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PUNCH YOUR OWN CLOCK

Proven Life and Business
Strategies for Freedom Lovers

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PUNCH YOUR OWN CLOCK

PROVEN LIFE AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES FOR FREEDOM LOVERS

By: Harold R. Elmore

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INTRODUCTION: DUPLICATE YOURSELF

"If you care at all, you'll get some results.
If you care enough, you'll get incredible results."

Jim Rohn, *The Master of Success*



There is no catch. This book is **FREE** because I learned along the way that my own personal motivator is taking every opportunity to help others. I enjoy equipping and inspiring driven individuals to create creative ways to make a living. I believe your business should work for you rather than you having to work for your business.

The joy of giving back has rewarded me far beyond what any income level ever could! Thank you for becoming part of that growing legacy.

I believe the contents of this concise book will strengthen your toolbox, allowing you to expand your own unique professional expertise and leadership capacity.

This book unlocks and simplifies over forty-three years of proven strategies for entrepreneurs and freedom lovers. These lessons were honed and perfected at my desk, on the road, and sitting quietly with my coffee while studying and imitating the masters. Guys like Zig Ziglar, Jim Rohn, and Ron Willingham have been trusted companions on my journey.

Truthfully, some of the lessons come from mistakes and regrets that I turned into opportunities for growth (we will discuss that principle in greater detail). Most individuals could become an expert in ten minutes or less once they grasp that they hold the capacity to reframe the things that have held them back and sabotaged their development.

I smile brightly when my peers occasionally refer to me as a master salesman.

I now work where I want and when I want, but it took years of consistent hard work to get here. You are just as likely to find me on my Harley Davidson as you are in my office. You may even find me taking month-long vacations with my beautiful wife, Donna.

I don't have it all figured out but I am willing to share the wisdom that has gotten me this far.

This book is my gift to empower you to achieve greater freedom in life and in business. Take it from my personal experience. You don't have to be extraordinary. You do need to be driven, coachable and consistent.

I will let you in on a secret to my own success. *My end game is not my own freedom. My end game is to make the amazing life of an entrepreneur available to as many others as possible.*

Investing in your own growth and development is key because, in the end, you will learn how to begin duplicating yourself. This shift brings exponential growth just beyond what many leaders would refer to as the tipping points in life and business. That is when who you have become as a leader and a business expert begins to have a ripple effect.

Let's begin this great journey. Grab your notebook or journal and ready to become equipped to ***Punch Your Own Clock!***

CHAPTER ONE: MY PERSONAL WHY

"I really enjoy the challenge and freedom of being my own boss. My success as an entrepreneur is enriched by knowing I am able to help other people obtain freedom in their own lives.

There is no greater reward than seeing another person craft a career that supports their desired lifestyle. It is hard to believe that I now work where I want to and when I want to. I guess you could say that I get to lead by example." Harold R. Elmore



Ice water has a way of waking you up. When you invite an accountability partner into your life and you are serious about it, you can expect to have a bit of cold water splash in your face from time to time. Such was a recent remark coming from my own accountability partner and mentor in business, as Leia bluntly bantered, *"So, when are you going to do it?"*

That was the wake-up call I needed to take action on a lofty business goal that I have been procrastinating. Her firm words nudged me to finally take the plunge. I am on an adventure toward attaining one of the highest business goals that I have ever set for myself.

I am writing this book to offer you a glimpse into the well-worn principles of success that have guided my journey. In the spirit of humility and authenticity, I will also share a few of the pitfalls that

caused me to stumble along the way. Some of life's most powerful teachers are our perceived mistakes and failures.

One of the reasons that I became a business owner was to mentor others on their own path. I openly invite you into the lessons and concepts that have guided my days as an entrepreneur. In a real way, you and I are on this journey together. My end game is more freedom over my days, along with the opportunity to equip you for greater freedom.

Let me share a memory that feeds my hunger for success as you awaken to a new level of motivation in your own life and business.

I can still remember that cool January morning. It was the first time that I awoke in Florida for a month-long vacation with my beautiful wife. I watched her sit peacefully in a chair by the large window in our rental luxury condominium. With a full view of the ocean, she remarked, "*Are we really here for a whole month?*"

We had left winter behind in our home state of North Carolina in exchange for a few weeks of sun, rest and re-connecting. It was a dream come true, and we now re-live that dream almost every year in that same location.

For many years, I could only imagine having this kind of freedom. After working for other companies and industries, I reached the conclusion that the best way to obtain freedom over your own schedule while crafting a lifestyle of your dreams is to take the path of the entrepreneur.

I am honored when my peers refer to me as a master salesman, but I don't want to mislead anyone. This path is possible for everyone but will only become reality for a few. Why? Because there is no get rich quick scheme out there. The only way to freedom (unless you are an heiress) is to do the hard work consistently.

With forty-three years of sales awards, winning teams, and many stories to my credit, I offer this concise book to those of you who want to break free from the daily grind. I have written the contents so that any person,

whether or not an entrepreneur, can apply the insights to increase their day-to-day sense of fulfillment and peace. Yet, in its truest intention, this book targets growing or upcoming entrepreneurs who want to bypass the struggles that cause most independent business owners to give up before they ever wake up to that month-long vacation.

I want to be like a friend who infuses hope and belief into you. At the same time, I need to warn you that the path of the entrepreneur is not for everyone. You need to possess passion, vision, courage, and a strong sense of adventure. You will also find integrity, maturity, and the ability to govern yourself with strong accountability to be useful traits for the journey.

If you have the heart, I am willing to share a few insights that have kept me growing, excited and engaged.

Punch Your Own Clock will offer you priceless insights into the top pitfalls that sabotage many entrepreneurs, along with my own proven strategies to overcome.

