

INNER CIRCLE

How Anyone Can Achieve All Of Their Personal And
Financial Dreams In Record Time Using The Power Of
INNER CIRCLE



Darin R. Garman

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Why I Wrote This Book

Here I am on my sixth book, and I am actually happy to say and see that it is not about real estate, finance or marketing.

Don't get me wrong, of course I love real estate and love what I do as a multi-family owner, property manager, broker and asset manager. My five previous books have done a lot of good in terms of being better at investing, owning multi-family real estate and laying the groundwork for people to become all that they can become in the world of multi-family real estate ownership.

However, there is a question that I get over and over again outside of the world of real estate. Whether I am a guest on someone's podcast or simply having a conversation with someone at a business or even a personal function. The question is usually along these lines: **“How did you go from an overworked prison guard of all things to having the personal and financial life that so many would love to have?”**

When I answer this question, I, of course, DO talk about the things that you would think I would cover. Things such as hard work, discipline, risk taking, dealing with failures, never giving up, resiliency, grit, etc. These things, and more, **have** led me to the life that many would like to have. Though there are many people that you could point to that have probably achieved “MORE” I believe without

sounding as if my ego is acting up that when it comes to “having it all” I feel I am close to the guy that does.

So, how did I get here?

Yes, by implementing those things I just mentioned in the above paragraph. But....

Over the years I have talked about the general ways and strategies I have used, but I HAVE NEVER TALKED ABOUT ONE IMPORTANT AND SPECIFIC REASON that I have achieved this level of success in my personal and business life until now. At the risk of foreshadowing what it DOES have to do with is who in my life I eventually decided to start paying attention to, learning from and listening to. Heck, upon deeper reflection I can honestly break this down to you as follows:

1. 50% of the reason for my success today and continued growth as a man, husband, father and business leader IS because of consistently disciplined hard work, action and implementation.
2. The other 50% of the reason for my success today and continued growth as a man, husband, father and business leader is because of *who I hung out with, who I listened to and who I learned from, and this is the important part – BOTH IN BUSINESS AND IN MY PERSONAL LIFE.*

The fact of the matter is we not only become what we think about most, but we truly become who we spend

time with and pay attention to most. Please read that again.

The bottom line is hard work, grit, risk taking, taking necessary action and never giving up on yourself and your dreams are really only HALF of what you need **for** what most would consider the SUCCESS EQUATION. The other half is all about who it is that you spend time with, pay attention to, listen to and emulate.

In almost ALL self-improvement books this important key is NEVER discussed or dissected. I think the reason for this is that it sounds way too obvious, is easy to gloss over, and, frankly, is not “dramatic” enough of a story. **W**hen, in fact, it is one of the most difficult things to do and you could argue it is “the reason” for most of the success that a person has in their lives especially, if they are able to keep that success.

I like to refer to this as the GAME OF INNER CIRCLE. In many parts of this book, I will refer to INNER CIRCLE as a game that is played every day. As you dig deeper into this book you will see why I do refer to INNER CIRCLE as a game, but for now the good news is that INNER CIRCLE is truly a game you play with yourself every day in order to achieve your personal and financial dreams faster. The game does require time, effort, and energy, but if you commit to playing the game every day, you will find the success that you are looking for.

So now, how about both of us going on a journey and

playing a game together, the game of INNER CIRCLE. You can use the game of INNER CIRCLE to arrive at your personal and financial targets ten to twenty times faster because it will be the people that you associate with the most that will lift you up to heights that you would not expect. Now it is time to get serious and make this not only a game that can be easily played but a science for you to help you finally discover your true potential.

Darin Garman

P.S. Feel free any time to access the 24 hour FULL POTENTIAL RESOURCE:

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Chapter 1

How I Discovered The Power of Inner Circle

The Definition of INNER CIRCLE: “The game you play in your daily life where you purposely let into (and purposely remove from) your life the people, processes, influences and experiences that produce personal and financial quantum leap results in shorter periods of time.”

The year is 1991. I had recently graduated from college and was working at the Iowa Men’s Reformatory in Anamosa, Iowa. This was, at the time, a medium security prison.

I started working at the prison in 1989 as a prison guard. This was my first “real job” out of college that was in the field that I thought I wanted to spend my life and career in which was Criminology / Criminal Justice. I went to college, played football and got a degree in Criminology, so, I was thinking this is what I am supposed to do, and this was my first real start toward a career in this field.

I was working in various places around the prison, from a cellhouse one day to a tower the next. My plan at the time was that this first job was the beginning of my life in Criminal Justice and that I would work my way to advance as time went on.

However, a problem crept up after my first year working at the prison. The problem was I was discovering that maybe

I did not want to be in the Criminal Justice field after all. I was starting to question my desire to work in this field and was finding out that this may not be the path I was meant to take with my life and my career after all. After a year I was not feeling the passion nor the enthusiasm that I thought I would.

However, in early 1990, after about a year as a prison guard, a position opened up at the prison with the title “Activities Specialist”. In short, instead of being a “guard”, this position got you to oversee and run inmate activity programs. Things like the Alcoholics Anonymous programs, Jaycees, and various other organizations that inmates could get involved in. In addition, I would oversee other programs like the TV rental program and various other physical activities. Think prison softball tournaments, basketball games, etc.

The most exciting thing though was in this position I was also in charge of the tours of the prison by the public as well as the “Scared Straight” tours of juveniles that were in trouble and needed a wakeup call by taking a hard tour of the prison and having a supervised visit with me and the inmates.

The good news was that I applied for the Activities Specialist position, was interviewed and obtained this position.

My thinking at the time was maybe a change of roles and responsibilities at the prison would be what I needed to change my thinking and feelings toward a career in

Criminal Justice. The good news was that after I started my new position, I really liked the job and the responsibilities. I found I was having an impact on not only the inmates but the public as well. But as time passed the feeling that this is not what I was meant to do and should not do with my life kept coming back to the surface. The new position, though more enjoyable than being a guard, was a temporary reprieve from this nagging feeling that I was meant to do and be more.

What kept coming to the surface as to what my next chapter was to be was real estate. When I was not working at the prison, I was paying attention to real estate investment information, read books, listened to cassette tapes (remember this was in the 1990's!) and got very interested in foreclosure sales, bank REO properties and multi-family ownership. I read a lot of real estate and wealth related books and even attended quite a few real estate and wealth building seminars plus I bought some courses too along the way. By spending my off-work hours on real estate I thought that maybe there would be "someday" where I can begin owning and investing in real estate and have enough money to quit my job and just own real estate. At the end of the day, I came to find that this is ultimately what I wanted to do with my life and career.

So, this pattern of "someday" I will get into owning real estate goes on for another two years. This daily push and pull were frankly motivating but getting me nowhere. It wasn't until finally what appeared to be a terrible thing

turned out to be just the thing I needed to finally move forward, and it had nothing to do with real estate.

One day at the prison I was called to the Security Supervisor's office. The Security Supervisor is like the person in charge of security for the entire prison during a given shift that answers to the Warden. When I went to his office, he told me that they had found an empty bottle of Rum outside of my office in a garbage can and wanted to know what I had to do with it. (As a side note, any alcohol in prison is contraband and what that meant was that someone smuggled it inside the prison, so, this was a big security breach and a big deal.) Of course, I had no idea about the empty bottle, where it came from or who drank it. But that was not the way the Security Supervisor was seeing things. He was convinced that I just had to have something to do with this, so, for three straight days I am questioned on and off about my whereabouts over the last few days, what I was doing, what inmates may have been around me at the time, etc. I was literally being interrogated as if I was guilty of breaking the rules of the prison and it pissed me off. I had nothing to do with it nor would I even think of doing this, but it seemed to me that the Security Supervisor wanted me to confess to this incident.

Well, after three days of this they finally realized that I was innocent and had nothing to do with it and there would be no more questioning. Of course, my thinking at the time was, "No kidding fellas I am innocent! I told you that!" So, the good news is this incident was looking like it was going

to finally be behind me, but the OTHER news is that I was still feeling not only the pull towards real estate more than ever but now add the personal sting of being accused of something I did not do. As you may imagine, I was now getting very, very impatient with where I was, with my career at the prison and what I was doing. I was itching for a change!

Now, the last and final chapter of this incident is the most important for me, for this book and dear reader for you.

It involved a final meeting regarding the incident with the Warden. The meeting pretty much centered around the fact that he wanted to make sure that I understood that he did support me but wanted me to understand that they had to go through this kind of questioning and detail, and he hoped I understood and was looking forward to putting all of this behind us and moving on. As mentioned before, I was still feeling the sting of this, but I understood he had to do what was necessary under the circumstances, however, as the Warden was speaking to me another voice was speaking to me, an internal voice telling me that this was not the place nor the career choice I wanted.

So, the Warden dismissed me, and I had to go into another office and fill out some paperwork with his secretary that would put a close to this incident. As I am in his secretary's office waiting for her, I see a book on a bookshelf next to where I am sitting with the title on it of "*Think and Grow Rich*". Hmmm. This looked like an interesting book, especially in a prison! It had to have been

well over thirty years old by the look of it. It was paperback but worn and yellow as if it had been sitting in someone's storage shed for decades. So, I grabbed it, and while I waited for the secretary thumbed through it. The table of contents stood out to me like a beacon of light, and I knew I had to read this book. So, ironically, as I am in the Warden's office waiting for this incident of wrongdoing to be closed, I decide to take this book without permission!

Over the next 10 days I read the book – TWICE! It had such an impact on me, was so eye opening to me that I could not put it down. It was (and is) that good and I had to read it again just to be sure I was not missing anything and the impact it had on me after I finished was monumental!

You see it was after the second time I read and finished the book I FINALLY made the decision to quit my job at the prison and take that unknown and scary leap into real estate! It was so crystal clear that even though I was not sure of which direction I would specifically pursue that it is just what I had to do! I could feel it deep down in my soul.

It was this one 200-page book and its influence on me that made me finally do what I had wanted to do and had been procrastinating on for years! Push me over the edge and get into the real estate business! Looking back on it now the most interesting part of this was it took a very negative incident in my young life and career at the time in going through accusations of wrongdoing, questioning my ethics

and even embarrassment to not only for me to be able to “find” this book but to have this book have the impact on me that it did!

In other words, if I would not have gotten into trouble, not have been accused of something I did not do it is obvious to me that I would not have found and read this book and not entered the world of multi-family real estate

Now, it took me about a month to convince my wife Gina that this was a good idea especially since we had a one year old at the time and little money saved. The good news is that she believed in me, believed in us as a team and believed in my passion and desire to go ALL IN and somehow make this work. That was 30 years ago.

If you fast forward to today, I have ownership in well over a thousand apartment units and thousands of square feet of commercial property. I have been a part owner of and sold a bank. I have a terrific marriage with my wife Gina and relationship with my three kids and I am in the greatest physical shape of my life – even in my mid 50’s! I have achieved so much as a result of this ONE decision and the fun thing is that I am just getting started.

Now, what would have happened if I did not have those important conversations with myself about what it was I needed to do? What if I would have continued to ignore my voice telling me that there is more for me to do and there is more for me to accomplish in reaching my full potential?

Well, obviously I would not have paid attention to and let the book *“Think and Grow Rich”* influence my thinking. What would have really happened is today I would still be working in the field of Criminal Justice, probably for the Department of Corrections, and I would probably **be** advancing just fine in this field. My life would still probably “be fine.”

At the same time though I would also be always wondering “what if” I would have actually listened to my voice in 1991? What would have really happened if I had taken that leap of faith because of listening to and being influenced by me? By being influenced by this one book? Where would I or could I be?

Thank God I decided to double down on me! Double down on listening to my voice and being influenced by the conversations that I continued to have with myself at that time. It took the influence of this book for me to double down on what I could really do with my life, in all areas, if I really wanted to and really decided to.

This was my starting point of discovering my INNER CIRCLE. My start was a faith in paying attention to ME and a faith in paying attention to a book of influence.

What we will cover in the rest of this book will center around plugging into not only the things that can have this kind of life-changing influence on you (and not taking so long to make those changes!) but also being exposed to the people that can have this kind of life changing

influence on you. We will cover not only you plugging into the people and information necessary for a similar kind of transformation for YOU, in ALL areas of your life, but also the life changing consequences of getting plugged into the people and information that will have the OPPOSITE effect on you taking you to places you do NOT want to go.

My hope is with this book by covering both ends of this spectrum you will see the importance of continually constructing your own personal INNER CIRCLE but also how to do it the right way. The results you will get in your life by doing this will stun you and others. This is not just empty talk because I and those around me have experienced this firsthand!

