



Live Your. Possible

*Ignite Your Happy, Authentic Self
and Live a Fulfilling Life Rooted in Joy,
Inclusion, Love and Possibilities!*

By Darrin Tulley
Ignite Happy

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Chapter 6



Purpose-Driven Beliefs: Inviting the World In (First Step to P.o.s.s.i.b.l.e.)



*Don't settle, become vibrant
and thrive.*

Hello Future Self

At the intersection of **H**appiness and **I**nclusion, humans ignite. It is when we can say “H.I.” to our future self. When we feel as though we belong and are ready to help others belong, we grasp we are possible as our unique self, embracing happiness as we define it and taking intentional steps to be ever-present and a habit. As we deeply explore ourselves and begin to practice inclusion, our brain will grow new skills and retrain our brain in new ways with intentional practices that enable new connections within ourselves, and then allow us to be vulnerable, connecting to what brings us the most joy. The “happy hippo” strategy we learned gives us an avenue to connect, where we can begin to intersect our similarities with a sense of calmness to understanding and welcoming the differences in front of us.

This chapter will focus on the first step on your path to **P**.O.S.S.I.B.L.E. To effectively sync with others’ commonalities and differences, we need to establish and understand who we truly are. Once we do that, we stop pushing things aside and gain clarity on how to invite the world in. Our minds begin to declutter and open up around us, and we can connect to something bigger than ourselves: our **Purpose-driven beliefs**.

I am often asked, “what do you mean by ‘beliefs?’” I am referring to the things that spark you and that open you to the world and invite you to see others in a positive light. In this chapter, you’ll explore every aspect of your beliefs, learn how you can better live them, and receive tools to hold yourself accountable.

Rainbow Connection

I am so excited for you and the world around you as you start to believe and take courageous steps in your life. We will begin to build our foundation of will and alignment of self. Where you put your attention and focus, your behaviors and actions will follow.

As you read through this chapter, I urge you to inspect what your beliefs are and what is ingrained in you and to try to see within a positive light rather than a negative one. You won’t be as open to growing if you see things in a negative light, and moreover, negativity works against an inclusive mindset. It takes intentional focus and purposeful steps to expand outside our own little

bubbles we hide within. I believe when our beliefs are aligned to the greater good, our world expands beyond comprehension.

Ever hear the song “Rainbow Connection” from Kermit, the Frog? I know I said this book is not about rainbows; however, this song has a powerful connection. For example, let’s check the meaning from one of my favorite lines where Kermit sings, “Somebody thought of that... And someone believed it...look what it’s done so far.”

I love this reference for the mere fact that, as humans, we have the intelligence and capability to see and create new things right in front of us at the intersection of our current and future realities. We can bring dreams to reality.

Thank goodness for that happy hippocampus that enables us to do this -) We need to practice using it differently. I now tend to believe almost anything is possible if we put our mind and effort into it.

***“Happiness is a skill. We all can train and work on it.
It is not just with positivity, it takes positive action.”***
— Katarina Blom¹

Take a Pause and Reflect: Take a listen to the “Rainbow Connection” song for a minute. Take a breath. Listen again without thinking it is Kermit and listen to the words as if your future self was singing to you. What resonates with you and gets you thinking?



As a reminder, we all interpret music differently because words have different meanings depending on where we are in life and how our mind has stored memories that get stirred up from music. In fact, I listen to songs many times over, and the meaning often changes over time. I even hear things differently as I change or words that I never connected to previously until I was ready to. This is normal; no one meaning is perfect. It is yours and your connection that matters.

One other tip we will expand on down the path: as we advance, try to allow yourself to look at life with kid eyes filled with wonder. Listening to Kermit and hearing about references to kid movies and other childlike references are purposeful concepts in this book to spark connections that likely have been quieted or dimmed over time too. Some amazing lessons will help you uncover what you are not allowing yourself to see today. Thank you for being silly with me at times and letting the kid inside each of us come out and play.

There are signs of happiness for each of us in our corners of the world to seek out and soak in.

No More “It Is What It Is”

Do you believe in yourself? This is important to you and everyone around you. It all really starts here. Imagine how hard it is to make progress, grow or improve if we are unsure of ourselves to deliver or accomplish things in life. We tend to not give ourselves enough credit each day for all that we do. We need to recognize any or all of our successes on a given day and build on them. Take a minute to answer a few questions to gauge the current belief you have in yourself. Also, consider these initial ideas while you build up the beliefs and trust in yourself throughout the remainder of this book. Creating a bigger belief in yourself is one of the intended outcomes you will experience.

How do you answer these questions?	If you answer no, consider these ideas when you experience in life:
When you're confronted with a new project or opportunity, do you generally jump to thinking you can easily handle it?	Stop saying "I can't" and begin saying, "I can do this" (Chapter 9). Then, identify what strengths you have that will help you succeed (exercise on page 154) and commit to self to either skill up (Chapter 8) where necessary or openly leverage other people (Chapter 5) with essential skills to fill the gaps.
When you have a setback, do you see it as a learning opportunity?	Try turning your mindset to be more curious and less judgmental (Chapter 7). Embrace learning from successes, mistakes, and perceived failures (Chapter 8). Develop resilience to handle setbacks (Chapter 9).
Do you follow through in your commitments or at least make a valid effort to?	Trusting others begins with building trust for ourselves (Chapter 9). Make honest efforts in all the commitments you make to yourself and others. If unable to act, have real conversations to modify promises to make sense where you can serve.
When you complete tasks or projects, do you look at the results primarily to what didn't work well vs. what did?	List out all the things you did to contribute and value first before seeking out improvement areas in a positive light to consider ways to improve for next time. Life is a continuous learning loop to embrace where we keep getting better and stronger.