Let's dive into chapter two as we face our fear and insecurity head-on.

CHAPTER TWO: BREAK THE FEAR BARRIER

"There is no illusion greater than fear." Lao Tzu



Whether you are looking for more freedom in life, business, or both, we need to collectively admit that fear is at the heart of what sabotages most desires.

It has been said that while some fear failure, others fear success. Which is most true of you?

In this chapter, we are going to face our fears head-on. I love the way Richie Norton once said, "To escape fear, you have to go through it, not around." The only way I see that you can go through your fear is to first identify it.

I have already mentioned that I am currently working toward an extreme business goal. In a recent meeting with my own business coach, she suggested that I consider if any fear might be holding me back from going for that goal. I had to stop and have a hard conversation with myself. It was not like me to procrastinate or self-sabotage, yet I seemed to be feeding into a bit of both. Did I fear that I could not succeed this time? Was it that I wasn't sure I should set the bar so high as I get older? What was it?

In the midst of some soul-searching conversations with myself, I recalled an earlier time when fear made an attempt to rob me of the

sales success that I knew I was capable of. My original sales career took me door to door, calling on customers that I had never met or worked with. Some would call it cold calling. That name may come from the fact that this process would cause many to go into a full-blown cold sweat. We fear rejection and hearing the word no. Well, my success would prove to be hidden in the midst of a thousand no's along the way.

I will admit that hearing no too early in the day or too many times in a day could actually begin to open the door to fear. Looking back, the fact that I was navigating a painful divorce at the time also made the emotional game much more complex and challenging.

Paralyzing call reluctance became my response to the fear of cold calling. I knew I had to overcome this fear or I would be forced to return to a regular nine-to-five job.

Attaining my success goals at the time required me to make fifteen to twenty cold calls every day. I decided that the key was in the way I planned out my days. I would sit in my hotel room at night reviewing my calls for the next day. Out of sheer intuition, I would strategically place a few calls early in the day that I had a good feeling about. I reserved the best prospect for my first appointment of the day.

As a guy who has always lived life with humor, it was easy to craft a comedic entrance. A joke, a pun, or just a smile would accompany me as I walked through the door of a potential client un-announced. I almost always got to speak with a company leader simply because I approached each opportunity with enthusiasm, kindness, and laughter. That initial success felt early on would fuel my motivation to go the distance through the rest of my day.

When I encountered inevitable cynicism or negativity, I had those early morning success points to focus on. (We will deal with the topic of focus in depth in the next chapter as a key principle)

Now, it is many years later and my career has taken me in a totally different direction. The way I spend my days has changed; however, fear

is a bit of a stalker. It tends to show up right when you decide to dig deep and really go for a big goal.

I just answered my own question as to why I have been feeling a bit of fear as I face my own new goals. Perhaps I have been mentally entertaining a bit of intimidation or fear that I don't have what it takes to win another round. I am at a different stage of life.

That is when one simple encounter with my accountability partner changed everything.

Her challenge to me came in the form of an ice-cold question I first mentioned in the introduction, "So, when are you going to do it?"

She must not have seen my age or my doubt. Evidently, she was looking past all that was holding me back straight into my potential.

Stop and take in three key lessons I have touched on that you may have missed.

Number one, if you are ready to go to the next level, it may be time to invest in your own life and business coach. Forbes 500 and other business success entities will all tell you that the top CEOs all partner with master-mind experts that help push them to the next level.

You may need a focus coach, a procrastination coach, or a motivation coach. Whatever you define as your greatest hurdle(s) in life and business today is like a clue pointing you toward the partnerships that could launch you out of your potential into actual results. I will share contact information for my own coach at the end of this book as a place for you to begin that search.

Second, once you have your coach in place, it is time to secure an accountability partner. In my own experience, this should be someone who is not emotionally attached to the outcome. My wife may have a vested interest in my income levels, so she may not be the most objective. It is rare that a close personal relationship makes an ideal accountability coach, as objectivity is essential.

Third, in order to get onto the other side of your fear, you must first identify it. Take a few moments before you dive into the next chapter to ask yourself what it is that you desire most. Then ask yourself the hard questions. What fear has stood in your way of attaining that desire?

Having worked in direct sales for many years, I wanted to become an expert in recruiting strong sales teams. I must admit that this area continued to remain out of reach for me as I would whole-heartedly network, follow up, then follow through, only to find that my teams failed year after year. I knew that going to the next level in direct sales was directly attached to the passion and productivity of my team. My team members were often people of maturity and integrity, yet I watched many procrastinate and self-sabotage their own success.

I began to ask more personal questions that took me and my team on a deeper search for what was holding us back.

My own coach tells me that we don't grow or progress far past that place where we got stuck. Perhaps you were once let go from a prestigious job. Maybe you are divorced and deal with abandonment issues. You may feel alone in life after the loss of a loved one.

Taking a look back may be painful, but I can promise you from experience that looking back will often keep you from going off the road you have chosen. I'm thinking now of how many times that a glimpse into my rear-view mirror during high speed chases back in my younger days as a highway patrolman afforded me a greater perspective on what was happening around me.

See another lesson here. Your windshield on your car is much larger than your rear-view mirror for a reason. Proportionally, we need to be looking forward far more than we are looking back. You don't want to get stuck in the past. You only want to look there long enough and often enough to learn from the lessons that can only be found with a backward glance.

Whether it is life or business growth, or both, that seems to elude you, you may want to start with an honest appraisal of the emotions, events, and patterns that hold you back.