Now, let's get started!

Chapter 2

The Most Important Person You Need To Let Into Your INNER CIRCLE

You become what you think about AND who you spend time with AND who you pay attention to most of the time
– Earl Nightingale. Author of “The Strangest Secret”

When it comes to the people that you have met and who you will meet now and in the future, there will obviously be some key people that you will let into your life and they, in turn, will let you into theirs. What much of this book will cover from this chapter is who exactly do you let into your life? Who is it that you should let in to make the needed impact on you that you want and in turn who should let you into their lives?

But let’s start by deciding who it is, right now, that is the MOST IMPORTANT person to let into your INNER CIRCLE. We are going to do this now not only because this is and will be the most important INNER CIRCLE person but also because we can build the foundation from this person and once we have the solid foundation built we can then move forward faster and more confident with who it is we have in our inner circle from here on out.

So, if you have not guessed yet the most important person to let in is YOU. Yes YOU! This is where it all starts. If you

want to be the person you know you can be, this is VITAL! Even though we will spend most of this book talking about others you let into your INNER CIRCLE the most important part and chapter of this book is this one where we make sure you understand that it all starts with you letting yourself in!

At first, it may sound strange that we are talking about letting yourself in. You may be thinking, "Of course Darin! I have to let myself into my own INNER CIRCLE! I already knew that"

However, how many times have you had the following happen to you:

1. You feel you are not worthy in certain situations.
2. Sometimes you don't trust your own decisions.
3. You are hard on yourself constantly being your own worst critic.
4. You have guilt and shame that get in your way.
5. You say and do dumb things only to regret it later.
6. You feel you are not worthy because of the results that you have or don't have right now.
7. You don't feel you deserve the love, respect and success that others have.

I could keep adding to the list, but these are the top seven. I will bet, without a doubt, that you encounter at least TWO of these every day and sometimes multiple times a day with either the conversations you have with others, or the inner voice conversations that you have with yourself.

So, in order for you to make the progress you know you can and be the person you know you are destined to be we need to do two things right now:

1. Understand that you have these thoughts, feelings and emotions.
2. You probably don't trust yourself fully because you experience these things daily.

THE KEY TO YOUR INNER CIRCLE

So, now that we know that we are far from perfect and that we have all kinds of things on or even off of the list I just mentioned get in our way it is time to give yourself permission. Time to give yourself the permission to trust yourself, honor yourself and know that the best mentor, teacher or even guru you will ever have IS you. That is right.... YOU!

Who knows you better than you? Who has had the experiences of your life that you have had other than you? Who is "the one person" that can make you or break you? Who is that one person that will forever be in charge of just how far you will go or how much of this life you will enjoy?

YOU!

So, the first person you let into your INNER CIRCLE, the first person you trust and the first person you listen to, pay attention to and learn from is YOU!

Until you make this profound yet very simple decision the world that you want and deserve will forever escape you. There is no getting around it.

ME AS EXAMPLE

The best and most productive conversations that I have are with me. The conversations that I have with myself are the key to my progress and I have these conversations with myself daily! Later in this book I will share with you just how I had these conversations but for now understand that this is my foundation and needs to be yours too.

For some this first step will be easy and possibly you are close to being there. With others you have been fighting yourself for years and may not even like yourself or trust yourself for that matter. Now time to flip the script and learn that your best ally and mentor and member of your INNER CIRCLE is and has always been you!

So, you can see this is the reason why I address this so early in this book. If you do not accept the fact that the most important member of your INNER CIRCLE, is you and that you will need to accept YOU, trust YOU and believe in YOU. If you do not have this locked in everything else, we will discuss in this book will be a waste of time.

For now, it is good enough to just know this needs to be the case for you. You do not have to make any huge changes right now or any life changing decisions at this

moment. Just know now that this is central to everything we do with INNER CIRCLE, and we will explore more in this book on how to do just that no matter what kind of relationship you have with yourself.

We will get deep into this because it is so vitally important. As I have mentioned before we all inherently know that the people that we listen to, have conversations with and choose to let in can take us to great heights or great depths. In order for you to reach your true and full potential in whatever area or areas that you want this IS rule of law. This is irrefutable. No one makes it without other people.

For decades I did not comprehend this. For a long time, I did not fully realize that I was using the power of the INNER CIRCLE to help me or to hurt me. I never realized that INNER CIRCLE was a useable skill that could take me to a point where I could have it all. Chances are you have been doing the same thing. Now is the time to change all that.

Chapter 3

The Most Important And Amazing Skill You Probably Never Knew You Had

More than likely as you are reading this book you are in total control of who you are around. For most people reading this book you have made the decisions, up to now, on who it is you have or will spend a lot of time with or pay attention to. Right now, whether you like it or not, as you read this you already have your own INNER CIRCLE in place.

This is not the case however with children. Other than the friends they choose to spend time with, a child cannot choose their parents for example. A child cannot choose Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents, brothers, sisters, etc. This is why the odds are that children that live in a dysfunctional home will grow to be dysfunctional themselves. Also, odds are that many children that grow up in a thriving household will also **become** thriving people. **This** is not new news and as I mentioned there are always exceptions to this, however, we do know this to be true.

So, at a very early age we ALL make a very key decision. At the time of course we have no idea how important this decision is, but we all make this decision. Here it is:

Deciding who we will and won't pay attention to and influence us.

Me Growing Up

Here are three quick not so awesome FACTS about my childhood.

*I Grew Up Single Parent Family. My biological father was never around.

*Grew Up In An Alcoholic Family. My Mother had alcohol problems I dealt with for decades.

*Grew Up In A Family Where Most Everyone Smoked Cigarettes in a small two-bedroom home – Packs A Day.

Now, when these three things were going on around me and when I was old enough to start noticing these things, I chose not to do them myself. Even though the people that I loved and cared about were all about these things and were in some cases consistent about these things I made the conscious decision that I was not going to do the same things that I saw many people around me doing and becoming. I already knew, when I became aware of these things, that, NO WAY! Not going to do that now or even when I am “old enough” to legally do them.

So, before you go thinking how great of a young man I must have been to have such “foresight” let’s get a few more facts on the table:

*I was a juvenile delinquent on probation at the age of 15.

*I was a problem in school. I was in detention often and even kicked off sports teams.

*I was on many parents list of the boys their son, or worse, daughter needed to stay away from.

*I had a bad reputation at a young age.

How in the world can I have this foresight to work in the past and realize that I did not want the life of a single parent scratching it out to make a living, live with alcoholism and terrible health choices but I was a train wreck in these other areas?

Even at this young age IT WAS BECAUSE OF WHO I DECIDED TO PAY ATTENTION TO AND LET INTO MY INNER CIRCLE! The world of who I decided to avoid and who I decided to let into my INNER CIRCLE even as an adolescent and teenager became my world!

You see this is exactly why so many kids can have a disaster of a life in some ways and be an absolute genius on other ways. This IS the reason! There are hundreds of examples of kids growing up in solid and caring families and turning into train wrecks. There are also hundreds of examples of kids who grew up in the worst of circumstances and life challenges turning into the renowned leaders that we know today.

So, where I am going with all of this?

YOUR CHOICE OF WHO TO PAY ATTENTION TO AND INFLUENCE YOU IS AN UNCONSCIOUS SKILL AND IT BEGINS WHEN YOU ARE BORN!

That is correct! This IS a skill you are born with, and you use it whether you know it or not. The thing is it is a skill that you are not only born with but start using from day one. It is not a skill that you somehow learn over time.

The interesting thing though is that we hardly spend any time working on this skill as we mature. We just have it, unconsciously, even in the hopes that it works for us and not against us and you can argue out of all of the things we can improve in our lives this is the most important skill to work on.

How many times do you wake up on the morning and say to yourself, “Well, today would be a good day to work on my INNER CIRCLE skills.” Of course, you don’t do that but the crazy thing is, even before you get your day started this skill is in motion in your mind and is in large part directing exactly where you are going that day, that month, that year, etc. and most of the time we don’t even know it.

I am hoping that this is a big eye opener for you. Sure, of course at a surface level you do realize that who you let into your INNER CIRCLE does influence you. That is not so much of a revelation but to know that you are unconsciously doing this picking and choosing all of the time and that this started at the moment you started your life and continues until you die, well, that is another thing entirely.

The INNER CIRCLE skill is always with you. It never goes

away.

So now that we know this and now that we have a firm foundation built on our INNER CIRCLE skill switch always being “ON” and effecting our lives every single day what do we do to sharpen this skill? What do we now consciously do to make this skill always work for us? We start that journey in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

The 5 Areas Of The Never-Ending Game

There are 5 areas of your INNER CIRCLE.

1. Your physical area.
2. Your bonds area.
3. Your being area.
4. Your mental area.
5. Your spiritual area.

At all times you have these 5 areas operating in your life whether you know it or not. So, since these areas are operating 24/7 it obviously pays huge dividends for you to have the best INNER CIRCLE you can in all of these areas.

Let's go over these.

Physical Area

The most obvious and easiest to measure. How you look and feel physically and the progress (or lack of it) you are making on your body. How are you doing in this area? Simply look in the mirror and step on the scale and you will know.

Bonds Area

This is your quality of relationships area with those you love and care about. Do your kids love you or think you

are an asshole? Does your wife adore you and do you adore her, or are you just roommates? What will your grandkids say about you, or have you not even thought of that? How do you feel deep inside about the connection to the ones you love? How is the quality of that connection to the ones you love?

Being, Spiritual and Mental Areas

This has to do with the quality of your mental and spiritual state. In other words, how do YOU feel about YOU? Do you love yourself or not? Remember, we are our worst critic and our best friend, so, at the end of the day how is your relationship with you?

In addition, how is your relationship with God and the universe? How is your soul doing? For those of you that do not believe in God or a higher power then I go back to how your relationship is with you? Most people, me included, seriously underplay this very important part of you. I did for years until I finally figured out how much my being and spiritual side mattered not only in my life but how all of my other areas were doing.

Then there is your mental area. This is where you use that powerful brain of yours to be a better person. This includes using it to read books, listen to audio books, podcasts, live conferences, belong to a mastermind group, having a mentor or even being a mentor. How much you are exercising your mind and what you are doing about the quality of exercise in your mind.

The biggest thing I can share with you is all of these areas count and count EQUALLY! Let me say that again – all of these areas count! The goal of INNER CIRCLE is to be the best we can be in all of these areas. Certainly, this is a lofty goal, but it is a goal that needs to be worked on every day knowing that in each of these areas we will gain a little every day with some areas more than others. Again, they ALL count and they all count equally.

In truth, many people are already really good at one or two of these but lack big time in the other areas. You know a lot of people that may be great business owners but are 100 or more pounds overweight. You know people that may be in great physical condition with their bodies, but their businesses or professional careers are a disaster. I had a mentor for many years that was a genius with business and marketing and had an unbelievable skill in business but his marriage and personal relationships were not good.

It took me way too long to figure out that constant and consistent INNER CIRCLE work in ALL of these areas is the key to a fulfilling, positive, profitable and joyous life. It also took me way too long to figure out that not just one person, mentor or book has it all figured out for the reasons I mentioned above which is why I have many people and things as part of my INNER CIRCLE and why my INNER CIRCLE is changing and adapting each and every month.

I hope you are starting to realize that the INNER CIRCLE game is the key to who you can become in all areas of your life. It is the key to reaching the full potential of who you can really be, what you can really accomplish and who you can positively influence not only now but for decades to come! Just think about what kind of person you can be when you are a master of all of these areas!

Mastering The 5 Areas Is A Never-Ending Game

But before we get ahead of ourselves one of the things that we need to understand right now is this is a never-ending game. I call it a “game” because even though it is really you mentally “playing” a game of who you pay attention to, who you let into your life, into your INNER CIRCLE, it is also what you choose to think, see, read and listen to. In short, it is not just about the letting of PEOPLE into your INNER CIRCLE it is also about the THINGS that you let in too.

Let’s go over a couple of examples that will resonate with you.

I have known my mother and father-in-law since I first started dating Gina. Since I was 16 years old, I have known them. Know what they are about, what they believe in, their values, etc. for over 40 years.

Since I have known them, they have been very conservative people politically. Being a farming family in Iowa is probably not a surprise. They have been married over 50 years and have been on the conservative side of

the table day in and day out.

However, something strange happened about two years ago. JW, my father-in-law, started to have health problems and needed home care. Gone were the days of him working day after day on the farm. These days were unfortunately replaced with him being more or less home bound and being cared for by Karen, his wife.

It was also a bit before JW's health conditions that Karen quit her job at a retail store that she worked at for years. Her health was not getting any better as she aged and as JW needed more attention and in home care, she stayed home with him.