I believe in you -) and need you to believe in you. Believe you can and follow through with holding yourself accountable. Start with the contract we each made with ourselves in Chapter 3 and see it through. Be open to what could happen and believe. Theodore Roosevelt said, "Believe you can, and you're halfway there." I like that, yet I will simplify in my view. If you don't believe in yourself, it's hard to have the backbone, confidence, or courage to tackle what you are capable of in life. In my case, it was always in me to believe that I could achieve and act in alignment with what lights me up. I didn't know or understand that until I truly persevered through all the trials and tribulations.

Believing in yourself is inside you. Due to your identity, background, or life experiences, believing in yourself may take more work—however, it can be done. I want you to know you are possible too. Many of us lack the confidence to believe because we were brought up in unsupportive

households or have experiences with being dismissed or treated differently based on the color of our skin, gender, association, or orientation. We are who we are today, yet this whole book is about reshaping to what you indeed can be—and want to be.

Many people challenge me—“As a white guy, why would you want to be a face for inclusion and happiness?” 100% of people that say this to me look similar to me, while 100% of people most unlike me say things like, “We need more people like you vulnerably sharing your voice and stories” in the spirit of encouraging and backing up people stepping up to speak their truth. We need our collective voices together with “all hands on deck” to achieve a more inclusive and accepting society. I am in this with you. All of you! We will build the confidence to believe more in ourselves and others.

It is up to each of us to believe we can live more actively and less passively and stop defaulting to “it is what it is” or “it just is.” To me, settling in a place where you are stuck or accepting mediocrity is not good enough, especially if you want to find true happiness.

“To succeed, we must first believe that we can.”

— Nikos Kazantzakis

Knowing My Secret Sauce

There is much potential and beauty in all of us waiting to be unleashed.

People are pressured to conform to societal and cultural norms; meanwhile, companies strive to bring their uniqueness to differentiate themselves from their competition. It seems like a contradiction that may limit our individual potential.

Let’s find your **Secret Sauce**. List out what makes you unique in the following chart (you can write directly in this book or sketch the same chart onto your own piece of paper or tablet).

Make a list of the items that describe you at your best, what you are most passionate about, and note your strengths. Review this list daily and assess for 7-10 days. Modify your lists as needed to reflect your true self.

Words and attributes that describe me at my best:	What brings me the most passion in life, excites me:	Strengths I bring to relationships and work:

Ask others what they love about you the most, or what they see when you are at your best? Things you do or how you act with other people are good ones too.

Think of a time when you were the most excited while working on or exploring something. One where your interest level expanded beyond comprehension.

Ask others what they think your strengths are as a way to learn more about what people think of you. Another way to identify your strengths is reading the Strengthfinders 2.0 book or taking the related survey at www.authentic happiness.com

These will be helpful to build upon as you move forward in this book. I am a big believer in building on our strengths as a way to differentiate in the world AND to influence the foundational beliefs in ourselves too.

Time to Thrive

When I think about where I fit in the world and what I know, I try to imagine “what if” I was born in a different part of the world—I might have a different skin color, be a different gender, have a different sexual orientation, pursue entirely different vocation paths, or look the same in an entirely different culture with different beliefs.

Take a Pause and Reflect: Take a listen to “Dancing Nancies” by the Dave Matthews Band. Whenever I hear this one, it reminds me to always be grateful for what we have and how I could have been born anywhere in the world on a much different path. Think about how this song resonates with

you and what you could have been, what you can be, and begin imagining what it would mean to fully be your authentic self in the world.



To put it differently: who is to say because I was born to think I am better or more right than anyone else with my beliefs. I cannot say that definitively as I realize I could have been in another person's seat or situation and respect their beliefs with the human dignity they deserve as long as it doesn't create harm to others. We are all born as humans with the same rights to happiness and access to opportunities as the next person (another belief of mine). That isn't the way it is today, and I feel we need to get this to be our collective truth and norm. Where you are born impacts who you are, yet it doesn't have to stop you from pursuing what still could be.

Take a Pause and Reflect: Listen to "You Never Know" by the Dave Matthews Band. It seemed dreams were more likely within reach when I was younger. The main idea of the song tells us that dreams are meant to be lived out, not stuck in our heads. In what ways do you connect with this song and what dreams should you pursue?



Don't settle, become vibrant and thrive. We never know what we can become until we try. Live out your dreams, not somebody else's.

***"Use your signature strengths and virtues
in the service of something much larger than you are."***

— Martin Seligman²

Shine a Light On It

Let's move outwardly to how we interact in the world with our beliefs.

- Do you have and know the beliefs that you live for every day?
- Do you know what beliefs make you happy and what connections in the world trigger your happiness?
- Do your beliefs support positive connections?
- Do your energy, strengths, and actions support your beliefs?
- Do you spend more of your energy on the negative beliefs or positive ones?
- Do you share what your beliefs are?
- Do your day-to-day decisions and actions support your beliefs, or run contrary to them?
- Do you do things to improve yourself and strengthen some of your beliefs?

Mahatma Gandhi famously said, "to believe in something, and not to live it, is dishonest." That is a tough message to accept and to own. Plus, it highlights the importance of what you declare as your beliefs. Many people feeling stuck in an unhappy place or wanting better would rather not think about this message. Living your beliefs takes self-exploration, humility, and effort.

Avoidance essentially lets us off the hook of being responsible temporarily, yet it catches up to us over time. We are born with survival skills to fight or flee when times get tough, and this is a core message out of the VitalSmarts' *Crucial Conversations* book where certain conversations are needed to help us achieve what we really want in life. The flight is to run away from danger and was likely intended for avoiding physical harm. In today's times, humans are too often using the flight tactic to pretend things will get better on their own if they ignore the danger long enough. We cannot live out our beliefs or get better unless we shine a light on them and notice it. We need to know our full intentions to properly have these conversations with ourselves or others.