If my car was attached by a strong cable to a heavy weight, I would only be able to drive forward until I reach the end of my leash. It may be time to sever the chords that are holding you back. Forgive others and yourself. Pull out your journal or legal pad and write a letter letting that lost loved one know that you are going to honor their memory by fulfilling your greatest potential. Take another sheet of paper and write to that employer or personal contact who caused you to live out of a sense of rejection or abandonment. Write, just as if they were going to get your letter, letting them know that they do not hold the power to hold you back. Forgive, release, and let go. These simple acts will propel you forward with fresh momentum.

If I had been in touch with my team members and all of their baggage from the past that fed their fear in the present, I would have retired early in life as a wealthy man. I say that because a team is only as strong as the weakest link. I wish I had known years ago what I now know. We need to take time to heal from the past before we move forward. That will ensure that we do not self-sabotage on the journey to our greater successes.

I have now learned that when I see a person pause and procrastinate, fear of failure or fear of success is lurking close by. I recognize it in you because I first had to find it in myself.

Those who fear failure have often been labeled as a failure somewhere in their own rear-view mirror experiences. Those who fear success are often battling guilt or the tension of wondering how others around them will perceive them. I have had business partners lose a loved one and go on to feel guilty for accomplishing what that other person will never have the chance to do. I have known others who have negative friends or family that try to hold them back or drag them down. Each scenario requires a special path.

Ultimately, I am going to answer to God, my Creator, for how I invested my potential. I do not believe that I can honor my own potential if I give another person more authority over my life than I am willing to give to God Himself.

If you like movies, I suggest you watch the family-friendly movie called Aquila and the Bee. Perhaps you actually want to make this exercise a family event, as the movie portrays a young woman who unexpectedly taps into a champion-level talent, but finds it hard to grow in the face of cultural expectations that try to hold her back. She finds herself bullied and belittled as she seeks to develop her talent and skill. The story becomes even more intriguing when she identifies the perfect coach, but he refuses because he is stuck in the past and has nearly shut out the world, drowning his own skill and passions in grief and depression.

This would be a great way to invest a couple of hours as you seek to uncover any hidden fears while developing coaching strategies and accountability tips that will launch your life and business to the next level.

You guessed it. When life gets hard, I go to the movies. I once heard it said that there are two master teachers in life, my own mistakes and the mistakes of others. I prefer to learn from the proven path of others if I can avoid making mistakes of my own. I often find powerful life and professional lessons embedded in fiction and non-fiction stories. I enjoy learning from others, whether the story highlights mistakes or successes.

Now, let's set our focus on the large windshield, the vision that lies ahead of us. Picture (mentally envision) where you are headed, your desired destination. Map out your route and give yourself permission to detour if you see yourself coming up on a familiar pitfall ahead on the road.

This is a journey, an adventure, not a perfectly mapped out road trip. You will make wrong turns and miss a few roads. But the wise traveler admits a wrong turn and makes quick corrections. The wise traveler who has the most fun makes a few friends and takes their best photos in the few moments that they do linger on that side road that wasn't planned.

Here is the bottom line. Take it from an old guy who still loves to ride my bright yellow Harley Davidson Road Glide. Stay in the driver's seat of your own life. Accelerate a little harder. Take the turns with a sense of

adventure. Celebrate discovering your fears and weaknesses, because in doing so, you may just find a shortcut that will keep you from going down that dead-end road in the future.

No one sums it up better than the late, great Norman Vincent Peale when he stated, "Any fact facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, for that determines our success or failure."

Putting our fears in the right place is an important step in resetting our attitude and our outlook on the future. Refuse to beat yourself up, realize you are smarter than you think you are, and get out there and ride like you mean it! Live like you mean it! Work like you mean it!

Chapter Strategies Summarized:

- Identify your FEARS and put them in their place in the rear-view mirror of your past.
- Hire a COACH who has a proven track record of going where you are headed.
- Secure an ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER who is emotionally unattached to your outcome.
- Learn from the MISTAKES and SUCCESSES of others.
- Hit the RESET button on your attitude toward your priceless future!

CHAPTER THREE: DON'T DIVIDE YOUR FOCUS

"My suggestion would be to walk away from the 90% who won't
and join the 10% who do."

Jim Rohn



Do you want to be in the 10% who succeed or the 90% who just daydream about it? One practice that is universal to the top 10% is a radical focus. No one succeeds without mastering this practice.

Focus fuels momentum and momentum holds the power to sustain your success long term.

If you want to sharpen your level of focus, you will want to silence your phone, put up the do-not-disturb sign, and test your own ability to digest the next few pages without disruption or distraction.

This simple exercise will only take a few minutes of your time, but it will highlight an important reality. As you find yourself thinking about your to-do list and your lunch destination, you will see just how hard it really is to use laser focus.

It is so hard that most give up. I am convinced this is a key dilemma that divides the pack. I have had to work hard to attain winning focus in my own business endeavors.

Who do you want to travel with? The marginally successful or the wildly successful?

Last month, I enjoyed one of the best months of my entire history as an entrepreneur. It was the same month that I finally committed to a large, new business goal that I had been putting off.

I immediately invited my business coach and my accountability partner to hold my feet to the fire. To be honest, I have always found laser focus to be a huge challenge.

In a recent meeting with my coach, she asked what made last month different than any other month. I quickly remarked, "Focus!"

I went on to explain to my coach that I could almost feel a mental shift occur the moment my accountability partner pushed me to decide if I was going to tackle my goal or just keep talking about it. I realized that I needed to do it or quit.

So, there you have it. Do it or quit! This is my one-phrase advice on how to elevate your focus to the next level. You first identify the goal, then you must decide whether to do it or quit.

The more clear the goal, the more specific you can get about what it will take to achieve it. Once you get clear, the only thing left to do is sharpen your laser focus and go for it with all you've got.

