

Maximize Your Brilliance

Focus on What You Know and Get Into the Flow!



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Darlene Willman, CPPC, CSMC

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and Get into the Flow!*

Darlene Willman, CPPC, CSMC

*The Accomplish Coach
Certified Positive Psychology & Business Mentor*

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A Note from Darlene

Dear Brilliant Reader,

This book was written for all of you that have been searching for answers about who you are and what you're meant to do.

To be completely transparent, I struggled personally with this for many years. I have worn many hats, accomplished several amazing things, and yet I still wasn't sure what I was meant to do.

As a person who loves to learn new things and try them on for size, I know it can be frustrating. Even a little depressing, not knowing the answer.

I am not an expert in finding your brilliance. This is something that only YOU can do. It truly is an INSIDE job.

I can, however, share with you my own experiences and why it's important to know where you should focus your attention, so you can get in the FLOW faster than I could.

In the meantime, I invite you to join a few other friends of mine at the "*Lead with Your Brilliance*" community on Facebook. It's FREE to join, simply go to **YourBrillianceGroup.com**

I look forward to seeing you there!

Darlene

Acknowledgements

I am so grateful for my husband, Greg, who has stood by me throughout every new adventure and crazy business idea. I appreciate all his patience, love, support and encouragement.

He is my rock and has been for over 20 years.

I also want my children to know how brilliant they are. They are my shining stars and I'm extremely proud of them.

I love you all very much.

About the Author

Darlene Willman has been in business since 2002 and has been featured in several books, received several awards, including the Women in Business Champion of the Year from the Small Business Administration in 2008 and has launched several successful companies.

She has over 100 published articles and has hosted more than 400 events in her career. She's the Founder of the U.S. Small Business Conference, the publisher of Accomplish Magazine and Host of Accomplish Radio Show which has reached over 100,000 listeners!

Darlene is certified in several different areas including Positive Psychology, Stress Management, Life & Business Coaching, and the Science of Happiness.

Now, she spends her time helping her clients develop their strengths and lead them through a journey of self-discovery with an option to develop their own unique small business. She holds mostly group trainings, both virtual and in person. In addition, she enjoys using her intuitive gifts as well as her own personal strengths to enhance the experience of her coaching style.

Her top five strengths according to StrengthFinders are:

1. Futuristic, 2. Learner, 3. Belief, 4. Maximizer, 5. Intellection

And her top five strengths from VIA Character are:

1. Honesty, 2. Leadership, 3. Creativity, 4. Humor, 5. Curiosity

Myers-Briggs ENFJ (Same as Oprah) and DiSC ~ High I & D

She's a Capricorn with a Leo Rising and Aquarius Moon

Darlene lives in St. Louis with her husband, kids, an inherited cat along with their newly adopted puppy. She enjoys traveling to the coast, new experiences, making others laugh, writing and *absolutely loves to learn*. In fact, she's probably in a program right now!

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Positive Psychology and The Meaning of FLOW.....	5
Do What You Love	11
Self-Discovery and Awareness.....	17
Hints of Brilliance	21
Uncover Your Brilliance through Books & Movies.....	25
Become the Expert You Were Meant to Be	29
How to Develop Your Own Personal Mission Statement	33
Your Brilliance and Your Purpose	37
Affirmations, Gratitude & Meditations.....	41
Intuition, Insights, Signs and the Law of Attraction	49

Introduction

*You'll Grow Most Where You're Already
Strong ~ Marcus Buckingham*

There are no instructions or user manuals to show us how to live our lives the best possible way. Believe me, I've spent most of my life searching for the answers. It would be so helpful to have a built-in compass that points you in the right direction or maybe even have a thermometer that lets you know when you're getting HOTTTER or COLDER. (Remember that game?)

I'm here to tell you that you can shine a light on where your brilliance is and I'm going to show you how to turn on that flashlight!

Something has brought you to this point and drawn you to reading this book. Maybe you can't seem to find your niche, secure a job or find the right type of career to focus your energy on. Maybe you're like me and find everything fascinating. I can't tell you how many times I've been drawn into something new, tried it for a brief amount of time then switched to something totally different.

Maybe I was just bored, or didn't feel really CONNECTED to it or maybe, just maybe...

I was afraid I'd FAIL at it.

There's that "F" word, front and center. What if I failed at what I was doing? Would I be humiliated? Would I go broke or lose money? Would people be judgmental and voice their negative opinions?