I encourage us all to understand what we believe. Beliefs are ours to own and master; they define us. These beliefs need to be clear so that we

can live them out consistently. Clarity and stability come with being keenly aware of your beliefs. Once you become aware, then you can confidently observe how your actions support these beliefs. It provides an easier, consistent way of life where you align your actions, words, and decisions as one source of truth to your beliefs, enabling you to build meaningful connections. Lack of clarity and intent can cause gaps in human relationships, which can have unintended consequences.

“You’ll see it when you believe it.”

— Wayne Dyer

Inviting the Positive You

I feel it is important to reiterate what I mean by beliefs. I am referring to the things that spark you and that open you to the world and invite you to see others in a positive light. I call these beliefs **“inviting beliefs”** because we open doors with them and not shut people or possibilities out. The most important word in this chapter is **inviting!** Open up yourself and others by living differently this way and leading with **“inviting beliefs.”** Ones that don’t instigate a claim of right or wrong and support the greater good. Living out beliefs not at the expense of others, yet with others.

For example, starting a religious debate is not the kind of belief I am referring to here in this book, which is often divisive from the start. I am also not looking for a full list of every belief you may have either. Start with a few to test and add over time. Think of beliefs that represent your values, ignite you with positive energy, and unleash the soothing happiness inside you while becoming more comfortable connecting with the world in new ways. Having such beliefs includes and invites the world, people, and nature into yours.

There is an upcoming exercise for you to document and begin to think of some beliefs that resonate with you. These can be simple like, I believe in love, I believe in hope, I believe all people have good in them, or I believe in you or other straightforward messages like these.

Take a Pause and Reflect: Listen to Brandon Jenner's song, "I Believe." An uplifting tune giving us hope and simplicity in a complex world. Capture what captures you -) and make note of this for the upcoming exercise.



The key is to understand what represents a bigger you and is worth sharing with others. That way, they can see where you are coming from and understand what you want AND can build on positive interactions with others. It is in us to believe and follow our hearts to a bigger and different path than people can see for each of us.

In the spirit of walking the talk, I am vulnerable with you by providing my top beliefs below to provide additional examples and context. You only need one, as I often live by, "I believe there is a beautiful light inside each of us waiting to be unleashed." The other beliefs I follow contribute to this bright line and guide me to living a fulfilling life in almost everything I do. I am not looking to debate whether my beliefs are right or wrong, superior or inferior in comparison to yours or others' beliefs. (Similarly, you should not see your own beliefs as up for debate or subject to the judgment of others.) I reflect on these daily, adjust and expand my core beliefs through a continuously active mindset.

As you begin this journey, it is not about the number of beliefs that you have. It is more about the conviction you have to specific ones that you implicitly align with. Ones that bring your true self out in this world. As you watch yourself and reflect, allow your actions and experiences to change. Shape the true beliefs that are unique to you.

My Current Sample "Beliefs":

- "I believe there is a beautiful light inside each of us waiting to be unleashed"
- "I believe that there is goodness in every human"
- "I believe in positivity first, and look for the good in most everything"
- "I believe inclusion makes us all better and stronger"

- "I believe in finding my part in things before looking to blame others"
- "I believe the world is filled with opportunities and is not against me"
- "I believe in a continuous growth mindset and constantly feed it"
- "I believe there is an untapped potential in all of us"
- "I believe in people and seeing the good intent before bad execution"
- "I believe anything is possible if I put my mind to it"
- "I believe that I need to believe before I accomplish"
- "I believe there is a kid inside all of us"
- "I believe everyone is deserving of happiness and love"
- "I believe in you"

Remember, society, where we were born, where we grew up, family members, close friends, and people in the communities we live in strongly influence our beliefs. Be aware of that and hold on to your own inviting beliefs that link to who you really are and want to be. Recognize that establishing beliefs different from those around you may be difficult, yet it is essential to identify with your personal belief system. **Be the unique self you are and live life as you see it.**

Living true to our beliefs gives us the responsibility of being aware that others around us are also living as true as they can to theirs. We all must keep in mind and be accepting that people may have different beliefs around us. Take notice and be respectful of differences. Each of us owns that responsibility. Nobody is totally right, and it is on all of us to build off of each other to create real harmony.

The goal of this exercise isn't for everyone to compromise their beliefs. It is meant to find ways to compound. Compromising tends to be where people settle for less than what is possible and where being average or good enough falls to the norm. Compounding beliefs is more of a collaboration with a mutual goal to make it better through the power of synergy and open-mindedness.

Having and knowing beliefs are the first components. How you project and connect them to the world is another important step. Let others know what is driving you to speak to your inviting beliefs. Teach them why it matters to you without telling, yelling, or selling. Be clear, transparent, and

thoughtful. It is hard to resolve something when we are not clear or are misunderstood about where we are coming from. As we take action, our beliefs should be out there, and they should feel inviting. In other words, I am suggesting we vocalize and reinforce with behaviors. For example, one of my beliefs is that “I believe everyone is deserving of happiness and love.” I go out of my way to make decisions and take action so that people can connect with this possibility. It is not about getting people to agree with me. I am sure some people feel not everyone deserves a second chance or to reconnect with happiness, and that it is okay. For me, I feel a spiritual connection to think more broadly, and it keeps me from trying to figure out who is deserving or not. As I just shared, it helps you see where we are coming from and to be aware of when your beliefs are different from others that can open dialogue and collective thinking.

The goal is to do the right thing, get it right and not always be right. Rather than taking sides, we can move to a new place together.

Improving ourselves with better alignment and understanding with our beliefs will help us connect in the world and have a better chance of “getting” the authentic us. This allows us to build a safer place to showcase your uniqueness and special qualities to the world. It is so fulfilling to begin unleashing your potential in alignment with your beliefs positively that is fueled through a continuous growth mindset. Continuous growth then fuels energy and outcomes that will empower you to engage and take actions that you once might have felt impossible.