It may sound too simplistic, but it really is just that simple. Perhaps it is time for your mental shift. What goal keeps coming up in repeated conversations that you hope to one day achieve?

My own business coach tells all of her clients that someday never comes. What does she mean? She means that someday never comes.

You know how we are as humans. We go around bragging about someday. Someday I will take that class. Someday I will reach out to that friend I have been thinking about. Someday I will finally take that dream trip.

Someday goals coupled with no focus, no plan and no strategy simply become regrets. It is time to shift out of someday into the power of NOW!

I have had great success along the way, but if I were to be brutally honest with you, I could have retired decades ago if I had gotten focused and remained focused early in my game. (If you like this level of authenticity, you will appreciate knowing that we will discuss authenticity in greater detail later in the book.)

Like high tide and low tide, my focus level has ebbed and flowed, causing me to lose precious momentum. When I reflect back over the years, I realize that I may have only worked at 2% of my total capacity. That is a bold statement, but I know my own potential and how far short I have fallen even in the midst of measurable successes.

I had a recent revelation and it skyrocketed my success last month beyond what I had known in years. My business was the same, the products were the same, my team was the same. So what changed?

My focus was spot on last month, but that was not the revelation. In a conversation with my accountability partner a couple of months ago, I realized that despite my success, I was also discontent. I knew I could accomplish more.

There was the revelation. My discontentment held the clues to my untapped potential. I decided to invite my discontentment to become my greatest motivator.

I refused to allow my discontent to depress or disillusion me. Instead, I put it to work for me.

When I have felt discontent over the years, I have often fallen into the trap of depression, despair, and hopelessness. When our minds decide to play in that devastating mental playground of negativity, we come away with our focus tarnished and with our goals feeling out of reach.

Because negativity never gets most people too far down the road to success, we have labeled discontentment among the negative. But when

you reframe this powerful mental beast, it can propel you where no other motivator can go.

Learn to ask yourself powerful coaching questions, just like all seasoned coaches would do. Where am I discontent and disillusioned? How can I reframe this negative into a force that is trying to highlight my path for the future?

I have spent many of my years as an entrepreneur involved in direct sales, the process that some might refer to as multi-level marketing. Here, I wish to share a few key insights for those of you who have a product or service that you wish to sell.

Duke Duvall is an amazing business leader and the author of *How to Conquer Giants*. I once heard him speak on the topic of duplicity. He was referring specifically to an individual who tries to work for multiple companies at once.

There are even more applications to his powerful word duplicity. It could refer to a person who is constantly distracted, with their mind divided into multiple directions. It would also mean a person who works full time at a traditional job while also attempting to create a supplemental income working for a direct sales company. Now, don't misunderstand me. If you have always worked a traditional job, there is wisdom in building your own business to a certain level before releasing that consistent income. That is not what I am talking about here. I am referring to the person who makes a career out of duplicity. Let me explain.

I am a nice guy, perhaps too nice in some ways. My heart is to help, a good trait that can tip out of balance, causing me to enable others out of the goodness of my heart. I have had to identify this tendency in myself in order to not allow it to sabotage my success. Here are a few things I have realized:

I will no longer recruit team members who look to me to be their source of focus and motivation. I will be their friend, but I won't recruit them until they mature to the place where they are ready to own their own success. To bring them into the business and make them part of my

team creates a drain on the direction, focus, and goals of the entire team. That places the weaker person in a vulnerable place where others could begin to resent them if my skills of motivating and training get sidetracked into professional babysitting.

I am also hesitant to recruit team members to my sales force that cannot clearly articulate their goals and vision. Do they want more freedom, more income, more vacation time, or a more schedule flexibility? Some just want to get away from a job they despise.

You need to be running to something, not just running away. If the vision is not clear, the focus will be divided. The goal also needs to be timely and realistic or the new recruit will grow disillusioned and lose focus.

It has been said that you cannot serve two masters. My own business coach recently shared how she had to realize that she spent too many years trying to be everything to everyone. Her own success began to shift as she became laser clear about her true mission as a coach and author. Clarifying our mission and vision acts like a knife sharpener, sharpening and shaping our focus.

Those with laser vision, a clear mental picture of the success they desire, are far more likely to live and work with laser focus. When you value where you are headed, you value it enough to give it your all.

I wish I could remember who said it. I have attended so many entrepreneur conferences and read so many books that they begin to blur together. The leader said that you should set your goal, meet it by 2:00, then go fishing.

Ok, so you may not be able to escape to a favorite activity by early afternoon every day, but don't miss the heart of his point. What he is suggesting is laser focus. Map out your day and attack it with such gusto that you accomplish more in a few hours with laser focus than many accomplish in days when they lack focus.

Issues related to focus have done more to either propel or derail my business success over the years. I can see where a lack of focus marked

years of stagnation. I can also recognize that my seasons of extreme focus yielded results that amazed me. They continue to amaze me to this day. I will share the story of one particular banner week toward the end of the book that holds memories that still impact my work life day to day.

When you drive a car or especially a motorcycle, you focus (if you are a good driver). When you walk across a busy highway, you sharpen your focus.

Why would we attribute sharper focus to our commute to work than we give to our actual work tasks? I am not suggesting you stop focusing on the road and safety. I am suggesting that you take that focus with you from the driver's seat of your car into the driver's seat of your own business efforts.

Focus can take you further than your expertise. Do you believe that? I have seen it with my own eyes. I have watched the most talented among us fail due to duplicity and a lack of focus. I have also watched the least likely individuals climb to the top like a person who lives their whole life to summit Mt. Everest.

While a lack of focus has disabled many talented entrepreneurs, I have trained hundreds of ordinary individuals with drive and determination. I prefer to recruit a trainable person with focus than a talented person whose attention is divided and whose vision is clouded.