So, both JW and Karen go from basically decades of working every day and being out of the house working to being in the house almost 24 hours a day.

So, what is it you do when you are home most of the day every day in a farmhouse in Iowa? What do you do?

Watch TV of course. JW and Karen went from working almost every day to watching TV almost every day. From the time they get up to the time they go to bed the TV is on and if one of them is not watching it they make sure they are at least listening to it.

What show or station did they spend most of their time watching? CNN. Cable News Network. Day in and day out they are paying attention to what is being reported on

CNN. Morning, noon, night, weekends, CNN.

With this as our backdrop one day Gina and I go to visit them in their home. As I am sitting around making small talk with JW and Karen, I learn the following from these decades long conservative people:

1. They are now liberal politically and believe the conservatives are going to take away social security.
2. Conservative politics is the reason why our country has so many problems.
3. Global warming is the fault of the conservatives.
4. We talked about two basketball coaches getting into a fight after a basketball game and it was Donald Trump's fault that it happened.

Now, before you go political on me this is not a political rant by me in any way, it is fact.

How is it that two people can turn 180 degrees in their beliefs. Beliefs they have had for decades?

It is what they listened to and what they watched day after day. If you let this into your life day after day for over two years, **you will change**. Having CNN on in their home every day, for months and years, made an impact on them that completely turned their beliefs in the opposite direction of what they were for decades.

The thing to make an important note here it was not a specific person or life altering kind of event that did this. It

was not a person in their life that they continued to pay attention to and listen to, no, it was something other than a person that did this and that can do this. Letting things, even what you watch and listen to on a daily basis into your INNER CIRCLE has a huge impact on you and how you will be. Like a mentor of mine says, "Small hinges swing big doors!"

Here is another simple example from my life.

Growing up I was always listening to and liking hard rock and heavy metal music. Anytime I was in a car, working out, having my SONY WALKMAN on and listening to music and even the radio station I listened to were all centered around hard rock and heavy metal music. Since I was a preteen all the way into my mid to late twenties this was the case. So, let's say for at least 25 years I am a hard rock and heavy metal music guy.

Then, something happened. My wife Gina started listening to country music. You know, how the cowboy lost his girl, got his truck repossessed and how he is drinking his sorrows away at the honkytonk? I started asking Gina why she is wasting her time listening to this redneck music and she said she enjoyed a couple of the country music artists songs and liked to listen to them.

So, over a period of about a year Gina went from listening to country music and having it played in our house once in a while to about every day. Whenever I would come home, I would be hearing country music playing in the

background. During the week and on weekends too.

You probably know already where I am going with this example.

So, it was about a year later after being exposed that I found myself at a country music concert, knowing the words to the song of the country music artist and playing country music now almost exclusively either at home, at the office or in my vehicle. I even have some country music concert T-Shirts!

What happened to me? Of course you know what happened. I “became” country music because of allowing myself to pay attention to it and be exposed to it every day. In short, I unconsciously decided to let country music into my INNER CIRCLE and now I am a redneck too!

So, you are seeing the point of this chapter because it is an important one. You become the person you are, good or bad not only because of WHO you let into your own INNER CIRCLE but understand too that many times it is WHAT you are subconsciously letting into your INNER CIRCLE that are molding you, shaping you and defining you.

Your task now is to identify those WHAT things that you are subconsciously letting into your INNER CIRCLE. Yes, actually sit down and make a list of what they are. If you take the time and seriously reflect you will come up with a sure-fire list. Some of the things on your list will become obvious once you give some thought to them but also

include some things that are not so obvious too. This will allow you to now at least be mentally aware of all of the possibilities and not fall victim to allowing things into your INNER CIRCLE subconsciously. You will now start the foundation of being aware that this is going on and thus you will become aware of what it is that you are letting into your INNER CIRCLE and of course if this is serving who you are and want to become or not.

Actually, when you think of it as a game and gamify it, well, it makes this a lot easier to understand and maintain awareness too. It is an easy to play and easy effort game of who and what you are going to let into your life on a daily basis.

Before we move on here is the good news. Knowing what you now know you are now ahead of 99% of people who are not even aware of this going on in their world. Most people will go through their lives totally oblivious to this and wonder why it is they feel that they just can't quite find that happiness they feel they deserve. But not you!

You are already becoming more of a high-performance person because of your knowledge of INNER CIRCLE and its impact, and you are just getting started!

Chapter 5

The Reason Many Fail To See The Power Of INNER CIRCLE (And How You Can Avoid Making This Mistake!)

As I mentioned in the last chapter 99% of the world really has no idea, at least on a subconscious level, that they are forming and creating their INNER CIRCLE every day and its effect, positive or negative, on their lives. Also, as mentioned earlier, though most people conceptually get that the “environment” and “people” that they spend time with is having at least a temporary or even lasting effect on their lives they do not really consider this fully nor do they end up doing anything about it.

So, why not? Why don't they do anything about it, about their INNER CIRCLE?

Let's answer that by using a couple of quick examples of people I know. The first person is Leon. Leon is a friend and business partner of mine that lived and grew up in the Ukraine over 30 years ago. Back then, Ukraine was much different than now. Back then, oppression and socialism ruled the day. Wanting a better life for himself and hopefully someday his kids, Leon left the Ukraine and moved to New York. He came to New York with no money, not speaking any English and no idea what he would do but knew he just had to do something. He had to get and be very uncomfortable for years and years in the hopes of all of that work and discomfort would provide

a better life for his family. You fast forward to today and Leon overcame all of these handicaps and is a successful businessman, husband and father in New Jersey. A fantastic story.

Compare Leon to Jessie. Jessie has been a tenant of ours for ten years in a low-income housing property that we own. Jessie was born in America, speaks the language and is an intelligent woman who has a ton of potential. Unfortunately, Jessie's life consists of staying on housing subsidy, dating men that are convicted felons, causing ongoing drama with her apartment neighbors and apartment community management and has been to jail a few times too and all while trying to raise a son.

So, what is the difference between Leon, a person that was not even born in America, could not speak the language, had no money coming to this country and no idea what to do with his life and Jessie who was born here, speaks the language and has been aware for decades all that America has to offer her?

The difference comes down to really only three things:

COMFORT! And DISCOMFORT!
Taking Action.
Asking The INNER CIRCLE question.

COMFORT AND DISCOMFORT

The main reason for change, especially when you add or even take away people and things from your INNER CIRCLE is how comfortable or uncomfortable you are in your current situation and how uncomfortable are you willing to be in order to become the person you know you can be. I have this listed as #1 because most people never get past this. Why? Because you have to be uncomfortable enough with where you are now in your life and where you see yourself being years down the road in order to even think about what you will do next!

Many smokers know that smoking can kill them but keep on smoking because it is uncomfortable to go through the process of quitting. Easier to live with bad health and possibly death to be comfortable.

Many overweight people know their weight can kill them but keep on eating. Have you heard of “comfort food”? Easier to be 400 pounds vs. going through the discomfort of losing weight.

You see in action too when smokers or those overweight “try” to go on a diet or “try” to quit smoking. They give it a try but find it is too uncomfortable for them, so, they go back to their old ways.

You see Leon was uncomfortable in the Ukraine and decided he was uncomfortable enough and willing to go through what he had to go through for years in order to

live the American dream of freedom. Leon risked it all and went through a ton of discomfort for years!

Jessie on the other hand has a life that, even though by most people's standards is not good, is very comfortable for her. Even though she continues to live day after day in her own self-made prison of self-imposed poverty, poor men decisions, poor Mother decisions and excuse making for her continued bad behavior she is comfortable there, so, she stays there because it is what she knows and that is comfortable.

As a side note, one of the main reasons for recidivism in criminals when they get out of prison is that many get comfortable in prison and comfortable with the prison life. So much so that when many people finally get out of prison and to the outside things are now so uncomfortable for them that they commit another crime to get back to prison where it is comfortable.

TAKING CONSISTENT ACTION

There are too many books and courses that espouse a dangerous myth that I want to put to rest. You cannot JUST manifest your thoughts. Too many people are led to believe that if they JUST think happy thoughts, well, they will be happy. If they JUST think about winning the lottery or having a large inheritance come their way that it will eventually happen. If they JUST think about how thin or in shape they want to be, then they will look like that. It does not work like that and too many people are led to

believe that this is all they need to do consistently to somehow magically materialize all of their goals.

We know that tens of millions of people consistently think about having a better life in many areas than they do. Tens of millions of people every day think about what it would be like to finally have the life, wealth, body, status, job, car, etc. You name it! It is not that you and I are not thinking about a better version of something for ourselves. Truth is, we think about it all of the time. So, let's get on the same page right now that there is no shortage of thinking good things for ourselves to materialize. We think about these things every day.

What tens of millions of people miss is that these thoughts have to be backed up with consistent action in order for the results to appear. It is not a case of you and everyone else not thinking hard enough, often enough and generous enough, it is the fact that you are not taking enough actions or have taken enough actions yet in order to achieve your goals.

It is really as simple as that. Sitting around and thinking, meditating is comfortable. Doing the work and the actions is uncomfortable.

So, Darin, how much action do I need to take in one or more areas of my life then? I have the thoughts every day of being thinner, stronger, wealthier, etc. How much of this action stuff do I have to do? How uncomfortable do I need to be doing this taking action stuff?

In quantities of more than you think AND in time frames longer than you think.

Let's look at Leon and Jessie again.

Think of the consistent action that Leon has taken in his life to get to the point of being an American success story. Everything from coming to this country, having nowhere to live, learning the English language, working dead end jobs to just earn some money while learning more in the trade that he ultimately started his own business in. Thinking of all of the actions – most of them uncomfortable – Leon took is mind boggling. Yet here he is now a successful father, husband and business owner.

Then there is Jessie. What actions is Jessie taking? It may be unfair to say that Jessie is taking no action. It is possible that she is trying to do something and is doing something but obviously she is not taking enough actions in the quantity necessary to break out of her self-imposed prison. Quite the opposite, most of her actions keep her in her prison. Why? She does not want to be uncomfortable long enough and in enough quantities, so, she chooses to just think about what she does not have and to make excuses and blame others, society, etc. for her life when it is all a result of her actions or lack of them.

I realize that for some of you reading this right now this is not new news. You already knew this. If that is you then my question for you is how are you doing in this area

yourself? How has your “program” been working out for you? What do your results REALLY look like?

Asking The INNER CIRCLE question.

This is the simplest part. It involves asking yourself just one simple question before or while you are in the process of paying attention to, spending time with or expending energy on someone or something. Here is the question, “Is what I am doing right now taking me closer to reaching my full potential and the reaching the outcomes I really want in my life?” If the answer is NO, you know you need to move on from what you are doing, listening to, reading or who you are spending time with or paying attention to.

Is the person you are listening to getting you closer to your desired outcome?

Is the book you are reading, podcast you are listening to, video or TV show you are watching getting you closer to your desired outcome?

Is what you are eating or drinking getting you closer to your desired outcome?

Is how you are behaving or treating others getting you closer to your desired outcome?

You get the point. This IS the question you need to keep asking yourself over and over again until it becomes a habit. It is also your ethical duty as a person, friend,

husband, father, wife, mother to ask this question.

Right now, as I am writing this book, I ask myself that question!

Now, admittedly, you cannot and will not spend 100% of your time with people or things that get you closer to your outcome. Many times, you do not have control of every scenario, situation, movie, podcast, book, person, etc. Also, it is not like unloading the dishwasher, mowing the lawn or cleaning out the garage is really going to take you where you want to go. We all have daily cares of life activities we need to do and be involved in that are just plain old parts of living. Same goes for all of the people we see and hear from on a daily basis. We cannot operate at 100% efficiency at this skill because things will happen to us every day that are out of our control.

For example, recently I spent time with an old college friend. I had not seen him in a long time and bumped into him in an airport. We both had about an hour or so until we needed to be at our gates, so, we hung out and chatted. After about 10 minutes of catching up with what we were doing he started down the road of blaming his ex-wife, his boss and the economy for losing a couple of jobs and having to do more traveling than he would like in his current job.

Well, though he was an old friend I just knew after about 10 minutes that this was not a person that I wanted to be around for very long, but could I do anything about it at the time? Not really. Sure, I could have just abruptly left

and told him I did not like his attitude but under the circumstances I took the time to listen to him and empathize but knew that at the earliest moment I needed to leave. I did just that and it was because the INNER CIRCLE question made me aware that my old friend was actually going to be a downer influence on me rather than someone that could help me.

