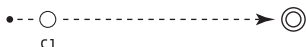


CHAPTER ONE

FINDING YOUR PATH

IT ALL STARTS WITH
THREE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS



If you don't know where
you're going, any road
will get you there.

—ALICE IN WONDERLAND

There I was, standing on a mountaintop, staring down a steep slope and preparing to risk my life for the sake of a sport.

My master plan was to hurtle my body down the Inrun, a world-renowned freestyle ski run in the French Alps. After travelling through a 150-foot track of snow with a pitch of about 28 degrees, I would hit a jump at 70 kilometres per hour, and then throw myself into the air to fly through space for another 150 feet. The grand finale would be to land on the ground with all body parts intact.

Hopefully.

Back then it was all in a day's work. But even as I contemplated what was to come, I couldn't help but ask myself, "Why?"

Why am I doing this? Wouldn't it be easier to sell shoes or vacuums or, at the very least, to get a desk job?

IS IT TIME FOR YOU TO ASK THE THREE BIG QUESTIONS?

Everyone has moments when they begin to ask themselves some interesting questions about what they are doing with their lives. Freestyle skiing maneuvers can be quite efficient in provoking thoughts about the deeper meaning of life, but chances are that most of you will be prodded to this confrontation by some other means or event. Life circumstances, a particular stage of life, hardships, or even a celebratory, mountain-top experience can all drive you to shout the age-old question, "Why?"

It doesn't really matter what the specific circumstances and situations are. In all my years of coaching individuals,

I have realized that the one common denominator that links them all is a deep, inner desire to find the answer to life's three essential questions:

What is my purpose for living?

What will be my mission in this life?

What will be the vision for my life?

These are the three big questions. At some time or in some circumstance, these three questions will find each of us and, when they do, they will consume our every thought, word and action. Suddenly, we will experience an unspoken desire for a life of purpose, an innate need to do something that matters and a deeply-held dream that will constantly percolate within our hearts and minds.

Have you now come to that point? Are you ready to answer the three big questions that everyone asks sooner or later?

If so, then you're about to embark on a life-changing process that has the potential to lead you into a myriad of different life adventures. As you honestly evaluate and answer these questions, you will begin to more fully experience the journey you are presently on, or perhaps even find yourself taking the first steps of a new journey that will bring unimagined and incomparable meaning to everything you are, everything you do and everything for which you hope.

INTEGRATION IS THE KEY

You may have already prepared a purpose or mission statement, and may already have a vision of the direction that you want for your life. There are plenty of books that discuss each of these concepts and can quite capably lead you on a process to create a distinct purpose, mission and vision statement. But treating each statement as a separate commodity isn't enough to unleash the very real and transforming power that exists in knowing your life purpose, mission and vision.

That's why this book will lead you through an integrated and interactive process of discovery. You will consider each of these questions as separate yet highly-integrated queries, and your answer to one question will inform, honour and impact your response to the next. Answering these three questions in relation to one another is the only way to achieve a truly balanced, satisfying and fully-integrated life.

This process necessarily begins with understanding your distinct sense of purpose. If you know that purpose, then developing a clear mission statement that describes what you love and what you do well is a natural process. And, once you know your purpose and mission, a clear vision will often spontaneously take shape, thereby leading you to your future path.

Conversely, a vision or mission statement that hasn't been considered in relation to purpose is functionally irrelevant. If one's vision hasn't been informed by one's life purpose and the meaning that underscores one's life, then

the resulting statements can contradict one another and produce a non-focussed, disparate approach to life. No one can function at their best if they are attempting to achieve something while an unanswered inner voice is whispering doubts about why they are even doing it.

It is thus imperative that the ideas of purpose, mission and vision inform one another. That's why this book has been designed to lead you through a process of thinking through each of these questions independently, while never losing sight of the reality of their inter-connected nature and purpose.

**WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE
EXPECTING . . . A TRANSFORMED LIFE**

One of three things will occur in your life as you work through these questions:

1) *Some of you will uncover* that a life purpose, mission and vision is already operating, at least to some extent, in your lives. You may already be very close to living the life that you have been designed for, but you may not even be aware of that good fit. If so, these exercises will validate what you may already know or suspect to be true.

2) *Some of you will recover* a purpose that you once had for life, but has since slipped away. When you are in touch with “who you are meant to be” and actively living out your life purpose, it's easy to get passionate about what you are doing. Conversely, it's easy to lose your passion if you aren't doing “what you were meant to do.” If you have lost your

passion, this process can help to restore your focus on what is most important to you.

3) *Some of you will discover the concepts of purpose, mission and vision for the first time and will be moved to embrace the passion that burns deep inside of you. As you do, you will move towards living the purpose-filled, mission-driven and vision-directed life that you've always dreamt of.*

THE PATH AHEAD

This process begins with the discovery of purpose, then provides the basis for clearly expressing one's mission and then, ultimately, culminates in the creation of a clear and over-arching vision. As you reflect upon and draw closer to answering these three questions, you will find that hope will replace any sense of hopelessness you may now feel, and direction will replace any restlessness or aimlessness. In fact, you may even gain some confidence and motivation for the path ahead by taking time now to consider the purpose, mission and vision of this book:

The purpose of this book is to give you hope by telling you that your life is important and that you can make a difference in ways you have not yet imagined.

The mission of this book is to give you a process and tools that will help you to answer the three questions, so you can begin an adventure that will shape everything you do.

The vision of this book is to help millions of people—just like you—to know a deep sense of meaning for their lives that clarifies everything they do.