One example comes to mind. I once recruited a great family man who wanted to be home to help raise his young children. That sounded like a lofty goal. I saw his determination. So I recruited him onto my team.

He knew he wanted to be home more as his family grew, but he had a hard time clarifying the business goals that would make that vision possible. He had a desire to stay home, but he lacked a measurable plan for making it happen long term. He got into direct sales because he didn't think he had any other options. It was a default plan. As his reserve money began to run out, his enthusiasm plummeted.

Can you guess what happened? He failed. His failure was not because he lacked the potential. Despite his vision for staying home, he failed to connect that desire to a focused approach to that would sustain his stay-at-home dad plan. He was finally forced to quit and return to a traditional job because he failed to apply focus to a proven business plan.

Here is your lesson from his story. Your personal vision must be supported by a strong business plan. I failed to recognize this imbalance. I have often wondered how this outcome could have been different if I had coached him prior to recruiting him.

I learned a lot through that situation regarding my responsibility to screen my recruits more closely. His disappointing outcome made me realize that desire is not enough. Only desire coupled with a clear vision that is attacked with focus will succeed.

Take a few 'focused moments' to review your own practices, distractions, and success strategies as it relates to our topic of focus.

If you are overcoming your fears and honing your focus, you are well on your way to making your dreams a reality!

Chapter Strategies Summarized:

- Make it a habit to PRACTICE FOCUS, tuning out every distraction and laser focusing on your most important task of the day.
- Join me in my mental shift, DO IT OR QUIT!
- Stop saying someday and do it NOW.
- Put DISCONTENT to work as your most powerful MOTIVATOR.
- Avoid the demon of DUPLICITY. Remember, a mind that is divided is destined to fail.

CHAPTER FOUR: CULTIVATE AUTHENTICITY

"Make a pact with yourself today to not be defined by your past. Sometimes the greatest thing to come out of all your hard work isn't what you get for it, but what you become for it.

Shake things up today!
Be You ... Be Free ... Share."
Steve Maraboli



Which interests you more? Results or methods?

After many years of studying and implementing many proven business growth methods, I am far more interested in results!

Lee Boyann is the author of one of the few books that made the recent cut when I de-cluttered my office. He is the author of *Successful Cold Call Selling*. His classic book is full of advice for any person who is trying to sell a product or service, whether you work for yourself or another company.

Here is one quote that always stood out and challenged my approach. "In a nutshell, I can tell you the difference between my top producers and the ones just getting by. My top producers are motivated by a desire for pleasing results. The mediocre ones are motivated by a desire for pleasing methods."

In Chapter Three of his timeless book, Mr. Boyann made a statement that I have found to be true:

"Observations from my consulting practice and my training of thousands of salespeople and managers on the job have convinced me that change just does not take place without all three of these elements:

1. A clear definition of exactly what is to change.
2. A firm commitment to make it happen.
3. An action plan to carry it out."

We have given attention to clarifying one's personal why, to overcoming fear and to cultivating focus in our first three chapters. Now, I want to take a look at one of the action plans that has yielded me consistent results over many years in business. I want to talk with you about the power of authenticity.

I opened this chapter with a quote by Steve Maraboli. I included it for one reason. He is right!

If you become successful, you will most likely stay in your chosen business for many years to come. Perhaps you have already accomplished that. If so, you can help me remind the younger generations of entrepreneurs that business is about far more than the money you can make. In its most pure form, it is more about who we are becoming as leaders and business owners.

The older I get, the more I care about the benefits that my skills and products bring to my trainees and to my customers. I find myself thinking less about myself and more about my impact. Right now, I am thinking about how this book might benefit you and how today's work might bless someone I do business with.

As I have gotten more connected to my own personal why of giving back and serving, I have found it crucial to my daily contentment to live out of a place of deep authenticity.

There are plenty of arrogant, self-serving individuals in the world. I don't know what product or service you sell. I do know this. How you sell it matters. Who you become in the process matters.

I have read countless stories and even had coffee with a few heartbroken peers facing divorces and unthinkable agony because they lost sight of what really mattered. They got caught up in a game of financial gain, but they forgot to ask what it would cost them in the end.

Many begin to dress different, talk different, and work differently to mimic their mentors and heroes. There is only one problem. You never honor a hero by becoming him or her. You honor them by becoming YOU!

Authenticity has gotten me into many doors. Authenticity is not a business strategy for me. It is a life strategy!

Long before I realized that my authenticity had the ability to break the ice on a cold call, it first served to remind me who I am becoming. I answer first to God and second to my wife. I look in the mirror and the legacy of what I have to offer my family and closest friends stares back at me daily.

If you want to stand out in any business community, start by being you. I heard an amazing missionary speak a few years back at a local conference. She simply stated, "Copies are worthless, but originals are priceless." Heidi Baker

I am not supposed to become the next Zig Ziglar or Stephen Covey. I owe it to those who have mentored and guided my success to become the best Harold R. Elmore on the planet.

You were uniquely created for a unique purpose. No one else can fulfill your destiny. Only you.

I want to encourage you to tap into authenticity, first as a supreme way to thank God for creating you. Second, you will find that you are most comfortable and fulfilled when you are truly being yourself. God created you in His image, which means your words hold creative power. Be

careful what you speak over yourself, your loved ones, and your business associates.

If you don't like who you have become, do yourself a tremendous favor. STOP! Pause and reflect. Don't keep rushing down a road that is taking you toward a person you never intended to become.

Get in touch with the blueprint for your personal development before you take hold of a new blueprint for your business or career. If you reverse those two, you will end up disliking who you have become. You will also likely only find value in performance and accomplishment rather than character and integrity.