More later in this book about the time you spend on things that actually don't help you because there are times you will want and need to do this because it is impossible for all of us to be "on point" twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. Again, more later.

But for now, remember that I also just said that it is your ethical duty to ask the INNER CIRCLE question. Why? Because you were not only put here to be the very best version of you, but you are also not immortal. You only have so much capacity as a person, so much time, and then your life is over. While you are here you owe not only everyone close to you but to yourself to be the best version of you that you can be and that means asking yourself and having the INNER CIRCLE question a part of your life. I would argue it is your ethical duty.

Many will see this and not agree but that is ok. Most that refuse to put in the work and know that they won't put in the work will be envious of those that do the work and will not agree. That is fine by me.

But for now, the key is to become, remain AWARE of this, and continue to mentally ask yourself this question and

make arrangements to change. The more aware we are and have those conversations with ourselves and ask this question the more we will improve our INNER CIRCLE and the faster our rise to the best version of ourselves will be. It is really that simple.

Again, the INNER CIRCLE question is: “What I am doing right now taking me closer to reaching my full potential and the reaching the outcomes I really want in my life?”

Chapter 6

The Myth of Working Harder

Even though this will be the shortest chapter of the book this may be the most confusing at first, but I promise by the end you will be seeing things very clearly.

There will be times when you will want to and need to turn off the business side of INNER CIRCLE. That is correct, I said turn it off! As a matter of fact, there are times that I turn off my business side of INNER CIRCLE every day. The main reason I make a point in doing this is to avoid what I call the INNER CIRCLE loop.

As I briefly mentioned in a previous chapter you cannot be “on point” with your INNER CIRCLE work twenty-four hours a day because if you are, it will be only a matter of time before you mentally fatigue and crash. This is why I give myself the permission, every day, to have periods where I allow myself to simply relax and recalibrate INNER CIRCLE behavior.

An example is after one of my “power days” where I start my day probably around 4:30 am and finish my day probably around 6:30 pm I don’t usually come home in a mood to dive into more work. You could argue that if I ask myself the INNER CIRCLE question of “Is what I am doing right now taking me closer to reaching my full potential and the reaching the outcomes I really want in

my life” I should have a quick conversation with Gina and catch up on the day’s activities, grab something to eat and then dive right back into work until at least 10 or 11 pm. Then, when that is done go to bed, get some rest and do the same thing tomorrow.

The thing to keenly keep in mind with INNER CIRCLE thinking is it is not all about grinding it out day after day. It is not all about “scrubbing harder and harder” or putting in “more and more effort”. Conventional thinking tells us to grind, work, grind again and work some more and THEN and IF you hit your targets, you can maybe relax for a short time, recharge and celebrate how far you have come.

This is complete bullshit! Read that again please!

Remember, your INNER CIRCLE entails success in ALL areas of our lives and it means that we also are strategic in the work on all areas including our health, relationships and spirituality. So, it is actually necessary to unplug from just work, from the grind and from the identity you have as a person of what you do at or for work. Rest and recharging and celebrating the small accomplishments and doing this consistently is part of INNER CIRCLE thinking because you are allowing your entire being to be refueled and recharged! I am ready to rest, relax and give my mind and body the rest or recreation that it needs. So now I am ready, not reluctant, to spend time with my wife. Whether it means a date night out or just some time hanging out at home watching a movie.

Many of us are taught that you are not worthy of celebrating, taking time for yourself or simply unplugging and relaxing until your objective is finally achieved. No down time should be considered until the goal is achieved, and the work is finally done. The problem is the work is really never done and once one goal or target is achieved there is another right behind it. The big danger here is if you continue down this path of putting off taking necessary time for you outside of your work you wake up one day and you think to yourself, "Is this all there is?"

My Lake Home Story

I was guilty of this for decades! Work, work, work all of the time and rarely taking any time to rest, recharge and celebrate those wins along the way as an integral and strategic part of my INNER CIRCLE. In particular I remember our lake house.

The Iowa great lakes is an area that Gina and I have loved since we were kids and wanted our family to continue to connect with this great place and made it a goal to own a home there on the lake. For about 11 years every summer we would pay for and take the family to a resort at lake Okoboji for about a week or longer and create some great memories. Finally, we decided that we needed to own our own place at the lake not only for us but for generations to come and so we spent a considerable amount of time looking for that home for our family to own on the lake.

Not surprisingly, lake front property is hard to come by and is expensive so the process of looking and finding takes a long time. Yes, even in Iowa you will pay millions for a nice home on the water especially in the Iowa great lakes area.

Well, one year as we were continuing to look, we decided to rent a house on the lake for our vacation vs. our typical resort property. During the time of our house rental a “For Sale” sign was put in the yard of a home just two parcels away. Once we saw the sign, we knew this was going to be the house for us. This was truly a sign! Pun intended.

We ended up looking at the home the same day we saw the sign and made an offer to buy the property. That was in July of 2008. Finally, in October of the same year Gina and I made our way back to the lakes to close on our dream property. All of the work in time, effort and energy spent over the years in finding and buying this home would come to a great culmination once we closed on the property, right? This is something we had dreamed of and talked about for years. The feelings of pure joy and accomplishment of this huge long-term goal we had both worked for would be on full display at this closing!

Or would it?

Well, we did end up closing on our home and all went great, however, once it was all done, the paperwork signed and the home was finally ours I was surprised to find that I did not have any of the thoughts, feelings and

emotions of joy and achievement that I thought I would have. For some reason it felt like one of the hundreds of real estate deals I had been involved in over the years. It felt like just another transaction. As a matter of fact, once the closing was completed and we started to walk around our new home on a beautiful lake that we now owned I said to Gina, “Is that all there is?” “Is this it?” I was expecting to be so proud, emotional and full of joy like I had won the Super Bowl but there I was after all of this accomplishment wondering why I was not as emotional, happy and joyous and fulfilled as I thought I would be? Where is that “rush” of: “WE FINALLY DID IT! YEEHAAA!?!???”

By now you have probably figured out why. For decades my INNER CIRCLE process was one of continuing to grind, work, get as much done and accomplished as possible and DURING THIS TIME not taking the necessary time for myself. I did not know how to celebrate my wins (and this was a big win baby!) and did not give myself permission to take my eye off the next mountain that needed to be conquered that was on the horizon. I did not have experience living in the joy and celebration of what I had accomplished in the past and in that moment because I was always so focused on what “still needed to be done.”

I am sure in some way, shape or form you can relate to this story.

The good news (and lesson) as you have probably guessed is this is not the case for me now. Now I make it a point

and take the necessary time for celebrating my wins. It is NOT optional to take the time to celebrate my wins anymore. Now my days are still filled with the work ethic that has been such a huge success strategy for me, but it now also entails set days, times and experiences for me to celebrate my wins. To double down on the love, joy and gratitude in my life and not put any of that off for some time in the future that may or may not come.

Chapter 7

YOU A Leadership Magnet

I want to begin this chapter by throwing out a couple of important things that many people do not talk about but are true and have a dramatic impact on the person you are, who you will be now and who you will be in the future.

1. The world has a real leadership shortage. 99% of people have no interest in leading, so, they are followers. 99% of people are looking to plug into a leader and in most cases multiple leaders to lead them.
2. More people pay attention to you, follow you and are influenced by you than you would ever realize. They see YOU as a leader.

My first point is probably not a surprise to you. Most people are content with being followers and not bring about any unnecessary attention to themselves. As my wife Gina says they are the people that like to “stay under the radar”. I also acknowledge that even some of our leaders today that are not under the radar have some traits that are not terrific. I acknowledge some of our leaders are dysfunctional in some things. There is no such thing as perfection. One thing though that is very clear is leaders are drying up and the number of people wanting to lead in all walks of life dwindles year after year. This is

why when someone does decide to lead it is a big deal as they are not only making a decision to take the risk and stand out as a leader but also announce to the world, they are going to take all that comes at that as a leader. The good AND the bad!

The point is that when you do decide to lead, at the office, at home, in your business, as a coach, etc. you are making an impact as a leader on people every day through your thoughts, words, actions. Yes, even though you may not be aware of it you are leading people every day and being a person of influence. How good you are at being a leader and the kind of impact that we all would want to make as a leader is a direct reflection of who and what YOU let into your INNER CIRCLE.

I know that many reading this now are wondering if this is really true for them. This is mainly because in most people's minds a leader is someone in the obvious role of leading people. Also, many leaders are appointed as leaders. Someone or a group of people has appointed them to lead. From a board of directors appointing a CEO to lead a company, from voters appointing politicians to lead at various levels in our society and even when customers appoint contractors of many kinds to lead them through a product or service that they may have purchased. Leadership in many of our minds is and should be obvious, but that simply is not the case. Most of the WHO people let into their lives to lead them, either consciously or subconsciously, are people that have not asked to lead them but for reasons true to us we look to them as leaders.

A case in point is Michael Jordan. Though admittedly a celebrity and considered the greatest basketball player of all time we know that Michael Jordan is a leader. Other than when he played basketball has he been appointed by anyone “to lead?” No. Has he had specific leadership conversations with the millions of people that look up to him for leadership? No. But is he a leader? You damn right.

I know that MJ is an obvious example but please understand that this example exists in all of us to some degree. Another way to put this is:

Whether you like it or not, are aware of it or not, there are people right now that see you as a leader and watch, pay attention and most of all let your influence into their lives in the hopes that by doing so they will become better people.

I have had this happen to me so many times that years ago I decided rather than be surprised by this and even in some instances not wanting this that I embrace this. You should too.

I Want To Be Like You

This really started to hit home for me a couple of years ago. I was at a hotel and after a long day of work at a conference I was attending, I met a couple of guys that I had met at the conference in the hotel bar for some drinks

to decompress a bit and get some social time in. While I was talking to these guys getting to know them better another guy came up to me and told me that he had been watching me for some time. Reading my books, reading some of my daily emails and watching some of my YouTube videos. He told me that I have had a positive influence on him and that he could see himself being like me and would like to be like me someday. I was floored. Here we had a super successful man that has appointed me to lead him to the life he believes he wants. I was not only humbled by this but came to the realization that there are hundreds of people like this out there that feel the same way and are watching, learning and working on being like me. Whether I like it or not I am leading them.

Whether you like this or not you are in the same position. Right now, people are letting you and wanting you in their own INNER CIRCLE and most of these are people that you have no real ongoing relationship with. “Oh, but Darin, I am a just a single Mom with two jobs, I don’t lead anyone other than my kids and all of my responsibilities”. You are wrong! Many other people that know you and don’t know you are watching, listening, learning and being influenced by you.

You see deep down you know this is the case because people can lead others to lives of disaster too, right? We all know how the negative influences of those that people have chosen to be leaders and let into their INNER CIRCLE can lead people to disaster too.

The Aliens Are Picking Us Up Three Months From Today

Yes, the power of INNER CIRCLE can have some seriously negative leadership consequences too. I once got a call from a bank President. He wondered if I would have an interest in buying a 12-unit property that they were working on taking back through foreclosure from the owner. Of course, I was interested in a possible deeply discounted purchase since many of the properties that banks foreclose on and take back can be bought for pennies on the dollar. I figured this was another case of an owner choosing to let the property go back to the bank, however, in this scenario it was not to be the case.

What I found out completely floored me. Usually in multi-family foreclosure situations one of two things happens. Either the owner decided to keep all of the rent money and not make the payments to the bank, or the owner failed to rent the property consistently so the property expenses, including the mortgage payment, could be made. Not the case here. I found that the reason this property was going back to the bank was because of the owner's INNER CIRCLE leadership choices.

About a year prior to the call, I got from the bank, the owner of this property suffered the tragedy of the death of his wife. After his wife died, he met another woman and began a relationship with her. This woman was also part of a cult that believed that someday soon there would be our ancestral aliens coming to pick up only the chosen few on their spaceship to take them back to "our" original

ancestral home planet. I promise what you are reading is true.

Apparently, our owner fell under the spell of the cult and started to believe in his new lady friend's alien beliefs and became a member of the cult too. About 6 months into his relationship with his new woman his kids reported him acting strangely. He only communicated with them once in a while and he seemed distant. They were worried.

Soon after, this man and his lady completely disappeared. He did leave his kids a letter saying that they had left to finally be taken back to "our" ancestral planet and the forefathers were coming to pick them up in their spaceship and he was leaving to finally go back "home" on the spaceship and to please not look for him or worry about him. He was gone.

Give this some thought. He was probably still emotionally unstable due to his wife's recent death. He meets someone that completely turns his thinking around in a matter of months and gets him to believe the planet's forefathers are coming to pick him up in a spaceship and he leaves everything. He leaves his kids, grandkids, home, possessions and this 12-unit property. Just disappears with only a letter to his kids.

