would like to be the lab assistant. Heck ya! And get a set of keys and stuff. I loved the idea and told him "yes" right away. He said, "Great, Meet me in my office after class." I was so pleased as the idea was maturing in my mind. Hey, I can put this on my resume, I can see what the other classes are working on, I can be in charge.

All I could see was up side! So class ended and we met up in his office. I was already aware of the lab and what was expected from me from the time I had spent in there. Of course, he went over everything anyway and then he slid me a key and told me that Tuesdays and Thursday would be my schedule.

"Wow! Am I on my way or what!" I thought as I started to head out. But just as I got to the door Mr. Horton said, "Hey Brad. By the way the job pays minimum wage." PAY!!!!!! What? You are going to PAY me also! You have got to be kidding me!

An absolute clear sign of my SWIM. Doing it for free.

This story may have fit better in a different chapter, but I just felt like sharing it here. I could have had a completely different attitude and "lost" the opportunity. I tell you right now that I believe, because I took the opportunity then, that several years later I was offered the Autocad instructor position. Again I took the opportunity to teach. Again I became good friends with the department chairman. But deep down I really liked the idea of being reunited with my first college drafting teacher who was now Doctor Horton the night dean.

A few other examples of lost opportunity are easier to demonstrate with companies. But the concept exist also with your skills, passions and your life SWIM.

Coke should have been Gatorade,
Coke should have been Red Bull (oops 2nd opportunity missed!)
American Express should have been Paypal
Folgers should have been Starbucks
BookStop should have been Amazon
Disney should have been MyCastleParty (okay, just give me time) (No I'm serious. You

would not believe what I am up to.)

Already SWIMMING - A final request.

Hey SWIMMERS!

So you are there. You are SWIMMING where you were meant to SWIM. And you love what you do! I hope this book touches you in several ways, and I would like to encourage you to help a few others. Before you say “Oh sure. Whatever.” Other people give up too easy. Or they just don’t have it in them to persevere the hunt for their SWIM. Hold on. I’m not asking you to share on their behalf. There really are those who have been beaten down like an old dog and they just can’t see themselves anywhere other than the puddle they are in. What I am really asking is for you to share and encourage them for your benefit. Everyone knows that you learn most when you are teaching. And I know this is true when I was teaching autocad at the college. Students would ask me questions and I would have to find out the answers FAST! So who was really benefiting? The teacher of course! Which would be you if you would actively look for a protégé. Go ahead write down 5 names right now.

But why? Because the world will be better with “Street sweepers” who have passion.

Consider one of my favorite movies of all times.

It is a story about a two time world champion. He already has two rings on his fingers. He got them because he loved to train. Not for the glory, fame or money. His SWIM was to bring out the best in his athletes. Throughout the whole movie, the focus is on the athlete. No one I have discussed this movie with has noticed the movie is really about the coach’s passion. With his wisdom, he *discovers* a new champion in the most unusual place. So unusual is his new champion that he is willing to risk EVERYTHING to train him. His protégé, his fame, his name, his reputation and even the glory of his previous athletes. His commitment to bringing out the best in this most unusually athlete pushes HIS very own talents as a master coach. He has to dig deep inside to find what it will take to get the results. He is clearly blazing new ground with this masterpiece of coaching genius. So much so that he even develops personal new skills and motivations to work with his understudy. His passion for coaching and his belief in this athlete are climaxed in the film when his very marriage is strained and his pupil becomes deathly ill. And at the moment just before the athlete passes away, Farmer Hoggett dances for the little pig. Getting so caught up in the moment that he loses all track of time and place in his efforts. Only to later find that he has created an unwanted audience of common farm animals. But it worked. Champion once again.

Babe

Watch it again. And see if you wouldn’t aspire to having a masterpiece in your own life. As in

the movie the credit will come to you. Your push forward and your success will hush the crowds of naysayers. Do it because you love it. SWIM.

The end.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Brad Strickland is the founder and CEO of My Castle Party and BoMoSo Buildings and Architecture. He is one of the top creative thinkers in the world.

At age 14 Brad drew his first set of house plans. By himself, he went to city hall and pulled the building permit.

After 4 years of being a busboy, Brad paid cash for his first house at the age of 20.

Brad was blessed with boundless motivation that he shares endlessly.

He has dedicated himself to inspiring the best out of everyone through his companies, designs and books.

Through his efforts Brad has appeared on television and consulted with celebrities. His clients have included large companies and nonprofits.

His entrepreneurial philosophy of “Brain over Budget” permeates throughout all of his talks and speeches.

Brad has been married to his first and original wife,

Susan Strickland, for over 23 years. They have 3 children and live in League City, Texas.

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