For me, being authentically myself has gotten me past more gatekeepers in my days of cold call sales. Today, as a business owner selling excellent products that improve personal and environmental health, that same authenticity is the bridge that connects me to my sales team and to my customers.

I like joking around. I am friendly by nature. I use this to my advantage. I allow humor, especially jokes about myself, to break the ice when I make a new contact. In my years of cold calling, I actually traveled hundreds of miles a day in a region known for its intense summer weather. I would often walk into an office and proclaim that the heat had melted the hair off of my head. They would quickly notice a bald guy with a large smile. Most couldn't resist engaging me in more conversation. I was ready to then get serious and tell them why I had stopped by.

Perhaps you are not outgoing, but you are scholarly. You may wish to find articles and information to pass out freely to those you wish to do business with. Your expert advice can be just as successful of an icebreaker as one of my bad jokes. Perhaps even better!

My favorite motivator of all time was Zig Ziglar. I loved hearing him speak. I have never forgotten how he once stated, "Imagination is the strongest nation on earth."

Let your imagination run wild. Think of what comes naturally for you. Consider your personality traits that your family and friends say are your strongest.

Now, make developing these unique traits as much a part of your ultimate business plans as your goals themselves.

Sincerity and authenticity have opened countless doors for me over the years, and they will do the same for you.

Sure, you will get the occasional no and hit the occasional roadblock. Authenticity puts you in touch with the real you. When you know who you are, you can leave those places behind knowing it wasn't meant to be. You can walk away with your dignity, your humor, and your expertise intact. Go forward in pursuit of those you are truly meant to connect with.

My humor did take me too far one day. Let me equip you to never make my mistake. I shifted the joke off of myself and quipped a bit too personal to the secretary of a leader I desired to meet with. There is no excuse for this kind of behavior. Looking back I am willing to admit that I took humor too far. She didn't think I was funny and she turned out to be the owner's wife. You might guess how far that got me with that particular company.

Before you call me an insensitive idiot, let me finish this thought for those who are tracking with me here. In my development of my unique self, I made a few blunders early on. I tried too hard, which takes you beyond authentic to idiot faster than a Porsche can go from zero to sixty.

Funny is only funny when no one gets hurt! Authentic is only authentic when you become your best in the process.

I am not encouraging reckless, careless, insensitive behavior.

What I am advocating for here is for you to begin to invest in yourself as a priceless original.

Most anyone can sell or do business. So then, what will set you apart as a chosen expert? Your uniqueness ... the sum total of your original combination of education, skill, experience, failures, and passion.

I am funny. I am also brave. After my divorce, I was left penniless and heartbroken. I remember being sent on a sales assignment when my boss did not know that I lacked the money for the gas or hotel. My pride did not let me divulge the depth of my financial struggle.

Talk about a motivator. I had to either sell something the next day or face embarrassment at the fuel pump and at the hotel check out desk. The pressure was on.

Failing was not an option.

I am happy to state that there were no unpaid bills or bill collectors chasing me back home. I stepped up to the assignment with determination and joked my way to a few sales records that year.

I have learned that desperation can be a powerful incubator for authenticity if we allow it to be.

I also realized as I reflect back that my authentic self is a better listener than any fake version I have ever tried to portray. For me, when I tried too hard, I overcompensated.

My mind goes a mile a minute, as I am somewhat distracted by nature. I have found that entering a room determined to just be me actually has made me a better listener. Sure, I may tell a joke or two, but I am also the guy who really cares about the story of the person on the other side of the business deal. The compassion and caring that are central to my DNA lead me to really want to hear how that person is doing and what challenges they may be facing.

I connected the dots one day when I realized that my sincere questioning around a person's issues actually created a door-opener for me to share solutions that I had access to.

I studied nutrition and alternative medicine for years. That amateur expertise coupled with the products I now represent have often converged to empower a customer to overcome asthma, allergies, diabetes, and even serious eye diseases. I was actually one of my first clients, researching to overcome my own diagnosis of Fuchs Dystrophy. I had no desire to lose my vision, so my motivation was high. I have gone on to share what I learned with others as a natural overflow of my desire to help bring balance and health to the lives of anyone who is ready for positive change.

Authenticity has put me in touch with the best me, made me a better listener and led me to research business and health strategies with passion and devotion.

It has led me to really ask and answer the question of what challenges, problems, and issues have I been placed on this earth to solve. In that way, it is a catalyst to the grand development of my highest identity.

Authenticity (and my bad jokes) has also opened a few doors that changed the path and the level of my success. You have the most fun when you can just be yourself. I now realize that I rarely ever got past the gatekeeper of a company to the CEO unless I was having fun.

When you are authentic, you will become quick to give credit to those who have taught and supported you along the way. I now know that my success is just as much about you as it is about me. You are reading this book and that helps me to know that my life matters. If you become better because of this information, my legacy will expand. If you actually take action on what you are learning, your legacy will expand.

We need each other! That is the ultimate lesson of authenticity. Arrogance says the world only needs me. Authenticity says that together we can impact the world.

Thank you for joining the community of freedom lovers that are making this little book part of your journey. It is my sincere and authentic hope that you will be encouraged and empowered to never quit. The world needs the original YOU and your priceless impact.

Chapter Strategies Summarized:

- Only practice methods that create proven RESULTS.
- Put all three pieces in place on your CHANGE CHECKLIST.
- Stand out to your potential customers by being YOU.
- Include your plan for developing your AUTHENTIC SELF in your simplified business plan.

CHAPTER FIVE: TURN YOUR APATHY INTO ENTHUSIASM

"Apathy can be overcome by enthusiasm, and enthusiasm can only be aroused by two things: first, an ideal, which takes the imagination by storm, and second, a definite intelligible plan for carrying that ideal into practice."