Well, the truth is, I did fail. And, not just once!

I had several companies that I had started that never seemed to really take off. Looking back, I realized I didn't use my strongest assets, my true talents and natural gifts. I was busy trying to earn a living to support my family.

The reality is, your life will pass by quickly whether you make the decision to own your brilliance or if you choose to ignore it.

Imagine how great you'll feel once you can clearly see what your true genius really is!

I will show you how I went through the process to determine what my natural gifts are and how I have changed my life and business for the better.

These next few chapters will show you the exact steps to take so by the end of reading this book, you'll have what you've been searching for...

YOUR BRILLIANCE.



Positive Psychology and The Meaning of FLOW

*Energy Flows Where Attention Goes –
Rhonda Byrne*

For some of you, you know what “being in the FLOW” really means but for those who don’t know, I’ll share some basic information about FLOW, so you can aspire to be in it, as often as possible.

Wikipedia categorizes FLOW as a part of psychology. In this case, it falls under Positive Psychology, a newer domain of the traditional psychology which has only been around since 1998.

Wiki’s definition of Positive Psychology is as follows:

Positive psychology is "the scientific study of what makes life most worth living", [1] or "the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life". [2] Positive psychology is concerned with eudaimonia, "the good life", reflection about what holds the greatest value in life – the factors that contribute the most to a well-lived and fulfilling life.

I began researching this branch of Psychology several years ago and I was fascinated by what I found. In a few words, it’s profoundly simplistic and yet so powerful. The foundation of it recommends to look at what’s working instead of what’s not.

I remembered an interview I did on the Accomplish Radio Show with relationship expert, Mort Fertel, who shared with me his biggest secret to working with married couples. He suggested instead of going to a marriage counselor and talking about all the problems that are happening, he said, “Go back to what drew you together in the first place and do more of that.” I didn’t know at the time, he was using positive psychology in his approach of keep doing what works and almost replace what doesn’t work, until you forget about why you were arguing in the first place. Fall in love all over again.

Martin Seligman, the founder and pioneer in positive psychology, identified five elements that measure “well-being” known as P.E.R.M.A.

They are:

1. **P**ositive emotion — Can only be assessed subjectively
2. **E**ngagement — Like positive emotion, can only be measured through subjective means. It is presence of a flow state
3. **R**elationships — The presence of friends, family, intimacy, or social connection
4. **M**eaning — Belonging to and serving something bigger than one's self
5. **A**chievement — Accomplishment that is pursued even when it brings no positive emotion, no meaning, and nothing in the way of positive relationships.

In this book, I'll be sharing with you more about the importance of knowing your strengths, attributes, natural talents and gifts and getting into the FLOW.

Let's look at what FLOW means by Wiki's definition.

In positive psychology, FLOW, also known as the zone, is the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. FLOW is characterized by complete absorption in what one does, and a resulting loss in one's sense of space and time.

Has this ever happened to you?

You get busy doing something (usually something you love to do) and then look up and several hours have passed by! I experience this when I'm writing. I'm so wrapped up in my thoughts and trying to get them out of my head and onto the paper (or type them on the screen) that I completely tune out what's going on around me. Before I know it, I've worked through breakfast, lunch and almost dinner!

Positive Psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, describes the mental state of FLOW as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost."

How it Feels to Experience Flow

According to Csíkszentmihályi, there are ten factors that accompany the experience of FLOW. It's not necessary to experience all of them to get the feeling of being in the FLOW.

Here are the ten factors:

1. Clear goals that, while challenging, are still attainable.
2. Strong concentration and focused attention.
3. The activity is intrinsically rewarding.
4. Feelings of serenity; a loss of feelings of self-consciousness.
5. Timelessness; a distorted sense of time; feeling so focused on the present that you lose track of time passing.
6. Immediate feedback.
7. Knowing that the task is doable; a balance between skill level and the challenge presented.
8. Feelings of personal control over the situation and the outcome.

9. Lack of awareness of physical needs.

10. Complete focus on the activity itself.

Achieving FLOW:

FLOW most likely will happen when you are faced with a task that has clear goals that require specific responses.

"Flow also happens when a person's skills are fully involved in overcoming a challenge that is just about manageable, so it acts as a magnet for learning new skills and increasing challenges," Csíkszentmihályi explains. "If challenges are too low, one gets back to flow by increasing them. If challenges are too great, one can return to the flow state by learning new skills."