A growth mindset is always hungry...feed it -)

Mastering My Beliefs

Let’s begin to craft your most important beliefs and values in life. What type of beliefs are we talking about here? Your beliefs might include:

- The right things to do.
- Ones that shine or fill your soul.
- Ones you are passionate about from your heart.

Think of beliefs that ignite you and unleash soothing happiness that is inside you. Write these in as important beliefs. Once done with this column, ask yourself if these are “inviting beliefs” as defined by beliefs that represent

your authentic self, ignite you with positive energy, and welcome the world in for the greater good. Add a note or two on why a belief is inviting and energizing to you. Check out the examples provided in the previous pages and note yours in “I believe...” statements as well.

The trick is to know your beliefs to live by and demonstrate them in everything you do. Walking your talk actually makes life easier. Review what beliefs you live out loud each day over the next 7-10 days. Notice which ones bring you the most joy and positivity. Take note of where you spend your energy and focus. Reflect on this, and feel free to modify these lists as needed based on your experiences and to establish inviting beliefs that light you up.

Identify your top 2-3 “inviting” beliefs from this list to live daily by going forward and continue to practice doing until it becomes you. Adjust your energy, actions, and words to make these come alive for you.

Important Beliefs:	Inviting Beliefs	Note Why Inviting & Energizing to You
I believe...	Yes or No	
I believe...	Yes or No	
I believe...	Yes or No	
I believe...	Yes or No	

Speak YOU

Take a Pause and Reflect: Listen to the words from “Say” by John Mayer. Which lyrics speak to you the most? Listen 2-3 times and see what else you hear the second and third time. List out the important messages that you hear related to the words that pop for you and describe those messages in your own words that best reflect the meaning to you. Pause here to listen and reflect.



For me, this particular song puts so much into perspective and sheds so much light on people all around me. It seems to accurately showcase how normal and relatable words are, like “being alone,” “stuck,” “afraid to speak up,” and “frightened.” Some of these words come to mind even though not explicitly sung in the song. My favorite line is when he encourages the listener to begin taking action. The line is “Do it with a heart wide open, a wide heart, Say what you need to say...” So relevant, so amazing. To me, it also implies putting yourself out there and allowing yourself to be vulnerable.

Speak with purpose and heartfelt meaning. Know what you want and be clear about it. I love every line of this song. Another favorite line is “Knowin’ you’d be better off instead.” To me, this is another way of saying stop taking the same old path or trying what you always have done and assuming your situation will change.

I believe the song’s spirit is gaining the courage to speak up and confront the world. To focus on solutions and to build a new beginning. It encourages us to find our personal integrity. After all, not saying what you need to say is leaving something incomplete, which holds us back from doing what is possible.

The last few lines steal the show for me. They are so amazing; whenever I listen to them. This song has greatly influenced me to speak from my heart and be clear and sincere. People can debate what you think, your opinion, even your beliefs, yet they cannot debate what you feel in your heart. That’s

the key to purposeful beliefs—they are truly connected to your heart and purpose.

“You have to speak your dream out loud”
— Kelly Corrigan

Lasting Legacy You Hope For

Do you ever wonder what people say about you behind your back? How about the words that will be spoken at your funeral? Would people say respectful things out of obligation, or would their words naturally pour out from their hearts? Are the memories you give people ones filled with warmth and happiness? Will these carry on in your legacy or quickly fade away?

What are the words people would use to describe you vs. what you would like to hear? Write down up to (5) words with complete honesty and vulnerability for each and note the differences. Pause here for a minute and self-reflect.

Words I think people would honestly say about me (if they were brutally honest with me):	Words that I would LOVE to hear about me:	Take notice of the similarities AND the differences:

If all of your entries match up, I am impressed. Ask others you trust to provide you what they think they would say about you. If others surprise you by saying more positive things about you than you thought, embrace it and consider building out on what lights you up. If these do not match the other way, it is scary to think how you want to be remembered may differ from the

words you came up with. We can change this misperception or misalignment by doing our part to be transparent and truthful in being every day. Either way, take control of your legacy. You have the pen.

Live By The Beat of Your Drum

Do you know the impact you have on people around you? Do you ever consider your impact before speaking or taking certain actions? Think about how you can affect others by taking notice and being interested in those around you in a different way.

***“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,
[yet] people will never forget how you made them feel”***

— Maya Angelou

Our sub-conscious minds often struggle with making decisions, choosing the right words to say, or knowing which actions to take or not. When we have better clarity around our beliefs, we understand and build trusting relationships as a result.

Now it is time to put all this in alignment with our purpose in life. Having this clarity and understanding simplifies our decisions and actions because we build ourselves to align with our new selves.

***“If you could only sense how important you are
to the lives of those you meet; how important you can be
to the people you may never even dream of;
there is something of yourself that you leave
at every meeting with another person”***

— Fred Rogers³

Do you have a personal purpose statement that is written out? Do you have your north star or blueprint to live out the actions and words that support how you want to be remembered in the eyes of others? Do you want people to get and understand you? Do you want to live out your legacy, so it is clear of your intentions?

Knowing where you are going or how you want to be remembered allows you to live it out in a way that is clear to the world. Every interaction truly counts. Once we know who we are and want to be, we can begin to see all

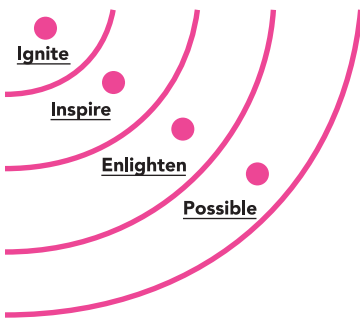
the things in the world we are missing. I equate this to when a speaker at an event or in a meeting is giving a presentation and is aware of her audience. A presenter knows their content to the point the words pour out from their heart, and they take careful notice of the audience to adjust accordingly and serve the audience where they are.