Arnold J. Toynbee



In *Punch Your Own Clock*, I set out to address several common areas that hold the power to determine our success when creating a lifestyle business.

We tackled our personal why, fear, focus, and authenticity in the first four chapters.

In this final chapter, I want to candidly discuss apathy.

I know what you are thinking. You are thinking that the fact you are reading a business and life development book places you in the zone of those who have already overcome apathy and have been propelled toward a life of purpose.

That is where we must humbly take note. Whether or not a person is apathetic by nature, apathy is a virus that attacks every person at some time in his or her life. Like a common cold, it is just part of life. Those who see themselves as too motivated may actually fall prey to this

devastating emotionless emotion because they are denying that it could pertain to them.

I have seen teams rise and fall on this one subject. A great entrepreneur can have a compelling why, overcome fear, sharpen focus, and develop great authenticity, and still end up falling into the trap of apathy.

Merriam-Webster defines apathy as indifference or a lack of interest.

Dan Millman once said, "Willpower is the key to success. Successful people strive no matter what they feel by applying their will to overcome apathy."

If you have already headed down the path of the entrepreneur, then you know that what I am about to say is a fact. Apathy is a potential roadblock that will show up time and time again whether you want it to or not.

If you are new to this path, let me give you some radical advice. Determine a strategy that will keep your willpower intact on the hard days and on the distracted days. The only way you will succeed is if you first succeed in your mind, in your determined will.

Note how the quote says that people take certain actions despite how they feel. That is one key to the life of a successful entrepreneur.

As my business coach challenged me with the idea of making this book available, she told me about one of her writing inspirations who has chosen to write one million words per year. This young man said he had to create what he calls his writing habit. He gets up and writes whether he feels like it or not. In that way, he immunized himself against the virus of apathy. Once you are infected, look out. It can be hard to cure.

Apathy may come disguised in the form of feeling distracted or a bit off your game. It can creep in during a family emergency or a vacation that you decide to extend because you now have control over your own schedule.

These things in and of themselves are inevitable realities of life. The problem is when we fail to quickly bounce back and our vision begins to cloud and our thoughts begin to derail.

The problem of apathy needs to be identified and addressed head-on. Dr. Leon F. Seltzer, Ph.D. wrote on *The Curse of Apathy: Sources and Solutions in Psychology Today*. In his initial remarks, he said apathy can be your worst enemy. He went on to say that apathy is an epidemic that affects nearly everyone at some point in life. He described it as, "the feeling of not feeling." Here is another excerpt from his insightful article:

"True, apathy is a feeling – though, like going numb, it's one so muted or held with such unrecognizable tension that you may not feel it at all. But its also an attitude. And sadly, that attitude is one of indifference ... unconcern ... unresponsiveness ... detachment ... and dispassion. Such an attitude saps so much of your energy that you feel lethargic, listless, and enervated – almost too paralyzed to act, and certainly without the will to do so."

That is exactly why I am challenging you to develop a defense and strategy that you will to keep acting on because this expert in psychology stated clearly that apathy can rob you of your will.

I can think of many times when I had to will myself to act when I certainly did not feel up to it. Some of the hardest years were the years following my divorce. It was in those years that I had to keep practicing my proven methods even when I just wanted to give up and quit.

Some individuals struggle more with apathetic feelings than others. The path of the entrepreneur is probably not a good fit for the guy or gal prone to apathy. Why? Well, if you don't work, you won't eat. Some people actually need more structure and external accountability, say that of a boss inclined to fire you if you are late one more time this month.

Entrepreneurs seek freedom of the open road. We love making out our own schedule, determining what our days look like. Therein lies the risk of apathy lurking nearby.

Less structure is a great place for apathy to take up residence. It is hard to discern apathy from a lazy day off that I have earned. Besides, who is going to call me into account if I grow a bit indifferent along the way?

I found a simple solution in the form of a tough-as-nails accountability partner. Leah just looks me in the face on my hardest days and says, "Well, then, when do you plan to get on with your vision?"

There are two important sides to apathy for the entrepreneur. Self-apathy and customer apathy. Once you deal with yourself, you will become better equipped to identify and overcome apathy in those you target for sales.

Larry Alton authored an article titled *Three Small Business Strategies to Overcome an Apathetic Audience*. In his opening remarks, he identifies how smaller businesses cannot afford to overlook this potential business-destroying beast. A large company may have enough customers for the engaged ones to outweigh the apathetic ones, but those of us working on a smaller scale have no room for apathy.

Mr. Alton gives three great strategies that can help stir enthusiasm and engage motivation among your target audience (my thoughts added in italics):

Differentiate yourself. It is up to you to show your customers why a relationship with you trumps a relationship with your competitors. Find a way to get people talking. We need to create a brand and outcomes for our customers that compel them to tell others. They are not going to talk unless you exceeded their expectations and met a real issue with a viable solution.

Make the customer experience unforgettable. We live in a culture that takes much for granted. The days of a written thank you note or a personalized gift are almost unheard of. Find a signature way to serve your clients, then follow up unconditionally. Thank them, send them a helpful article or link, refer them on when another business might serve them better.

I am going to add my own fourth point here. Consider how you might make referring easy for your customers. Start by asking if they feel

comfortable and willing to refer you. Be ready to embrace any constructive remarks that feel insulting initially. Stay calm and defer any defensiveness because constructive feedback is a free way to learn how to improve your overall product and approach.

Once your customer tells you they are willing to refer to you, continue the conversation with a less obvious question. Ask if they have what they need in order to make the process of referring business your way easy and convenient for them.