Do What You Love

*Success is not the key to happiness.
Happiness is the key to success. If you love
what you are doing, you will be successful. –
Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965)*

We are busier than we have ever been, working long hours and feeling under more and more pressure.

How do you spend your days?

For many people, work and pleasure are seen as separate, with work being a chore that has to be done to pay the bills. It doesn't always have to be like that. Although we don't have to love everything we do, we do need to gain some enjoyment from most of what we do.

Take a moment to see if it is time to start over and do something you love, something that adds the pleasure factor back into your working life?

Think about what matters to you and why you do the things you do. For each person that means something different. What aspects of a job are important to you?

List them.

Think about your dream job. Does it motivate and inspire you? If not, think again. It must mean something to you; otherwise you will not be prepared to put in the effort to achieve what you want.

Ask: 'What am I prepared to give up to make this happen?' 'What would I love to try?' 'What options do I have?' 'What are my talents, skills and qualities?' 'How can I utilize them in my ideal job?' How can you take an idea and turn it into reality? Get creative and think through how you could make money doing what you enjoy.

Starting over again requires courage, confidence and commitment.

Hold on to your sense of purpose.

Believe in yourself.

Ignore the critics, for there are bound to be some, and face your fears (there will be many of those too!). Ask for help from those

people who can assist you and get supporters to keep you motivated. Research things that interest you and, if necessary, go back to basics and learn new skills.

Develop a clear vision of where you'd like to be in 10 years' time – and why. Write it down. Be specific. This will provide you with something to focus on. Think creatively. This may not happen quickly, but if you work at it gradually, day by day, it can happen.

And if starting something new is not for you, how can you love the job you already have?

You can't always control your situation, but you can always choose how you react to it. Your attitude reflects how you face every day and has an influence on the people around you.

Choose to be positive.

Are there areas of your job that you can improve on? Who can you discuss this with? Is a change to a new role in the same company an option?

Examine the possibilities. Your job does not define you, but how you do it does.

And why bother?

Doing what you love gives you a good reason to get up every morning. Your life will be challenging, most certainly, exciting, most definitely. Doing the things you enjoy which give you personal fulfilment and satisfaction has been shown to contribute to good health and longevity. Don't wait for perfect circumstances to start.

Begin now!

*It's a helluva start, being able to recognize what makes
you happy. ~Lucille Ball*

In this chapter, I'm going to address your career choices. You were probably forced into making a choice about what to study in school long before you knew what you really wanted, right? Remember that old question everyone asked you...

“So, what do you want to be when you grow up?”

Or, “What are you going to major in College?”

How in the world are you supposed to answer that question at such an early age? You have nothing to compare it to yet. You don't know if becoming a doctor is the right choice or if building homes is more your style. All you know is what grades you got in school and which classes you seemed to excel at.

Let me share with you a simple technique that is super easy to do.

Take a few minutes and list out all the jobs you've ever had.

I'm talking about everything.

What job did you have in high school? When you were in college? When you lived at home or out on your own? How about after you graduated college? When you got married, when you had kids, when you moved, etc.

List your title and/or position at each one.

Next, jot down how long you were at that job.

Then, why you left it.

Highlight the top 3 place you stayed at the longest. Then write at least one or two things you liked the most about those positions.

This will give you your first hint into what you're brilliant at.

Write that down.



Self-Discovery and Awareness

*Find what makes your heart sing and
create your own music. ~Mac Anderson*

Now, let's look at what most people do when they are searching for solutions.

They ask GOOGLE! (Just Kidding!)

When you are applying for a job, a lot of companies require you to go through skills assessments or personality tests. I can't tell you how many of those I've done in my lifetime. The truth is, I really love taking them! I believe the more I can uncover simple truths about my own skills and personality, the easier it will be to find my right place in this world.

Although many employers will ask you what your weaknesses are, I find it beneficial to not even think about your weaknesses. Instead, I want you to focus ONLY on what you're good at. Yes, you should be aware of what your weaknesses are but those are just that...WEAK.

There are several online tests you can take that will show you what your top strengths are. In fact, I have always recommended people read the book, *"Now, Discover Your Strengths"* or the newer version called *"StrengthFinders 2.0"* In the back of the book there is a code to enter on their website, so you can take their online quiz for free.