So, back to the 12-unit property. What does the bank do now? The property is running fine, but the owner has disappeared. The owner's kids do not want the property. The bank knows that the payments will not be made

unless they start managing the property. You see how this is now unfolding and how and why I got the call.

We ended up buying the property for a very good price, owning it for three years and then selling it at a decent profit. So, for me and my investors this worked out well, however, for the former owner and his family it did not, and it was all because of who he decided to let into his own INNER CIRCLE as a leader in his life. He decided to let this woman in and lead him into this kind of thinking. I promise you that this woman was no real leader in this cult but to the owner of these apartments he saw her as a leader in his life, probably since his wife had passed, and bought into her 100% and within months radically changed.

Of course, I am not saying that you will consciously or subconsciously lead someone into something as bizarre as my real example but make no mistake, right now as you are reading this you are leading and influencing more than you know. People are looking at you and making decisions based on what you do or don't do as a leader, as a member of their INNER CIRCLE.

Chapter 8

So Who Do You Choose For Your INNER CIRCLE? Those Better Than You

Let's face it. There are a variety of things that you are good at and there are other areas that you need to work on. We cannot be really good at all things. In fact, most people have one or two really great strengths or "superpowers" and are average or below average in a variety of other things. In some areas you make things look easy to people but in other areas you struggle.

This is the case with all of us.

So, how is it we improve in the areas that we need help in? You probably already know the answer by now, we find someone or something that has proven beyond a shadow of doubt to be better than us in this area and we let them into our INNER CIRCLE.

For some people this could already be the end of this chapter knowing that you:

1. Identify your strengths, your "superpowers" that you are good at.
2. Identify your areas where you are weak and need help.
3. Find others better than you in those weak areas that have proven themselves to be better than you.
4. Allow those better than you into your INNER CIRCLE.

Sure, these four items are important enough, but, we have only really scratched the surface. We need to stretch more than just the four items I have outlined so far to be our very best versions and reach our true potential. We need to add more fuel to our fire and that begins with finding people better than you in ALL areas. Not just people that have proven themselves better than you in the areas you know you are weak, but in ALL areas. Yes, even in the areas of your superpowers there are people that have proven themselves to be better than you.

The secret here is you work on not just your weaknesses but your strengths all at the same time using the power of INNER CIRCLE.

Conventional wisdom would have you believe that you should work on your strengths, continue to work on your strengths and accept the fact that your weaknesses are what they are, so, just get used to it.

OR

The other conventional path is to work on your weaknesses and then when you are at a point in time where you have made significant progress on your weaknesses, go back to your strengths and start working on those again.

Neither one of these is what INNER CIRCLE focuses on. INNER CIRCLE means you work on all of your strengths and all of your weaknesses at the same time knowing that you will always be putting in the work on all of these areas and

you will continue to improve in each of these areas at least a little bit every day. In other words, the reason INNER CIRCLE works in all areas is that we want to be a better version of ourselves tomorrow vs. today. A better version of ourselves next month vs. this month. INNER CIRCLE understands that this is going to take time but by increasing our capacity in all areas at least 1% per day, we are changing and evolving every day and the slow daily progress will equal massive overall progress in a matter of months.

The key lever for us then is to find someone better than us, someone proven to be better than us in all areas and start to add them to our INNER CIRCLE. Again, this applies to not only someone better than us in our strengths but also someone better than us in our weaknesses!

Why Someone Better Than You

The temptation for us as human beings is to hang around people that are just like us. We are social creatures to be sure that identify more with people of similarity. Why? Because this is what makes us most comfortable. We all get a level of comfort when we are around like-minded and like us achieved people. While this is good in many situations this is a path that leads to nowhere when it comes to your improvement as a person. You feel comfortable and more confident with people that are just like you that are the same level as you or even have not ascended to your level yet, but, when it comes to your growth and advancement to your REAL POTENTIAL the key

lies in allowing those better than you into your INNER CIRCLE.

Making You Uncomfortable

The first key to this process is to understand that your growth in any and really all areas lie in the fact that you will need to be uncomfortable in order to grow. You will need to go through the process of being uncomfortable, sometimes for a long time, in order to continue to be the best version of you. The more you buy into this fact that being uncomfortable is your friend and not something to avoid the faster your growth will be. Getting out of your comfort zone and feeling the discomfort is the true and faster path to progress.

For example, when it comes to finances and wealth probably one of the best and proven people to have in your INNER CIRCLE would be Warren Buffet. So, having him in your INNER CIRCLE would be a good idea. However, how comfortable would you feel calling the offices of Berkshire Hathaway to have a conversation with Mr. Buffet? Or, if Mr. Buffet stopped by your house or office today to visit you or check in with you just how comfortable would you feel around Mr. Buffet? How comfortable would you feel about him asking revealing questions about your wealth and finances?

You know you would be very uncomfortable. So much so that most people would not have the ability to pick up the phone to try to talk to him or would even avoid meeting

with Mr. Buffet because of the amount of discomfort they would feel. Even if you scheduled a series of meetings with Mr. Buffet over the next year you know that walking into each of those meetings you would never feel truly comfortable, would you?

This discomfort is what stops most people from advancing when it is this very kind of discomfort that is needed to advance. So, the lever that we use to advance us through this discomfort is by adding those better than us into our INNER CIRCLE. Those that have REAL and PROVEN track records of being (or have been) where we would like to be in all areas of our lives.

How To Find People Better Than You To Add To Your Inner Circle

This is actually the easy part due to technology. By doing research using the following tools it will be easy for you to find people better than you to add to your INNER CIRCLE.

1. Internet.
2. Books (Paper and Ink, eBook and Audio)
3. Library (online and offline)
4. People you already know.

In each of our 5 areas of potential you can research those that are better than you using all or at least some of the above. Within a few hours using each of these four resources I mentioned you will have at least one person to add to your INNER CIRCLE for each of our 5 areas we want

to make progress in.

For example, let's say you are looking for someone that is better than you at physical fitness. You can find someone your age or close to your age that has many years' worth of track record and results that show you simply they are better than you in this area. Add them to your INNER CIRCLE.

Another example would be you are looking for someone that is better than you at mind and body connection or meditation. You can find someone your age or close to your age that has many years' worth of track record and results that show you they are better than you in this area. Add them to your INNER CIRCLE.

A Quick Reminder - They Must Qualify To Be In Your Inner Circle.

I want to make an important note that even though it will sound obvious you need to make sure that people qualify to be in your INNER CIRCLE. Of course, the main way to qualify these people to see their results and make sure they have obtained or are obtaining the results that you want. Sounds obvious I know but many times it is easy to get lazy and allow someone in your INNER CIRCLE just by watching one or two videos, reading one book or reading a few of their Facebook posts. No! You need to go back and spend some time researching these people you allow in. Making sure their results are REAL and SUSTAINABLE results and not just someone preaching what you should

do or how you should be and not doing it themselves.

For example, in my world, multi-family real estate, there are a lot of people full of advice that sound like they know what they are talking about but have very little real world experience or results. Or it may be the person that has hit one home run and is thinking that this one deal makes them an expert. No! You need to qualify who you let in and be picky and do your research on not only their results but their experiences too. Same goes for books, podcasts, videos, etc. There is too much fakery in the world today that seems real so take your time and do your research because remember, the people and the things you let into your INNER CIRCLE will chart the direction that you are headed!

You do this for each of our 5 categories of growth. All four of the places that I mentioned before to locate the members of your INNER CIRCLE should be used all of the time. For example, chances are you know someone right now that is better than you in one or more of these areas and have a proven track record of results to show that they are worthy of joining your INNER CIRCLE.

Lastly, you will find that many times you will have people or things as part of your INNER CIRCLE for many years and some not so long. The good news is that over time you are allowed to change things and the members of your INNER CIRCLE as you see fit but make sure that you are not always chasing the bright shiny object. If you find yourself continually making a lot of changes to your INNER CIRCLE, then it may be time to make sure you are clear on the

results you are wanting and looking for in all 5 areas.

Chapter 9

The Force and Power of Discomfort

I mentioned this briefly in Chapter 8, but I wanted to take just a bit more time in talking about the importance of choosing people, things and even places for your INNER CIRCLE that force you to be uncomfortable. Since this is what gets in most people's way in truly tapping into this easy to use power every day.

You see, our natural inclination will be to choose people and things for inclusion in our INNER CIRCLE that validate what we already know or believe. While I am not saying that you allow someone into your INNER CIRCLE that you totally disagree with what I am saying is you cannot allow people into your INNER CIRCLE that do not push, challenge or make you work mentally and physically toward your desired targets. The people and things that you let into your INNER CIRCLE need to be strategic and cannot be easy or convenient. As a matter of fact, one of the things that you need to seriously consider is how uncomfortable the people or things will make you because the more uncomfortable these things make you the more and faster progress you will make toward your targets.

An obvious example is a physical one. If you need to level up in your fitness and you cannot even do one pullup and you start an intense fitness class that requires you to do

pull ups you are definitely going to be uncomfortable, especially if you are with other people that can witness your lack of being able to do a pullup. So, not only are you feeling some shame because you cannot do one pullup you also have other people witnessing that you cannot do one pullup. Not a comfortable situation for you that is not going to change, at least in the near future. Realizing this, what most people will then do is not show up to this class again. They will go back to being comfortable and either choose something more comfortable to do or quit altogether thinking this was a bad experience and how terrible they felt because of it. In reality though, the best thing they could do is remain uncomfortable, work through it and improve and come out the other end much stronger and be able to do those pullups!

So, this is an easy example that most of us can relate to. Most of us are limited in one or more areas physically and need to level up in some area and are weak on some area that would be obvious to us and others and make us uncomfortable. If not pullups it would be running, lifting weights, weight loss, how you look, etc.

So, that is an example regarding the physical part of ourselves but what about the mental side of things when it comes to being uncomfortable?

I guarantee you that what you will find is that it is much harder to do the uncomfortable and remain uncomfortable when it comes to your mental, spiritual and bonds side of you with those that you care about than

your physical body. Why? The main reason is that the improvements you make in your mental game many times can not only be made through possible mental pain but are not as obvious because you cannot really “see” or “measure” them. Your body improvements are in front of you every day when you look into the mirror, so you can see how you are doing daily, but the mental side is not so obvious and not easily seen.

Knowing this is the case how uncomfortable are you willing to get when it comes to your bonds and connection with those you love or care about? How uncomfortable are you willing to get with the relationship with your husband or wife in order to make it stronger, better and more fulfilling for you both? The same questions when it comes to your relationship with others like your siblings. The guilt and the shame that you still feel and deal with to this day from your childhood or later as adolescent or adult when someone else that has wronged you or maybe you wronged them is still there, still eating away at you. Are you willing to do the INNER CIRCLE work on these BEING and BONDS areas to make your and their world a better one? Or, are you like 99% of the population who will just sweep it all under the rug and HOPE that things will improve?

I am not saying you go out of your way to pick a fight when it is not necessary or offend someone just to make things uncomfortable, so, think of it this way. There are people close to you that you should have already had honest conversations with about something that you have been

holding onto for a very long time and you have not had those conversations, or, you are choosing not to work on those relationships important to you not because you don't feel they are important enough but because it is too uncomfortable to have those conversations. The result of choosing to stay in your comfort zone will be things will not change and will over time simply stagnate or get worse all because you feel too uncomfortable.

Make no mistake, part of your INNER CIRCLE involves having the right people in it. This does not mean that every person you allow in will be perfect, but you know they need to be in your INNER CIRCLE. Making your bonds more solid with some of them will be uncomfortable but is the key to making all other areas of your life better.

The Solution To Reaching My Potential Is More Money?

It took me awhile to figure this out. You see, for decades I thought all of the personal issues that I had or wanted to improve in my life would finally happen if and when I made more money. The solution for me in improving the relationship with my wife, my children and others close to me was just making more money and that this alone would make everything better. So, instead of working on my bonds with them and fine tuning my own personal INNER CIRCLE work I would attend another course, another seminar or read another book about making more money, being better at marketing or increasing my income. Again, in my mind more money was the answer.

It wasn't.

The only thing that working on making more money gets you is better at making more money! While I did get better at making money, I found that my relationships with those close to me were not really improving.

I know that on the surface this seems obvious, but many people believe, like I believed, that the key to fixing all of the other things in our lives is more money. More money helps a lot of things. There are problems I have now that I would rather have than the problems I had when I did not have money. There is no doubt about this, however, I knew my bonds with my wife and kids, my physical wellbeing and my spirituality could be better, much better but I was not making any progress and in some areas was declining.