I strongly encourage each of us to fully understand and write out our personal purpose. Even if it is only one word to start, you can add to it as you expand and grow. Please read it to yourself daily and live by it every day until it is ingrained as part of your subconscious self. If you are unclear of the vision you have for yourself, how do you expect the world to understand you? Your actions should mirror your personal purpose—it will help people get you. It is extraordinary what you can accomplish when you understand your beliefs, trust, and align your actions to this personal purpose statement.

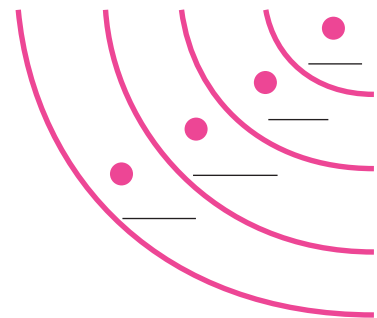
Having direction and trust is knowing where you are going without knowing exactly where you will end up.

Start with one word. Think of this evolution as though you are in a circle that continues to expand outwardly. Start slow and go at the pace that works and speaks to you. Draw a circle with one word in it, then draw another one around that with another word, then another around that until you list out your purpose words. I started by identifying the “my purpose” word one year at a time. My first year was “ignite,” then “inspire” led to “enlighten,” and this year it is the year of “possible” -)

Darrin’s Purpose Words:



Your Purpose Words:



This growth comes from taking risks and putting yourself out there. Experimenting with the word, aligning our actions, learning and modifying

with whom you want to be, and allowing yourself to go there and expand. Try it out. It is fascinating when you start with one word. It starts to appear wherever you are. Did you manifest it, or was it always there? You decide. It's similar to leaving the car dealership with your new car thinking it is unique, and you never see it on the road—until you pull off the lot. On your way home, you see, like, ten of “your” unique car. Where we put our focused mind, the results will appear in time. It will happen time and time again when you allow your mind to focus.

These words may change periodically as you expand your comfort level and learn more clearly what you want, what your purpose is, and the legacy you want to leave behind. For example, in my case, “enlighten” replaced the word “inspire” and even carried over into my full personal purpose statement. Adding words to each new circle and crossing out words less relevant or meaningful after trying them out is evolution and continued growth.

When you are ready, you can form that word or words into a statement to read and live by each day until it goes from doing to being you. My current purpose statement is as follows for your reference (and to hold me accountable):

“My purpose is to enlighten you to the beautiful light inside you, to ignite your happy, authentic self, and to help you live your possible.”

Continue expanding your circle by repeatedly bursting your bubble of comfort. (With kindness, compassion, and that “happy hippo” campus, of course.) Said another way: with an understood purpose, we can have a personal plan and spend our energy focusing on impacting others with our approach. Ideally, we slide our dimmer switch back up for the world to notice and ignite others on the path with us. It is like walking down an old beach path in darkness while the sun slowly rises, illuminating our own path and the paths of those around us — it becomes clearer every step we take.

I check myself against my purpose-driven beliefs every day to learn and adjust accordingly. I need to remain open-minded and objective to see if I am performing the actions and genuinely saying words that support what I want to be remembered by.

A few examples from other people might help illustrate a bit more before we dig deeper into exploring ourselves. I have met so many beautiful

people that I have embraced along my path, and these are only a few of them. I hope to hear what this looks like for you and encourage you to share it with me one day. When we lead with purpose-driven beliefs in harmony with our everyday actions, unique connections and possibilities follow. Here are the examples for reference:

- Mindi Cox, SVP of People & Great Work at O.C. Tanner (<https://www.octanner.com>) leads with “love” as her purpose word and supports her actions with a belief that everyone is able to thrive at work.
- Garry Ridge’s, CEO – WD40 (<https://thelearningmoment.net>), stated purpose as a leader and teacher is to encourage people so we can maximize our opportunities. He believes it is all about his people first or he calls “his tribe.” Another belief is what he refers to everything as learning moments (from successes and mistakes) that creates a safe place for personal growth.
- Nakia Kears, Co-Founder Block Bias (iblockbias.com), has a mission to help people see and overcome bias. She inspires people to go beyond just living and feel as though they truly belong and have a chance to flourish. Not only has she founded Block Bias, Nakia also created a toy company “Create in Color” to design toys creating experiences that promote inclusivity and acceptance around the things that make us unique.

Take a Pause and Reflect: Imagine if you had the sheet of music that represents your purpose and the beauty that you bring to this world. Listen to the beauty of “Unwritten” by Natasha Bedingfield and start writing your song to sing and live by the beat of your own drum.