Another great test is called the "Myers-Briggs" which many of you have probably already taken at one point or another. I found that Tony Robbins offers an online quiz that you can take to give you a full report on your personality and leadership style.

One of my favorites is one I learned about when I was going through my certification to become a Positive Psychology Coach. It's an online survey to identify your character strengths through an organization called VIAcharacter.org and it's a free tool you can use.

I've recently taken a test to discover my own teaching style. That exercise was spot on and extremely accurate. I encourage you to always be looking for new assessment tools and take them. The

more you understand who you are, deep down on a subconscious level as well as how you are on a conscious level, the better you'll adapt and be prepared.

It's all*
in the
{Att*Tu*de}



Hints of Brilliance

*With the New Day Comes New Strength
and New Thoughts ~ Eleanor Roosevelt*

You may not realize it, but you are always doing what you're brilliant at, almost every day.

Sometimes, it's subtle and almost invisible.

It's things like caring for your family or pets, or organizing your closets, or planning a family vacation! Maybe it's simply reading a book or working out, paying the bills, writing emails or social media posts.

Heck, it could even be gardening or housecleaning!

EXERCISE:

Take a few minutes and list out all the activities you do on a regular basis.

What do others seem amazed by what you do?

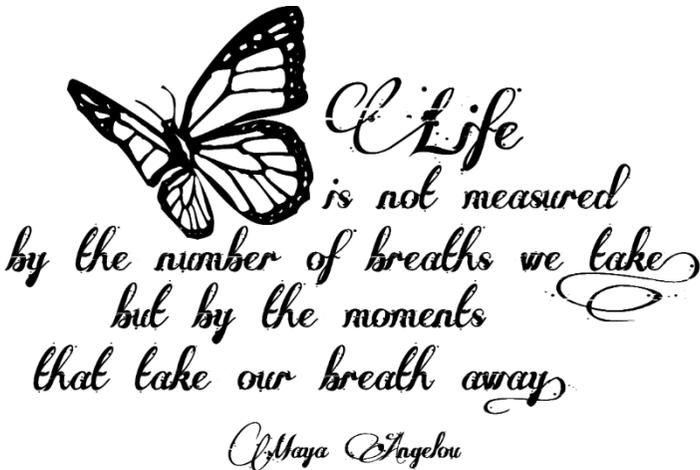
This holds a HUGE clue to what your brilliance is all about.

If you've ever heard people say, "Wow! You did that?" or "That's amazing! How'd you do that?"

Write down a few things that come to mind now.

Use *LinkedIn® Featured Skills & Endorsements* to see how other's see you!

I love the tool that LinkedIn® created that allows your connections to give their recommendation on what they think you're good at. Of course, it's not 100% accurate but it will give you a quick snapshot of what appears to be your top skills.





Uncover Your Brilliance through Books & Movies

*So often time it happens, we all live our
life in chains, and we never even know we
have the key. ~The Eagles, "Already Gone"*

What kind of books do you read the most?

A friend of mine once said she took all her books off her shelf and then opened the cover to see what Genre she read the most. This got me thinking about all the books I've read and what topics I liked to read about. It's amazing to see how much this can really tell you about what you're naturally drawn to and how it helps you develop your brilliance.

Here are a few things to look for when you do this.

1. Identify if you read mostly FICTION or NON-FICTION

2. List out the categories that the author lists for the Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data. This is how traditional libraries would list you on their shelves. For example: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* written by Stephen R. Covey has it listed as 1. Success – Psychological aspects. And 2. Character

3. You can also list what GENRE the book is so for the same book as above, it's Non-Fiction – Self-Help

4. Go to Amazon and see how they have the book listed and what section it is featured in. Typically, this is where the author thinks his/her book fits the best. As with the above example if you look up the same book as in step 2. you'll look for PRODUCT DETAILS and see this:

Amazon Best Sellers Rank:

#142 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)

#6 in Books > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure

#8 in Books > Business & Money > Skills

#9 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Leadership

These sub-categories are like gold nuggets! They almost tell you exactly what your brilliance is all about! Take special notes on these!

What movies have you watched repeatedly?

This one will really shed some light on your brilliance. I'm always amazed when I ask my clients about their favorite movies because it tells me so much about them. This is like your books on your shelves but with the kinds of movies you watch and why you watch them.