It was not until one of my coaches and mentors (INNER CIRCLE!) pointed out to me that until I got this and understood that it was the mental growth side, bonds side and spiritual side of my world that was the key and made a priority doing the necessary INNER CIRCLE work here all of the other areas of my life would not even be close to fulfilling. In other words, it did not matter how much money, market share or satisfaction I got from the business side of things if the quality of my bonds with my wife, kids, and friends were lacking, I would be continually lacking and frustrated.

Talk about being uncomfortable! I was not the kind of person that even remotely looked forward to working on this. As a matter of fact, the other realization I had was I was more comfortable working on my business than having personal and deep conversations with my wife about our relationship, our goals and the satisfaction we wanted as a couple. The same goes with my work on my relationship with my mother (which has been tumultuous for decades). Also, being a better father and leader for my kids and their kids. It is truly uncomfortable to do this kind of work but so necessary and I found that my willingness to have some deep conversations, be uncomfortable when necessary and be open to this allowed others to open up to me as well and the result was better relationships with those that I love and care about.

Today this is where most of my focus and attention is. For me and for many others this impacts everything! It is being uncomfortable and doing this work that is the rub. It is much harder to work on the bonds and being areas because most of us were not taught how to do this and do this continually. You are like the person who cannot do a pullup in your fitness class of 50 people for all to see just how weak you are. With bonds and being work you are exposing your weaknesses on an even deeper level making it hard work. As long as you know and accept this as what it is you need for your growth and the growth of those around you vs. being “work” you want to avoid you will be just fine.

The key is being and remaining uncomfortable as long as

you can but an easy analogy for your ultimate INNER CIRCLE is simply this: Do The Uncomfortable Work As Often As You Need To And The Final Life Changing Results Will Well Worth It.

Chapter 10

The Real WHY of INNER CIRCLE

I want to start out this chapter by asking you a few questions..

What is your mission? Or, more specifically, what is your WHY?

Why do you do what you do? Or, more specifically, do you know the reason why you make the decisions or take the actions that you take?

More importantly though: Why will you implement INNER CIRCLE in your life? What is the driving WHY for you to be the best version of you and use INNER CIRCLE to do this? You are reading this book and learning more and more about INNER CIRCLE for a reason and is it now time to find out WHY?

These are very important questions that not a lot of people know the answer to. You have to go deep with these questions because it will not only get the root of who you really are now, but it will guide you to who it is you have to be in order to be fulfilled and this leads to the choices you make regarding who and what you let into your INNER CIRCLE.

So, for me my WHY comes down to three things:
1) Impact 2) Legacy 3) Leadership.

Not only do I implement INNER CIRCLE in my life but WHY I do it is because I want to make the best impact and influence I can on those around me. I want them to be better because of knowing and being around me and I want that impact to stay with them always. Also, my WHY consists of my legacy. The impact that I make now on my wife, kids and grandkids will carry on for generations and I want it to carry on for generations. This also includes how I lead day in and day out in all 5 areas of INNER CIRCLE.

So, my choice of implementing INNER CIRCLE in my life is not just a choice of me being better and reaching the potential that I know I am capable of, it is much, much bigger than that now and over the next 100 years!

You see, I have a big WHY for implementing INNER CIRCLE in my life and you also will need a big WHY too because if you don't have a big WHY or more than one big WHY's you will not implement INNER CIRCLE and a year from now you will be back to where you were or even worse off than you are now. Your WHY's are the reasons, your reasons for not only implementing INNER CIRCLE but doing the things that INNER CIRCLE will require you to do that you don't really want to do.

For example, right now as I am writing this book, I look at the clock and see that my workout starts in about 10 minutes. If I am honest, I would rather sit here in my

comfortable chair and continue to work on this book or read the stack of magazines I see sitting next to me than get ready for a grueling workout. But my WHY includes leadership and impact and how I show up physically is a big part of that, so, my WHY is going to drive me to get that workout in no matter how much I don't want to do it.

So, here is one of the most important exercises you can do your entire life: Sit down with a notebook or journal and write down your WHY. Heck, you may have more than one WHY but write them down. Take your time here too, this requires you to go deep and do some deep thinking past the surface level. This process can take hours or even a few days. Fine! Let it take that long because this is so important. But, you must dig deep here! No surface level WHY's; we need DEEP WHY's!

For example, if one of your WHY's is that you own your own business or "to make good money" that is a surface level answer. What is your REAL WHY? This is the question that needs to be asked in all 5 areas. Once you have the answers in each of these areas then these answers serve as your personal guideposts as to who and what you let into your INNER CIRCLE.

Chapter 11

The Past Does Not Equal The Future. It Is Never Too Late.

So, as you have been reading this book there is a good chance that the following what I call “impostor voices” have been playing in your head. You may be hearing yourself say things like:

“I am too old to start INNER CIRCLE”

“I will start INNER CIRCLE when I am less busy”

“I have screwed up way too many times to start INNER CIRCLE now”

“What will people think of me if I start this INNER CIRCLE stuff?”

“I have too much guilt, shame and failure to start INNER CIRCLE”

“INNER CIRCLE is too much work”

The examples above are what many tell me goes through their minds, in some version, as they are reading this book. If this is you and you are hearing these “impostor voices” then let me set the record straight for you on a few things.

First, you are NEVER too much of anything to implement INNER CIRCLE in your life. Your past, no matter how good or bad it may be, is just that – your past! INNER CIRCLE is all about the present and future of you and your world! This is what is awesome about INNER CIRCLE, it does not discriminate, nor does it care! It just works for you no matter what great things you have done or ridiculously stupid things you have done. It works.

Far too many of us hold onto those past events or circumstances way too long and then they become beliefs that hold us back from being the best versions of ourselves. Make no mistake, that also includes those people that have done some high-performance things in the past or are doing them now. We all have our own foundations we build around us and all of us have these foundations at fundamentally different levels and we can build and add to our foundations no matter what level we are at in each of the 5 areas.

For example, I have made most of my progress in all 5 of the INNER CIRCLE areas in my 50s! Also, I know that each day I am getting a little better in each area, so, the terrific news is that in a sense I am just getting started! Now that is exciting! I look forward to what things will be like as I continue the game of INNER CIRCLE in my life in my 60s, 70s and beyond and I am thrilled!

So, your first day of your own game of INNER CIRCLE is now, no matter where you are in these 5 areas and no matter your ups and downs up to this point. This is not

some positive attitude BS; it is real, and it is accurate!

Don't let anything in the past define limit you or your willingness to go all in on INNER CIRCLE! That will be the subject of our next chapter!

Chapter 12

Going All In. The Game of INNER CIRCLE.

Going all in! How many times have we heard this or some form of this saying.

“He went all in!”

“She won the tournament because she went ALL IN!”

or...

“He is seeing those kinds of results because he decided to go ALL IN!”

You get the point. You and I have heard this saying and I think you would agree that there is a real risk of the “ALL IN” term being overused.

So, let’s set the record straight on this then right now. The best way to get the fastest and most surprisingly positive results for you by implementing the INNER CIRCLE game in your life is to go ALL IN on INNER CIRCLE! It must be something that you are passionate and emotional about every single day. It cannot be something that is done or thought about every once in a while, or when you have some free time on Sunday. It has to be a game you play every day and if you do go ALL IN on INNER CIRCLE every

day you will see results that will surprise not only you but even more so – those around you.

How do I know this? Because for the first couple of years as I implemented INNER CIRCLE in my life and played its game, I was not going all in. I was present to its use in my life when I had time and when I was not busy. It took me two solid years to change the following formula:

Get Your Daily Work Done First Then Do INNER CIRCLE WORK

to...

Do INNER CIRCLE work first and THEN see how much work you get done and progress you make

My problem? I was not going ALL IN on INNER CIRCLE. I was only using it when I thought I had the time to use it vs. using it every day. Once I realized that I needed to implement the game of INNER CIRCLE first every day I started making huge leaps in progress in all 5 areas of my life. This was not only an obvious benefit to me but also all of those that I loved and those close to me too.

The simplest way to get started with INNER CIRCLE every day in your life is to make it part of your daily schedule. Yes, schedule it! Now, I realize that there will be days when things are thrown at you and life happens, so, I am not talking perfection here. What I am talking about is a realization that making INNER CIRCLE a daily game you

play and THEN PLAYING IT will create results in your life that will stun you. You see, you will be tempted to get your work done first and then when you have left over time in the day or on the weekend you work on INNER CIRCLE. No! INNER CIRCLE is not a hobby! It is life changing! If you want your life to change to where you know it can realistically be do you think this can be done by simply putting in some work for a couple of hours every Saturday? C'mon! That is not realistic!

The Work On INNER CIRCLE Is How I Start My Day

The first hour and a half of each day belongs to me and that is what I work on. This is my INNER CIRCLE work time. I don't start with emails or social media or reading about what happened over the last 24 hours. I start every day with INNER CIRCLE work.

In other words, the first hour and a half of each day is devoted to me and working on just me. What this means is:

1. Meditation
2. Reading / Learning
3. Journaling
4. Daily Power Ritual
5. Workout
6. Daily Work Begins or Day Off Begins

I imagine that as you just went through the list of six things that I do to start my INNER CIRCLE day every day there were some of the items that may resonate with you, or,

you may be even doing now and there are some items that you have no real connection with or really any interest in doing.

If this is the case, don't fret and don't be concerned because I used to be the same way.

For example, I have always been a person that works out. This was a habit instilled in me by my Uncle going all the way back to my early high school days. So, getting some kind of a workout in every day has really been just part of my life.

But what was never really part of my life was meditation. I had always thought that meditation was all about chanting, making weird sounds, sitting in an uncomfortable position for hours and burning incense and for what? Peace of mind? In my mind a huge waste of time to be sure, especially when you consider doing it every day. So, meditation was never part of my day until I kept seeing and hearing those in my INNER CIRCLE talk about how important meditation was to their progress and wellbeing. It kept coming up over and over again until finally it was at a point where I decided because so many people and so much information in my INNER CIRCLE kept pointing to meditation as a key ingredient in their growth that I could no longer deny it and had to start doing it too.

Fast forward to today and I am so glad that I did take the "meditation leap". It is a big part of my life and my progress. The funny thing is ten years ago if you would

have told me that I would be meditating every day I would have laughed at you but now I realize how important it really is and I found this through my INNER CIRCLE.

So, let us cover each one of these items briefly. I will not only go over the importance of each of them but also what I do in my own daily routine.

1. Meditation

I already covered this but let me give you some guidelines that will help. First, I sit in a chair when I meditate, and I don't get in an uncomfortable position. I also use an app on my phone to meditate to make the meditation process super easy. There are many meditation apps out there to use and these make this super convenient and easy and many of them instruct you along the way too. Next I only meditate about 10 – 20 minutes per day. I don't spend hours per day meditating. I have found that 10 minutes every day is ideal and sometimes I do more, but my maximum is 20. Again, when I do meditate, I simply sit in my comfortable chair and relax and meditate. If I am following an app on my phone, then I do what the app instructs me to do. Very easy. I like to do this first thing in the morning after I wake up and have a little coffee. I will sit in the quiet area of my home before anyone else is up and meditate. Easy, convenient and effective. Since this is the case, it is then easy to do every day.

2. Reading/Learning

After I meditate, I get my book, audio book or video course out and dig in. Of course this is material and information that I have let into my INNER CIRCLE for a reason. I do not use this time for what I call “recreational” reading or viewing cat videos. This is for my growth, development and expansion. Many times, I will have more than one book I am reading and switch between them or alternate them on certain days. Again, I don’t spend 30 – 60 minutes on this every morning but I will spend 10 – 15 minutes on reading/learning every morning.

3. Journaling

One of the best uses of my time in the morning is journaling. In my opinion there is no better tool to use to not only have real and deep conversations with yourself. At first you may think it odd to have deep conversations with yourself, but as mentioned previously, the conversations that you have with yourself are the most important. Journaling allows that much needed self-talk to happen. You are literally checking in with yourself each and every day and taking the time to assess everything going on in your life and in the 5 areas. This daily “huddle” you have with yourself is a priceless piece of the puzzle in order for you to continue to make progress. I will spend about 10 minutes each and every morning journaling. You can go longer if you like but I find the 10 minutes, in the quiet, perfect for checking in and having those deep conversations with myself.