Those from the old school may want business cards they can pass along, while those from the new school may be willing to post an online review to their favorite social media forums with your website or contact information.

Make yourself memorable, then make referring easy and automatic.

I want to close with a story that encapsulates every topic we have discussed, from fear, to focus, to authenticity and even apathy.

I call the story my Brinkley, Arkansas week. Many years ago in the early days of my life on the road as a salesman, I had a week that marked the rest of my career in ways that I still recall. From that one week, strategies emerged that I still use for myself and when I am training news salespersons.

I was at a place in my business where I felt desperate for a record-breaking week. I let that desperation drive me to carefully choose the town I would target. The town had all of the demographics that indicated it could be a great place to target with my products.

Before Monday arrived, I took time to set up my strategies for the week. I knew that I needed to make seven sales so I mapped out a plan that would create the activity needed to generate seven sales.

There is one tip I still use today, almost daily. I focus more on the activity needed than on the number of sales. Why? I can control my activity, but I cannot control sales. Activity goals have proven to bring in the sales I need over and over.

I didn't know that week if the sales would come in the first meeting or the last, so I made it a point to stay focused, enthusiastic, authentic, and energized for every meeting. I did not want a random apathetic moment to throw a wet blanket of indifference over the encounter that held the key to my sales goals for the week.

I then decided to use a tip I had learned from Brian Tracy that was new to me at the time. He suggested finishing up by 2:00 pm. So I structured my days to work efficiently and effectively for a focused period of time, after which I would reward myself with the chance to relax and plan out my next day.

I hit the road that Monday morning headed for Brinkley, Arkansas. I decided to totally focus on the mission ahead, so in an uncharacteristic fashion, I refused to turn on the radio to hear the news. Instead of news and meaningless content, I decided to pop in a motivational cassette (now I am showing my age).

I was excited to see where my new level of focus and my intentionally shorter work day would lead me. I felt my motivation build as I neared my destination.

Once I arrived, I worked fast and focused. The week ended with more than enough sales and at least one day that I was able to finish even before 2:00 pm.

I had a banner week. I had practiced my ultimate level of focus and authenticity. Over the years, I had lost my fear of the word no. Hearing that word had simply become a motivator for how I could leave an unreceptive place quickly and head for another opportunity.

I had also learned another lesson that I once heard referred to as the Twenty Thousand Dollar Lesson.

A customer who once told you no will not say yes in the future if presented with the same offer. You need to either move on quickly or find a way to significantly re-frame the offer to better appeal to their needs and interests.

My banner week fueled what has become a lifetime enthusiasm toward entrepreneurship. I don't travel as much for work as I once did, but I do still enjoy the open road. I love a new challenge in business as much as I love a ride on my Harley Davidson.

I have certainly faced fears and even some apathy at times when my goals grew stale and my insecurities began to surface. But I am living proof that you can Punch Your Own Clock. I am just an ordinary guy with an extraordinary vision. I know that if your vision is compelling enough to keep your heart and mind engaged, you will be unstoppable.

Take it from my story. I have not arrived alone. I have built teams that have encouraged and sharpened each other. I have also never gone long without a coach, a consultant, and an accountability partner.

Build those supports long before you need them. Surround yourself with a master network of mentors, coaches, and accountability. The next thing you know, a trusted peer might refer to you as a Master!

Enjoy Your Journey!

Harold Elmore, Proud Husband of Donna Elmore
Entrepreneur & Master Salesman
Author of The Tension Point and Punch Your Own Clock

Please don't miss the author's final words at the end of the book, including:

- Author Contact Information
- A Special Invitation ... and ...
- A FREE Bonus Coaching Gift!

CONTACT INFORMATION & A SPECIAL INVITATION:

YOU MAY BE ASKING ... IT IS POSSIBLE TO ***PUNCH YOUR OWN CLOCK?***

YES, IT IS! AND THE ANSWER MAY BE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK.

CONTACT ***HAROLD DIRECTLY*** TO LEARN MORE ABOUT IMMEDIATE
BUSINESS AND FREEDOM OPPORTUNITIES

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Contact Harold directly:

- To learn about immediate opportunities to develop your own business and personalize your lifestyle.
- To discover products that will maximize your health and energize your environment.
- To gain coaching and mentoring in sales and entrepreneurship.
- To grab a signed copy of his first book titled The Tension Point (co-authored with his Business Coach, Kim Fletcher)

Visit his website: Harold invites you to visit his team development website: www.switchtofreedom.com/hrelmore. Then click on the VIP Center and enter your information and the password: proven.

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Coach yourself to *Escape the Mundane*

FREE COACHING BOOK: <http://www.kimfletchercoach.com>

Hi! I am Kim Fletcher and I am proud of the business partnership I have with this amazing friend and entrepreneur. I am especially excited about the book we co-authored a few years back titled *The Tension Point*. You should grab a copy from Harold right away if you wish to further develop your personal and business IDENTITY and VISION.

I also endorse Harold for those of you who may be seeking a business consulting or business opportunities. He is a trustworthy man of integrity who is serious about his commitment to giving back as a mentor and friend.

If you are in the market for another high-value **FREE BOOK**, I would like to offer you a copy of my 2017 release titled *Escape the Mundane: Create a Life You Love on Any Budget*.

Harold and I wanted to offer you this link as an added bonus, as many of the coaching concepts go hand in hand with *Punch Your Own Clock*, providing priceless insights and strategies for anyone who is ready to create a life you love on any budget.

Simply visit: <http://www.kimfletchercoach.com>. Your copy is waiting.

Feel free to share both of our FREE eBook links with your friends and associates!

Enjoy!

Kim Fletcher, Life and Business Coach, Author

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Many thanks!