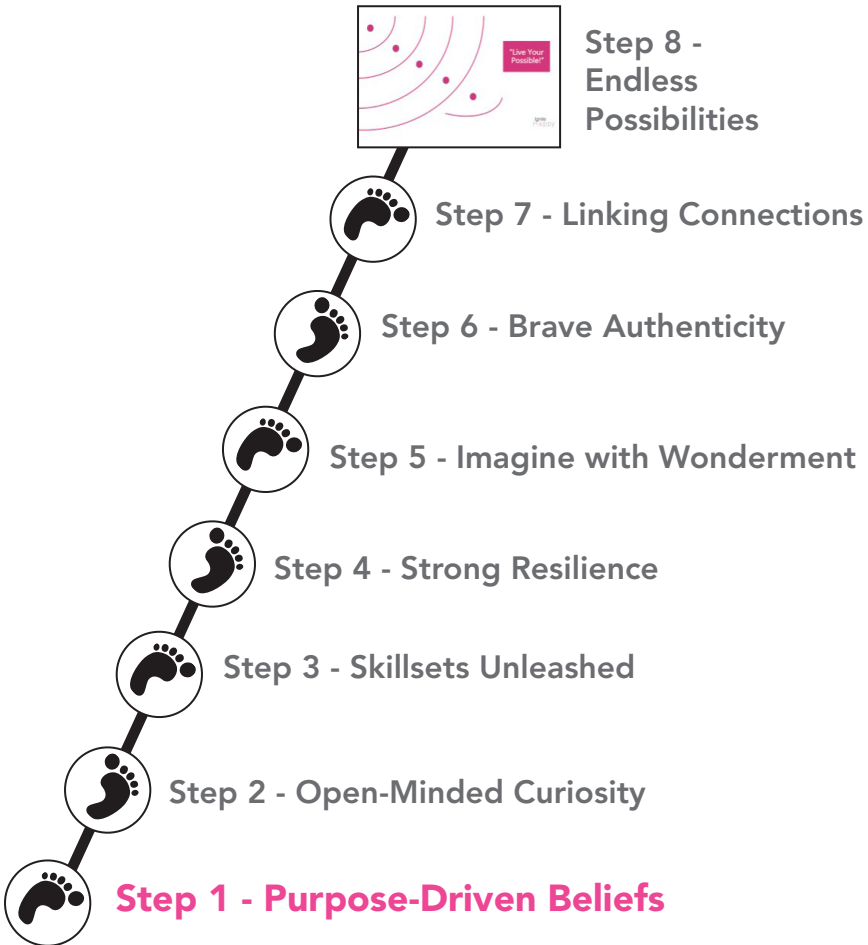


“Living well consists in doing something, not just being in a certain state or condition. It consists in those lifelong activities that actualize the virtues of the rational part of the soul.”
— Richard Kraut, Scholar and Author of “Aristotle’s Ethics”⁴

illuminating Your Path Forward

It's time. Time to take the first steps down your **Path of Possibilities**. Time to discover and document your story to live gloriously. It will be worth the trip. As my son, O.T.'s favorite cheer at the start of little league baseball games goes: **"I am fired up! ... are you fired up?"**

Path of Possibilities:



Starting on the coming pages, there will be a set of questions to help you self-reflect. As you answer the questions honestly throughout the path, it is important to think about the answer that represents how you feel MOST of the time in MOST situations. We are never 100% or perfect, and that is not what the questions are looking for.

Challenge yourself to define where you are to focus on your most meaningful areas to improve and become the person you can become. Healthy self-awareness is the starting point to make yourself even better.

The functional guide, **Path of Possibilities (POP)**, will suggest relevant actions following the question pages specifically for you to choose and tackle over a period of time. These activities directly correlate to your simple yes or no responses to the set of questions along each step of the **POP**. I encourage you to practice each selected action over 15 to 30-day periods (or more as desired). Track your planned actions in the “Personal Action Planner,” (see the template in Chapter 3 or the Resources Section of this book), to help keep you focused and summarize your experiences/learnings in your prescribed path as you go.

The model is established in a lifecycle format that is continuous by design to help you evolve through a prescriptive path as you adjust, grow and experience in real-life situations. Depending on where you are in life, you may need to address multiple actions along the lifecycle before moving forward. You also can focus on the most relevant actions for you and continue forward (you’ll always have the option to return to particular chapters and actions as you see fit). I have provided note pages at the end of each chapter to encourage you to document thoughts that come to mind, note your ideas, emotions, and the progress you make as you move forward.

I believe the **POP** will help you build a foundation and a core set of principles that will set you on a course for living a happier life through a positive lens, while also opening doors to new possibilities that once felt out of reach or had gone unnoticed.



Step 1 – Purpose-driven Beliefs

Let's get to work on the **Path of Possibilities (POP)** and explore our first step. Try to be more honest with yourself than you have ever been. We need your truth in order to effectively move down the path. **Circle your answer** to each **POP** guiding question as a yes or no and **clarify your response** as needed (if not sure, select no):

Guiding Questions	Circle Best Response	Add Notes to Clarify Your Answer
<p>1) Do you do and say things that intentionally follow your beliefs? (when aware of beliefs, you walk the talk and follow through with actions that match your beliefs and also actively monitor to check if your actions are authentic)</p>	Yes or No	
<p>2) Do you take steps to improve yourself to be in alignment with your beliefs? (growth comes from continuously learning, modifying, aligning yourself to what is important to you, being passionate about getting better and making time to do this)</p>	Yes or No	
<p>3) Do you feel people "get you" and perceive you the way your heart wants them to see you? (people important to you understand why you do certain things and talk about you in sync with how you want to be remembered)</p>	Yes or No	
<p>4) Does your larger purpose include intentionally making positive contributions in this world? (gain fulfillment from doing things that help others or organizations to bring the best out of people and situations around them)</p>	Yes or No	



START HERE: If your response to Question #1 **“Do you do and say things that intentionally follow your beliefs?”** is a:

- **MAYBE**, and if you are interested in improving even more in this area for the full experience or **NO**, then continue on this page and identify **Intentional Practice Actions (IPAs)** you plan to try before going to the next page, or you answered
- **YES**, for most of the time and believe you are all set, then move to the next question

IPA #	IPA Idea	Check (X) To Try
1A	Secret Sauce: 1) Circle the biggest strengths you identified as part of your secret sauce. 2) Put a star next to your favorite “inviting beliefs.” 3) Find the commonalities to tie these strengths and “inviting beliefs” together as you reflect your best self out to the world and in future IPAs.	
1B	Outside In: 1) Look from the outside in to monitor yourself at the end of each day. 2) Identify any actions that you took or things you said that went for or against your inviting beliefs. 3) Do more of what worked well and take any steps needed to change into the next day. 4) Note that you may realize that your beliefs may need to change, too, not just your actions.	
1C	Alignment Challenge: Take a 30-day challenge tackling a specific action you would like to align with your beliefs. An example would be to try to look at every situation over the next 30 days from a positive perspective or look for others’ positivity or beauty from within.	
1D	Share with Care: 1) Share one belief of yours a day to support an action or comment you are making in a conversation. 2) Explain why it is important to you without trying to convince others. 3) Be careful not to suggest your belief is “better” or “right.”	