4. Daily Ritual

I discovered the Ritual from one of my coaches and mentors Raul Villacis. Raul shared the concept with me that our minds and bodies need to get primed each and every day because we are going into a battle of sorts each and every day. Of course, I am using the word “battle” figuratively, but with all of the things that are required of us, and we are required to do in order to lead ourselves, our families, our businesses and our communities we need to show up and be our best versions every day. Think of it as showing up each and every day like a King or Queen of old. That is what the Ritual does. It powers not only your conscious but more importantly your subconscious mind to lead with power in all areas of your life. I will spend about 30 minutes each and every morning on my Ritual. The Ritual can be done all on its own first thing in the morning, or, during a workout. For example, for many of my morning runs I would listen and do the ritual while I was running. For some of my weightlifting workouts I would do the ritual while I was lifting weights. The Ritual is a mental and physical game changer like no other. For more information and guidance on the Daily Ritual go to: **www.dailyritual.com**

5. Physical Workout

Almost every day I do some kind of workout from 30 minutes to 90 minutes. As I have mentioned previously dialing this in was not so difficult for me because I had learned the importance of being physically fit as a high

school and college athlete. I understand that this is probably not so much of a surprise to you, however, the important part here is that every workout you do does not have to leave you crawling for the locker room when you are done. Too many times people think that they need to destroy their bodies and be sore for a month in order for a workout to do them any good. Though it is important to push yourself at times this is entirely false and not sustainable. That IS the key – sustainability. My workouts consist of things that I do most every day that are sustainable. Here are a few examples of what I do every day:

- *Weightlifting and/or body weight exercises like pushups, pull ups, etc.
- *Stationary Biking Indoor (Peloton)
- *Outdoor Biking (Bike Trail)
- *Trail Walking
- *Yoga and Stretching

I will usually do a combination of these each and every week. For example, Monday may be my weightlifting day and Tuesday may be my biking day.

6. Daily Work Begins, Day Off Begins Or Combination

After my workout is done, my day begins. Usually during the week this means I am getting in the shower and then when done starting my day in the multi-family business and going strong until early evening. On the weekends, my leisure time activities get underway. I am pretty

consistent with my “workdays” being Monday through Friday and my “leisure days” being Saturday and Sunday, with the exception of two or three hours during a weekend where I plan my following week and also take care of any personal business.

I hope that you are getting the picture that by playing and implementing the INNER CIRCLE game each and every day I make a lot of progress as each day I put in this work builds upon itself. The daily progress I make is not in huge quantum leaps but in reality about 1 – 2% per day that continues to stack on itself and it is progress made in each of the 5 important areas so that by the end of say a quarter or a year I can look back and see the monumental shifts. Think of it this way, by doing this I make small almost unnoticeable gains each and every day but by the end of a month or a year I have compounded time and have made years and years of progress and am not the same person I was just a few months ago.

Another way of looking at this in its simplest form is this: I work on myself each and every day and it is the first thing I do every day. By doing this for an hour to two hours each day I not only feel better each and every day I make more progress in the areas of my life important to me than most anyone else. Who benefits from this? Of course ME but also all of those around me.

Sometimes it may be the first two hours of the day, other days it may be the first hour of the day. In any case the first thing I do every day is lock in on INNER CIRCLE.

I found that as I continued this as my foundation each and every day that the days typically work out well for me. My energy and my power are at full throttle. I have people comment to me all the time that they wish they had my energy. The impact I make on others is much more magnified and I find that I enjoy my day a lot more too. Not only that but the progress I make in my business and personal life is amazing.

And again, it is because of 1) Working On My INNER CIRCLE by finding and allowing those people, information and tools and strategies in my life as my foundation. 2) Now that I have the people, information and tools at my disposal I use them every day.

As I mentioned, every day does not work out perfect and there may be a day here or there that I miss some of this or something out of my control comes up that derails things, but the point is that I am going all in every day and the results show it. If you do the same thing, so will yours.

Chapter 13

The INNER CIRCLE Formula That Will Allow You To Make Years of Progress In Your Life In Just A Matter Of Months.

Here is how you realistically compress time. Here is how you get years of progress completed in a matter of months and you do this by using this simple INNER CIRCLE formula.

The INNER CIRCLE formula to follow is:

- 1) Build and complete your personal INNER CIRCLE by taking the time, effort and energy to create it.
- 2) Once created, work on and with your INNER CIRCLE every day.

In other chapters in this book I describe just how to build your INNER CIRCLE and who and what to allow into your INNER CIRCLE, so, I will not get too far into the weeds in this chapter but I will provide a few guidelines for you to keep in mind.

First, it should take no longer than two weeks to build the foundations of your first INNER CIRCLE. The good news for you is to realize that your first INNER CIRCLE will not be perfect and over time you will be moving people, information, and things in and out of your INNER CIRCLE as

you evolve as a person. So, the key here is not to think of or expect perfection or take the time for perfection your first time around. The key here is to do your best job at building your first INNER CIRCLE, get it built best you can and then go from there. Again, as you evolve so will your INNER CIRCLE.

Give yourself a two-week deadline to complete your INNER CIRCLE in all 5 areas. That is plenty of time and it also puts you in the mode of accountability in order to get it done. If you don't give yourself a deadline you will find yourself months down the road still working on building vs. using your INNER CIRCLE.

Second, once it is built in all 5 areas it is important to work on INNER CIRCLE every day! In other chapters in this book, I go into detail on this too and how to implement this easily every day but once built if you want to make years of progress in all 5 areas in a matter of months then your INNER CIRCLE work should be done every day.

A question I get quite often when I have gone through this process with someone is that many feel it is a lot of work and it takes a special amount of "motivation" to do this each and every day. My answer is that it really is not that hard for two important reasons. First, once you realize the things that you can accomplish for yourself and for those you love and care about by compressing time you will have little problem getting up and getting started on INNER CIRCLE. It literally fuels you to do the work. Second, once you start to see and feel the results it provides a firmer

and growing INNER CIRCLE foundation that continues to make you unstoppable.

Compressing Time Formula:

1) Build and complete your personal INNER CIRCLE by taking the time, effort and energy to create it taking two weeks or less to complete your first version of INNER CIRCLE.

2) Once created work on and with your INNER CIRCLE every day.

If you think about it this is not complicated. What we do when we play the game of INNER CIRCLE is bring people, information, and resources into our lives that already have the experience that we want in all areas. We are just using their experiences and information from others as a springboard for our own progress vs. trying to figure it all out on our own from scratch. By doing this consistently within INNER CIRCLE we are gaining years of time in just months. The key is then once we have our INNER CIRCLE completed, we keep using it every day and we keep adjusting our INNER CIRCLE as needed and as conditions in our lives warrant, we do so.

Chapter 14

INNER CIRCLE Levels The Playing Field In All Areas No Matter Where You Are At

A few questions...

Are you overweight right now? Is your health lagging? Have some kind of an ongoing health issue like diabetes, smoking, drinking? Do you look at yourself in the mirror and like what you see in terms of what your body looks like?

Are you where you really want to be with the relationship of those close to you? How is your relationship with others like your employees? Are you full of connection with all of these people or mostly frustration?

How is your connection with God right now or a higher power in your life? How is that going or are you just drifting?

How is your career going or business going right now? Are you where you want to be? Looking at where you are, should you have made more progress by now? Are you frustrated with your progress and feel that there should be more out there?

More than likely, you have answered one or more of these

questions negatively. We all have one or more areas in our life where we are, simply put, lacking. We all have one or more of these areas where we have not shown up as good as we could, and our results show it.

Well, the good news about INNER CIRCLE is that it does not care at all where you are or what you have done or not done. INNER CIRCLE will allow you to make the kind of progress that you want and need in all areas no matter your background, education, skin color or any other handicaps that you feel you have. INNER CIRCLE truly levels the playing field for everyone including you!

In other words, no matter where you are in your life INNER CIRCLE will work! Once you start playing the game of INNER CIRCLE in your life, you will see progress in all areas no matter how you are doing in these areas you will improve!

Take me for example.

I am a former Iowa prison guard of all things. I came from a single parent home and was jointly raised by my mother, grandparents and an uncle. I had an excess amount of dysfunction going on around me as I grew up and as a result, I was in trouble a lot as a child too, not to mention that I had no rich relative or trust fund to help with anything financially. I literally had nothing by the time I went to college and when I graduated, I had nothing but my degree in Criminology, a job unloading trucks at Walmart that paid \$4.00 an hour and an old car that had the heat constantly running and “stuck” on with no air

conditioning and \$300 in the bank. I finally got a job as a prison guard in 1989 making \$17,000 annually and I thought I had struck it rich!

Fast forward to today and by the use of INNER CIRCLE in my life I have a fantastic marriage of over 30 years, I have three kids that are all responsible adults and doing fantastic and that I share a deep connection with, I am spiritually at a great place, I am physically in terrific shape and I have a super successful multi-family business. I have authored 6 books and have been an influence on thousands of people. Before you think that I am putting myself on a pedestal and saying “look at me” understand that I am not. What I am doing is JUST GETTING STARTED! Yes, I have made a lot of progress over the years by using INNER CIRCLE but understand that in my mind I am in no way done – I AM JUST STARTING – and I know that with the playing field that INNER CIRCLE gives me I will continue to improve at least one percent each and every day in all areas.

So, just know this right now. You are exactly where you need to be in all of the 5 areas right now. It makes no sense to beat yourself up over any lack you have in these areas nor does it do much good to think you have any of these areas conquered because by playing the game of INNER CIRCLE it allows a level playing field for continuous growth, development and improvement in all 5 areas of your life.

Chapter 15

The Habit of Celebrating INNER CIRCLE Progress!

You know, for much of what you are reading is of course coming from me but by now you know that who you allow into your INNER CIRCLE influences you! The habit of celebrating the progress that you continue to make in your life, even when there is still work to do, comes from my friend and mentor Raul Villacis.

As I have mentioned elsewhere, you may be like me in this regard. Having that guilty feeling of celebrating when you feel you may not fully deserve to and then avoiding taking time off to celebrate. I am not sure if this comes from my environment as a child or was burned into my brain as I made the transition to being an entrepreneur but for decades I would always put off, as Villacis would describe it to me, “celebrating my wins” until I had conquered something huge in scope.

For example, I would have a target in my business of reaching a certain level of occupancy at all of our apartment communities and would not rest until we reached that target. So, I would direct my management teams to do what is necessary to hit those targets and give them a 90-day deadline to do this.

During these 90 days we would have some nice positive things happen related and unrelated to this occupancy target being accomplished but I would not recognize those

“wins” because we had not fully completed the occupancy target.... yet. At the same time, I would have some nice progress and wins personally in things like my workouts (physical), with my meditation (mental) and with my journaling (bonds/mental). I would also make some good progress with my wife and kids and our connection as a family.

So, even though I would mentally recognize some pretty good progress in all of these areas, both business and personal, I would refuse to “really celebrate” until that one big occupancy goal was achieved. Villacis explained to me that this is the total opposite of what I need to be doing. Though he understood what I was doing he told me that in order to not only make continued progress in the areas where I was winning but to make even more progress with the big, big goal (in this case our occupancy) I needed to take the time necessary to celebrate those other accomplishments too because if I don’t whatever I accomplish will never be enough and I will always be in the mode of chasing no matter if and when I finally hit the target or not. Constant chasing would lead to continued frustration and the feeling that I was never enough.

Wow! For the first time this not only made a lot of sense to me but explained a huge reason why I was feeling the frustration that I had all these years even though I would continue to make progress I would also continue to wake up every day feeling more and more frustrated with where my life and business were heading. I discovered that this was the reason why.

A quick analogy of this: To put it simply it was like my kid would come home with their report card reporting ten classes. Nine of the classes my kid would be getting an A but in one class he would be getting a B+. Instead of celebrating a great report card and the (9) A's you would spend all of your time and energy berating your kid for the one B+. That was my problem for years. I was focusing on the one B+.

Now I Celebrate All The Time

Today I take the time to recognize the small wins and celebrate those. You may be wondering right now just HOW I celebrate those small wins? The first thing I do is take the time to reflect and recognize the wins and this is usually through my journaling. I don't just let them go by and move on. I do take the time to ACKNOWLEDGE them and actually feel them and recognize them. In addition to this other ways that are a little more involved that I may do this is taking a day off with Gina and doing what she wants to do, going on a long weekend trip, spending some time at the lake home, taking the family out to a nice dinner at one of our favorite restaurants, sitting on the patio smoking a nice cigar, etc. As you can see my celebrations are not weekly wild party "ragers" that go on into the night with the police coming by to stop the festivities!

Doing this consistently reinforces my progress, my confidence and my overall self-esteem and continues to

fuel me as I continue to work on and reach my ultimate targets.