EXERCISE:

1. Make a list of your TOP 3 movies you've watched more than 3 times
2. Write three words to describe each of those movies (that's a total of 6 words)
3. Write three words to describe what feelings you had while watching them (another 6 words)
4. Now, highlight any duplicate words if any

HINT: Those are like more golden nuggets! These words you use to describe the movies and how you felt watching them give you major insight into your brilliance.

Just for fun...

If you could meet someone alive or dead, who would it be?

1. List 5 people
2. List 3 words that describe each of these 5 people
3. If you were to share a taxi ride to the airport with each of them, what question(s) would you ask during this ride?

These 5 people are really who you'd like to be yourself! And what you admire about them is what you admire about yourself! Think deeply about the questions you'd ask them for the answers are what you've been searching for within yourself.

Become the Expert You Were Meant to Be

*Never become so much of an expert that
you stop gaining expertise. View life as a
continuous learning experience.
~ Denis Waitley*

As you develop your core strengths, you can apply them in your field of interest. To be known as an “Expert” you must believe in yourself and your ability to know the ins and outs of your topic.

I mean be obsessed with it.

Become a master of your craft.

This won’t happen overnight but if you stay the course and use your brilliance, it can and will happen.

I once heard to be considered an expert you need to do the following:

1. Focus on ONE thing
2. According to Brian Tracy you must read at least 100 books on your topic.
3. Malcolm Gladwell says that it takes about 10,000 hours of practice to achieve mastery in a particular field.
4. You should interview the top leaders in your chosen field
5. Write a book
6. Speak about it
7. Practice, Practice, Practice

I’m sure there are more ways to be considered an expert but let me share a secret with you, expert status isn’t an absolute, it’s all relative.

An expert can be someone who has enough knowledge to help others with confidence and conviction.

So, believing in yourself and having confidence goes a long way in becoming the expert in your community.

Confidence relies in your ability to tap into your genius. Rely on what you know the BEST and the knowledge will flow.

Your life
is an occasion.
Rise to it.

-Suzanne Weyn



How to Develop Your Own Personal Mission Statement

I don't care how much power, brilliance or energy you have, if you don't harness it and focus it on a specific target, and hold it there you're never going to accomplish as much as your ability warrants. ~Zig Ziglar

Your personal development and motivation is the key to a successful and happy life. If you want to feel fulfilled from day to day, then you need to know what makes you tick and how to get it. You need to be able to meet your goals and even exceed them and with a personal mission statement you will be that much closer to being in the position to do so.

Even businesses are getting in on these mission statements. They is a great way to make it known to yourself and others just where you want to be and what your goals really are. When you know your goal, you can be constantly working towards them. If you simply bumble through life you will not stay on course with the same amount of steady ease. Everyone can benefit from a mission statement and if you want to get where you are going you will start writing your own today.

Your personal mission statement is not only about getting what you want out of work or the people around you, it is also about giving back to the world and your loved ones. This mission statement will help you to find out just where you stand in the world and help you to find out just what you should be doing for those around you. Take your time with this mission statement and see how you can change the world for the better. If you know that there is more that you could be doing for the entire world then this will help you to realize those dreams as well.

Your personal mission statement will help you to evolve into the person that you have always dreamed of becoming. If you are sick and tired of being the kind of person who simply lets things happen to them then a mission statement is for you. You will become a person to reckon with, a powerhouse of determination and skill. This statement is going to change your entire life for the better and it will begin to do so immediately. As soon as you take the step to start

writing it you are going to begin to grow and evolve in ways that you ever thought that you could.

Start with just a simple pen and paper. Sit down and write about the person that you are today. Do you like yourself? Do you think that there are areas in your person that you could improve? Write about it and how you are going to change for the better and how you are going to do it. Focus also on your strengths and your abilities. Write how you want to change and in what areas of your life as well as about the goals that you want to see yourself meet over time. Which goals are short term ones, and which are long terms goals. Write down all the personal things that you want to see happen and change in your life and you will change from that day forward.



life is an
ADVENTURE

Your Brilliance and Your Purpose

*At the intersection where your gifts,
talents, and abilities meet a human need;
therein you will discover your purpose. ~
Aristotle*

By now you should start to see a clearer picture of what your true talents, gifts, strengths and genius are and why they are so important.

In fact, your brilliance is like a fingerprint.

No two are the same.