*Note: Only pick 1 or 2 IPAs to complete and experience success in the first couple of months. As you experience some success and confidence, gradually increase to 3-4 IPAs in a month as you gain momentum to enthusiastically do more. Track your actions and document your progress in your personal planner and personalized **Path of Possibilities** located in the Resources Section.*



If your response to Question #2 **“Do you take steps to improve yourself to be in alignment with your beliefs?”** is a:

- **MAYBE**, and if you are interested in improving even more in this area for the full experience or **NO**, then continue on this page and identify **Intentional Practice Actions (IPAs)** you plan to try before going to the next page, or you answered
- **YES**, for most of the time and believe you are all set, then move to the next question

IPA #	IPA Idea	Check (X) To Try
2A	Master My Beliefs: 1) Review what beliefs you live out loud each day over the next 7-10 days (exercise on page 161). 2) Notice which ones bring you the most joy and positivity. 3) Take note of where you spend your energy and focus. 4) Reflect on this, and feel free to modify these lists as needed based on your experiences. 5) Identify your top 2-3 “inviting” beliefs from this list to live daily by going forward and continue to practice doing until it becomes you.	
2B	Discovery Zone: Discover others’ “inviting” beliefs and explore them through discussion or putting yourself in their shoes. Your goal is to gain another perspective without providing any opinion on their beliefs. Identify at least 4-5 over the course of 10-14 days and self-reflect what you are gaining by respecting and learning others’ beliefs and values. Include any ideas that enhance or improve your beliefs.	
2C	Musical Spark: Listen daily to a few songs over a month that inspire you and that you could listen to repeatedly. Learn what brings you peace, joy, or even comfort to sing and dance out loud. Include any core themes or words from these poetic inspirations into your beliefs to live by. (See my song list in the Resources Section for potential ideas.)	
2D	Learn to Grow: Debrief with yourself each day on what you did well, what you did that was in alignment with your beliefs, what you’d like to do more of—and also document items you learned from that day either as development or to do differently next time.	

*Note: Only pick 1 or 2 IPAs to complete and experience success in the first couple of months. As you experience some success and confidence, gradually increase to 3-4 IPAs in a month as you gain momentum to enthusiastically do more. Track your actions and document your progress in your personal planner and personalized **Path of Possibilities** located in the Resources Section.*



If your response to Question #3 **“Do you feel people “get you” and perceive you the way your heart wants them to see you?”** is a:

- MAYBE, and if you are interested in improving even more in this area for the full experience or NO, then continue on this page and identify **Intentional Practice Actions (IPAs)** you plan to try before going to the next page, or you answered
- YES, for most of the time and believe you are all set, then move to the next question

IPA #	IPA Idea	Check (X) To Try
3A	Leave Your Mark: 1) Revisit the legacy and purpose words from above that you want to be known for. 2) Document these words and carry them around with you. 3) Look at them when you have a break or when you are waiting for something. 4) Inspect how these words are showing up in your life and what connections you are making. 5) Add new words that arise or modify the list where you authentically light up the most.	
3B	Purposeful: 1) Build on IPA #3A and create your Personal Purpose Statement (PPS) on the next page. 2) List out a set of words that you'd like to hear people associate with you and string them together into a 1-2 sentence statement (remember: this is your first attempt at your personal purpose statement to live and build from over time). 3) Review daily, and revise as needed within 30 days, then at least annually.	
3C	Living with Purpose: 1) Read your completed "PPS" (IPA #3B) aloud at the beginning of each day and self-reflect throughout the day. 2) Identify any actions or statements made that supported or undermined your "PPS." 3) Make adjustments in your upcoming behaviors before heading into the next day. 4) Continue until your "PPS" is you being you.	
3D	Feedback Gift: Test out your "PPS" by sharing with friends/colleagues. Ask them if your actions/statements in the day are mirroring the perception you want of yourself per your "PPS." Adjust yourself and "PPS" daily according to their feedback. Try to maintain this for at least 30 days and even invite these folks to challenge you in the future and call you out on events that either support or go against your "PPS." Social pressure helps remind us who we really want to be and be it.	

*Note: Only pick 1 or 2 IPAs to complete and experience success in the first couple of months. As you experience some success and confidence, gradually increase to 3-4 IPAs in a month as you gain momentum to enthusiastically do more. Track your actions and document your progress in your personal planner and personalized **Path of Possibilities** located in the Resources Section.*

Live Your Possible

If you decide to try **IPA #3B**, document your **PPS (Personal Purpose Statement)** in a 1-2 sentence statement below. Leverage words you outlined in the exercises from earlier. (These exercises include **IPA #3A**, I believe statements, legacy words, and one-word purpose words coupled with my sample PPS for your reference.) For additional inspiration, take a moment to watch Simon Sinek's "Golden Circle" TedTalk. Learn about finding your "why" to help set up your framework for personal goal setting in alignment with your "PPS."



Then begin reviewing daily and adjust monthly or at least annually (**IPA #3C**) until it represents an authentic you. Eventually, check in with others, ask for and listen to feedback about you directly and what is being said about you (**IPA #3D**). Ask for feedback to learn from others (as it is a gift) when you are ready, and be open to whatever it is. I always (well, most of the time) say thank you for the feedback and sharing so openly to help me. We need to hear we are on the path we want to be (or if we're not on the path so that we can course-correct as needed). Plus, having people provide this input is inclusive and can be extremely rewarding for both parties.