Again, this is counter to what a lot of people tell you or even teach but I can tell you that this INNER CIRCLE strategy is a game changer and will make a big difference in not only how far you can go but how quickly you will be able to reach those targets in all 5 INNER CIRCLE areas.

Chapter 16

Painful But Necessary

As you start to allow INNER CIRCLE people, information and things into your life you will likely discover something that will give you some stress and even pain. You will probably discover through this process that there are people and things in your world that you need to distance yourself from.

Before I go into some details on this keep in mind that this is something that you will be consistently doing and monitoring. In other words, this is always evolving and needs to be in the front of your mind each and every day.

“Is this person, situation, thing, etc. serving me, or no?”

“Is where I am spending my energy, right now, serving me?”

Right now, even before you begin your INNER CIRCLE game you already know that there are these people and things existing right now in your life that are not serving you. If you take just a minute right now there is no doubt in mind that there are people in your life that are no longer serving you or the things in your life that bring you down and you have some tough choices to make. To keep them or get rid of them.

This is the potentially stressful or painful part. In order for you to grow and expand to your true potential using INNER CIRCLE you will have to make some changes with who you spend time with and what you do, pay attention to, etc.

Some of these choices can be simple. For example, if you like alcohol and honestly feel that you are probably drinking too much and too often then you can make a plan to either drastically reduce or eliminate alcohol consumption. Or, if your only exercise routine right now is walking from your car into your office every day for work then you know you need to make a change. These are simple things.

But when it comes to people this is different and harder. Especially when there are people that you have to be around or with during a given day that are not serving you.

So, what do you do about them?

There will be two groups of people that fit this category. Group 1 are the people that you can start distancing yourself from and it won't cause you much pain or stress because you do not have a close relationship with them. So, it may be a bit inconvenient with this group but doable.

Then there is Group 2. People that you are close to but are sucking your energy and your true potential. You know you need to make a change but how do you do it

without causing a bunch of drama or hard feelings?

Let's use an example of a good friend of yours. This is a person you have known for years but every time you get around him or her, they are negative and constantly complain to you about their wife, husband, kids, politics, etc. and want to drag you into their world of negativity and complaining. You like them well enough and have some nice things in common sure, but you know that if you continue to consistently spend time with them that this INNER CIRCLE relationship is not helping you it is actually hurting you. You see them at least once a week in your bowling league or your workout session at the gym and it is hard to avoid them. You also golf with them at least once a month too. How do you extract yourself from their world?

The answer here is to do it slowly. Sure, you can make the decision to just avoid them completely and drop out of their world today but that may cause you some issues and hard feeling you want to avoid. So, in order to avoid those hard feelings, extract yourself from their world slowly and be strategic about it. Maybe you start by dropping out of the golf league and using the reason that you have a project at work or at home (YOU!) that you are working on and need to give it priority, so, in the near future you will not be able to golf once a week. From this point on slowly start to remove yourself from all of the other things too. Take a few months to do this if need be. Pretty soon, after a few months, you will find that it was easier than you thought and now you have replaced that person that was

not helping you with someone or something, that is. I am not saying you eliminate them from your world permanently, which you could do of course, but by doing this slow strategic removal method from contact you will find in a matter of months they have moved to other things and so have you.

Another way of looking at it is simply thinking about who was your friend and who you spent time with say ten years ago compared to today? When I look back ten years ago and see the people and things I was spending time on compared to today, in many respects the people and things that I associate with today are totally different today for me vs. ten years ago.

Those Very Close To You

When it comes to those that you are unavoidably around every day it is a different story. If you love your husband or your wife but they tend not to be on board with what you are doing you can't really start strategically removing yourself from their world, it is just not that easy. To some degree the same may go for your kids or other relatives too. So what do you do?

You need to have a conversation with them about what it is you plan on doing. You need to tell them that you have decided to make YOU a main priority and by YOU getting better every day and reaching your true potential by implementing the game of INNER CIRCLE it will not only have a dramatic impact on your life but a huge positive

impact on their lives too. The important thing is that you need everyone on board to help you with this. How can they decide to be on board? By simply being supportive of your cause and being on your team and having them as part of your team in reaching your potential. They are part of your team by being behind you, positive and supporting when things are going well and even more so when they are not. They support you by letting you work on INNER CIRCLE without criticizing you and your plan. Even though those closest to you may be the most skeptical of you, assure them that you are working on your INNER CIRCLE team and they are one of the most important members of your team and influencers in your life and you need them to be on board with your cause, at the end of the day doing this together. Of course, you are the one that will be doing all of the INNER CIRCLE work, but the other members of your team will be very important as your daily cheerleaders and support people.

When I decided to quit my job at the prison and really go for my dream to be the best I could be in multi-family real estate, the first thing I did was have a handful of long conversations with Gina about what I wanted to do and how we could benefit by being on the same page. It was crucial that the woman I love, and the mother of my children and I were both in support of this goal. Not surprisingly, at first, she was not thrilled with the idea of me quitting my job and being an entrepreneur in real estate. We had a house, a child and responsibilities after all and there was a risk if things did not work out. In the end Gina got behind me and told me to go for it and we

will both deal, together, with whatever happens. Now, don't get me wrong, it was not a case of a five-minute conversation and Gina saying, "go for it". It was a series of conversations we had over a month plus period of time before we both were sure this is what we were going to do to support each other. She is and was truly part of my INNER CIRCLE, but it was not easy, and it was not automatic.

Now, let's say that she would have said NO and she was not behind this at all and would never be behind it. What then? What would I have done if she had completely shut me down? I simply would have continued to work with her over time to gain her support because I wanted her as part of my life. In short, I would have been very persistent. Sure, it could have taken say six months or even longer vs. a month for us to decide this was the direction we should take. Heck, it could have taken a year but in the end, it would have been worth spending the time to do this with someone this important to my personal INNER CIRCLE.

So, let's play this out. Let us say that we were down the road two years and Gina would never hear of me going into real estate and was adamant about me being a career person for the department of corrections and staying in my prison guard job for good. What would I do? Make the painful choice of either finally going for my dreams or staying in a marriage with a person that did not support my, and really our growth. Eventually, I would have had to make a hard and painful decision and if I felt that I truly

exhausted all of my energy and resources then it would have been time to move on and I would have some hard choices to make. There are no wrong answers with these choices, but I would have to make one otherwise we would live together with me being resentful for the rest of our lives and that is not a good way to live. Unfortunately, I know a lot of relationships that are like this and that is not what I would have wanted.

Of course, it is up to you to decide if this is the path you should take as you play the game of INNER CIRCLE. All relationships do not work out and after you have exhausted all of your resources and energy there may be a time where it makes sense to go through the pain of moving on knowing that you will be in a much better place in the future if you do. If you do not make this painful decision you will live with regret and resent yourself and those people around you for the rest of your life and that is worse than the short-term pain you may have to go through.

Chapter 17

Where To Go From Here? The Three Easy Steps To INNER CIRCLE Mastery And Living Life On Your Terms.

Well, my friend though this is not a long book you have taken in a lot of life changing information and really what has been presented to you that WORKS is simple in concept, but it is admittedly harder in practice. So, what is the easiest way for you to not only get started but also make INNER CIRCLE a daily part of your life so you can enjoy the benefits not just now but for decades to come?

Step 1. Make a plan. Write out your plan.

Your plan does not need to be super extensive but can be. Your plan can be on one page or on 10 pages, but you need a plan. Simply, take this book chapter by chapter and map out how you are going to implement the game of INNER CIRCLE. Do not overcomplicate this! Simply go through the book again and make your plan in all 5 areas.

Step 2. Give yourself a 100-day target for each of the 5 areas.

By giving yourself a shorter-term target to reach in each of the 5 areas it literally forces you to keep track on a daily

basis of how you are doing and makes sure you are not going to establish an unrealistic target too. I don't necessarily mind a yearly target but when targets get too long into the future, we tend to put less importance on the work necessary for us to hit our targets in the beginning because we have so much time. Also, the further out the target is the more likely our targets may be unrealistic. In short, we are pretty good at knowing, realistically, what we can achieve in 100 days AND we have a shorter fuse to which to do it, so, we check in, monitor, work on it more and spend more time thinking about it. This equates to progress!

Make no mistake that during your 100-day sprints you will have to make changes and decisions about what you discover about yourself. That is OK because that IS doing the work! We are not after perfection my friend we are after progress!

Step 3 When You Journal Every Day Do A Quick Progress Check In

Part of implementing and doing the work of INNER CIRCLE is journaling every day. Simply do a quick check of your progress in all 5 areas each and every morning when you journal. You can either journal about your progress (or lack of it) too or not. That is up to you.

Step 4. Teach Others The INNER CIRCLE Game

I guarantee you that once you start INNER CIRCLE in your

life others will notice and they will ask you what you are doing. You will be operating and vibrating at such a higher energy level that people will be automatically attracted to you. The best way to not only share your successes but also entrench these life changing habits more is to teach them what you are doing. Now, you don't have to start your own class every Wednesday night in your basement, but you can do simple things like share a strategy, share this book or even share a video that would be helpful to them.

I do this all the time, especially with books. For example, I tell the people I work with, my employees and my family about a great audio book, paperback book or YouTube channel they should subscribe to. I refer to them people they should follow and try to connect with or a movie that I think has not only entertainment value but some other value that can help them grow.

However, a "caution" for you with this is when you really start to use INNER CIRCLE and show up at a higher and much better version of yourself as a result there will be some people that are not going to like it. They will want the old version of you back. These are the people that will either attune themselves to accept your higher version each and every day or not. The good news is that those that are not going to like the new version of you and never will are the obvious ones that you will want to slowly start separating yourself from so you can work on being in and around those that support and look forward to being around the best version of you. Believe me when I say you

will be able to tell the difference between those that are on your bandwagon and those that are not. Now that you know this will happen you certainly do not want to spend any time teaching or talking to people about the new version of you that do not appreciate or will not appreciate that version of you. You are truly wasting your time and energy if you are going to try to talk people into not only the new version of you but also a possible new version of themselves. It will never happen with these kinds of people so do not waste your time. I made this mistake a lot and even find myself now once in a while doing it, trying to save people when in the end they don't want to be saved.

The good news though is when you are consistently and daily playing the INNER CIRCLE game AND sharing information on your game with others you are doubling the effect of INNER CIRCLE in your world. Like my mentor Raul Villacis says, "What you give the world the world gives it right back" and it is true. By sharing and supporting others with what you are gaining from INNER CIRCLE it speeds up your own progress even more. The interesting thing is that I am doing this now through you reading or listening to this book!

Step 4. Now Repeat The Process Every 100 Days

After your 100-day sprint I mentioned before is over assess how you have done. Assess the breakthroughs and progress you have made in all five areas but also assess where you did not quite show up to. Remember, as I said

before this is about PROGRESS not PERFECTION.

Once you have done your assessment take the time again to celebrate the progress and the breakthroughs you have made in the last 100 days. Once you have done that it is now time to start the process all over again for another 100 days.

By using the 100-day time frames it will create more progress and more mental and physical involvement from you to continually do the work. Just keep repeating every 100 days and watch and feel the progress. As I said before others will be amazed at how far you have come and where you are going and all it takes is what you have learned in this book and doing it every 100 days.

Now, go forward starting today and play the game of INNER CIRCLE with me. Do this every day and you will never go back. Do this every day and find that version of you that has been hiding inside of you and finally start to reach your full potential!

**SAMPLE BEGINNING INNER CIRCLE PLAN 100 DAY PLAN
(Use This Format 100 Days At A Time)**

BEING

*Meditate For 10 minutes every morning.

Why? To begin each day with less stress and apprehension and show up clearer and more focused.

How? Use a simple mediation app that I can access every day.

Target? To be more focused and energized every day.

BODY

*Workout a minimum of 30 minutes a day.

Why? To get my health back. To start getting my body back to the shape it was in 20 years ago so I can be more active in my personal and professional life.

How? Subscribe to an online workout program where I can do the exercises from home every morning without having to travel to the gym.

Target? Drop 10 pounds.

BONDS

*Schedule a date night once a week with my spouse.

Why? To bring us closer together and have time for us to share and grow even closer.

How? Each week we rotate who makes the decision for a mystery location for our date and what it is that we do.

Target? To feel and see that we grow closer together as a couple and team.

BEING

*Read or Listen to at least two books that can focus on

mental and spiritual growth.

Why? To strengthen me both mentally and spiritually.

How? By reading/listening 10 – 15 minutes each morning
or 10 – 15 minutes before bed.

Target? Finish at least two books.

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Darin Garman

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www.daringarman.com

darin@heartlandinvestmentpartners.com