If your response to Question #4 **“Does your larger purpose include intentionally making positive contributions in this world?”** is a:

- **MAYBE**, and if you are interested in improving even more in this area for the full experience or **NO**, then continue on this page and identify **Intentional Practice Actions (IPAs)** you plan to try before going to the next page, or you answered
- **YES**, for most of the time and believe you are all set, then move to the next question

IPA #	IPA Idea	Check (X) To Try
4A	Light Up Others: Be the reason someone smiles today. Perform a genuine act of kindness each day over the next 7 days; repeat for 3 more weeks and grow the # of acts per week. Please take notice of the joy in others as you light them up and how you feel as a result too. Document as you go, share outcomes, and reflect how you feel at the end of the challenge.	
4B	Give Joy: 1) Identify and complete several actions that will make a positive difference in the world. 2) See how many you can make in a month. 3) Watch how you feel, how you grow, and notice the joy in others from your actions. <i>(See the next page to assist you with this exercise.)</i>	
4C	Warm Up: Hug yourself by hugging someone else each day. Try to open up and expand your circle of comfort in sharing a hug. (Caution: some might not be ready, and you may want to ask them first to be sure they are comfortable. And obviously honor any boundaries that people share with you.) A great place to start sharing hugs is at home with family, pets, and other humans you care for.	
4D	Positive Electron: 1) Try to refrain from speaking negatively in any conversation for a month. 2) Watch yourself and adjust in real time when you catch yourself. 3) Be humble and redirect yourself out loud if/when you catch yourself going negative.	

*Note: Only pick 1 or 2 IPAs to complete and experience success in the first couple of months. As you experience some success and confidence, gradually increase to 3-4 IPAs in a month as you gain momentum to enthusiastically do more. Track your actions and document your progress in your personal planner and personalized **Path of Possibilities** located in the Resources Section.*

Give joy to others by stoking it inside them through your actions (**IPA #4B**). Keep these actions simple and within reach without overwhelming yourself, at least at the beginning. Start small and then expand your reach. Track these here and what you experience. Please understand that we will never fully know our impact. We may spark people to pay it forward or start a new journey. Get creative for what you think will stoke others. Simple examples include:

- Smiling or saying hello to everyone you cross paths within the day.
- Holding doors for people.
- Sharing gratitude, love and appreciation.
- Listen for the language you use with others and practice being inclusive.



Be genuine and show compassion in your actions or words. Some people will reward you by sharing how you impacted them. Others may feel uncomfortable sharing, while others may not realize it was you that lit them up or caused them to feel their unique joy. Giving joy prioritizes the other person or people; it's never about "looking good" or getting the credit or reward. Knowing you made a difference by giving joy will change your circles and link different cultures beyond understanding. To me, this is pure joy.

Congrats on Getting to Know You Better

Congratulations on setting the foundation of your **Path of Possibilities** and putting a **POP** into your step as you begin to unlock your potential. Believing in yourself and knowing your purpose-driven beliefs put you on the road to happiness, belonging, and seeing what's possible. Before we continue down the path, take time to reflect on the questions you focused on. Think about why you completed your actions and how you will incorporate any learnings that you came away with from the actions.

I encourage you to document what you learn along the way and how you see yourself growing in a place where you can easily pick up again later (phone, happy journal, notepad, or pages at the end of each chapter). There are so many times throughout the day when our mind is standing still or idle. We can sneak in a few minutes to fire ourselves up by reading our notes before we go back to being too settled back into complacency.

Build a new routine of habits that support your beliefs. Starting there will lead to happiness and our possibilities open up in abundance. The more we do, the more it rewires our brain and becomes second nature to who we are.

My hope for each of us is that we start to see and feel something different as a result of completing the first steps down the path. I am imagining there is positive energy forming or growing within you. Commitment to improving yourself is an everyday effort. This can bring a sense of uneasiness. Embrace it. See the positive in it. Keep the long term in mind too. You, too, will be able to bring the best out of the others you love and live life with on this earth.

Our continuous focus to ignite our happy, authentic, and inclusive self is as essential a need as it is to breathe. Oxygen feeds our body with energy to

do human things, and our happiness empowers us to do amazing things with other humans.

Never give up, be purposeful and bring out your best human self to the world. You are worthy and deserve **it** (which benefits those around you) too.



Live Your Possible

Document what raw reactions and personal feelings are resonating with you.

Ignite your **Happy** from within to **Live Your Possible**



Live Your Possible — Chapter 6 in Review





About the Author

Darrin Tulley

About the Author



Darrin Tulley is the CEO and Chief of Possibilities @ **Ignite Happy**. He is also an author, executive coach, board advisor, keynote speaker, and leader of experiential learning workshops for his original platform, **Live Your Possible**.

Darrin strives to help both individuals and businesses feel the power of possibilities. A Business Executive with 25+ years of leadership and coaching experience in Corporate America, Darrin is known for activating business units into lean, top-producing, innovative and joyful workplaces by building and leading high-performing teams with a unique, rare blend of pragmatic, data-informed, and empathic servant-leadership style. Darrin intentionally focuses his energy to spark positive change in humans to unleash the untapped potential residing within all of us.

Darrin guides, co-creates, and executes inclusive solutions alongside business leaders to engage, activate, and transform its people and business performance as an authentic role model and inclusion ally. As a former CFO, Head of Strategy, M&A Advisor, Business Resource Group Advisor & Member, Head of Lean Business Systems & Learning, and Head of Worksite Operations & Business Intelligence, he grasps the importance of organizational connectedness and alignment to drive significant business outcomes. He is also a CPA, holding his Master's Degree from the University of Connecticut Business School and his Bachelor's Degree from Siena College.

When his world turned right-side up, he turned into an inclusion ally, happiness expert, motivational speaker, and an authentic leader turning the light up in people and cultures all around. His transformative journey is living proof of what is possible, and he can meet you and your organization wherever you are on the continuum to realizing infinite possibilities.



Live Your Possible

Darrin is a loving husband and father of two children. In addition, his family raises two working guide dogs supporting the Guiding Eyes for the Blind community. He is also a dedicated youth sports team coach of nearly 30 teams for 10+ years, giving back to his community while spending quality time coaching kids to continuously learn, improve, and find joy along the journey.

Learn more about Darrin and the company he founded along this journey by visiting www.ignitehappy.com or reaching out to Darrin directly at wg@ignitehappy.com.