When you figure out your winning combination and find you're "Sweet Spot" you'll be ready to live your life with full intention and purpose.

I know that finding your real purpose in life can be a challenge. You don't know anything for sure and there are no guarantees. However, I can tell you from my own journey and experience, that our purpose takes time to reveal itself.

Lots of people say their children are their purpose. And, I must admit, they play a SIGNIFICANT role in our purpose. But is that the only purpose in our lives?

Perhaps we play this game of chess with each strategic move we make, we get a little closer to finding the answers.

In my own opinion, our purpose in life is to SERVE others. As we discover our own brilliance, we share it with the world (or at least in our immediate circle or community) and LIFT people up as we continue the CLIMB.

We're all connected.

Each person holds a certain amount of brilliance that is needed for the next person to move to the next level. And, the only way to know that brilliance is for that person to share it.

Don't hold back your brilliance.

There is a universal law known as the "Law of Reciprocity" which it basically says that when someone does something nice for

you, you will have a deep-rooted psychological urge to do something nice in return. As a matter of fact, you may even reciprocate with a gesture far more generous than their original good deed.

Become a teacher.

For everything you learn, TEACH.

We all learn something, whether it's from reading books like this one, attending a class, watching a video on YouTube, doing hands-on experience, or whatever it is, we must PASS IT ON.

In my opinion,

THIS IS YOUR PURPOSE.



Affirmations, Gratitude & Meditations

*For each new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food, for love and friends,
For everything Thy goodness sends.*

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Being me is wonderful.

My life is filled with happiness, peace, and limitless opportunities. I accept myself as I am. I know that I am worthy of love, compassion, and respect.

I am content with what I have. I value my spiritual faith and loved ones more than any material possessions. My self-esteem is based on my actions rather than on anything I own.

I enjoy what I do. Cleaning the bath tub can be fun when I play my favorite songs and think about how I am creating a comfortable home for my family.

I live in the present moment. I let go of regretting the past and worrying about the future. I immerse myself in what is occurring right now. I slow down and listen to my senses. I think positive.

I notice the miracles that surround me. I marvel at the beauty of nature and the ingenuity of human beings.

I stay calm when things fail to go my way. I recognize that setbacks and obstacles are inevitable. I believe that my struggles are temporary. I can turn things around. I learn from each experience. My persistence pays off.

I dream big. Challenging goals excite me. I know that I can do amazing things when I am willing to put forth the effort.

I give generously. I find gratification in serving others and sharing my riches.

Today, I celebrate my blessings. My life is as beautiful, meaningful, and wonderful as I choose to make it.

Self-Reflection Questions:

1. How would I describe a wonderful life?
2. How can life be wonderful and difficult at the same time?
3. Why does true happiness come from within?

How Gratitude Can Change Your Life

Thanksgiving, the holiday that has its origin in the Puritan's tradition of giving thanks for a good harvest. The Puritans weren't the first in this regard. Many religious and societal traditions are based in the concept of gratitude. What all these traditions may or may not have known is that recent scientific studies point to a direct link between gratitude and a deep satisfaction with life. Not only is it good to give thanks, it is good for you to do so!

In a study at the University of California at Davis, Professor Robert Emmons came up with some very interesting and illuminating results from his research project on gratitude and thankfulness. Professor Emmons found that people who kept gratitude journals on a weekly basis exercised more regularly, reported fewer physical symptoms, felt better about their lives as a whole, and were more optimistic about the upcoming week compared to those who recorded hassles or neutral life events. In addition, participants who kept the journals were more likely to make progress towards their personal goals in life.

The study also notes that people with a strong disposition toward gratitude have the capacity to be empathic and to take the

perspective of others. Grateful individuals place less importance on material goods; they are less likely to judge their own and others success in terms of possessions accumulated; they are less envious of wealthy persons; and are more likely to share their possessions with others relative to less grateful persons.

If the practice of gratitude is so beneficial to our overall well-being, how can we learn to cultivate it more? My gut feeling is that the type of gratitude we normally experience when we see others that are less fortunate than ourselves is not enough. If it were, we would all be much happier as we are surrounded by evidence of the suffering of so many people in the world today. It seems that we need to look directly at our own lives to be truly grateful and thereby reap the benefits of gratitude.

The concept of gratitude is directly related to the idea of the power of positive thinking. Concentrating on what we do have versus what we don't have seems to be the key. Reminding ourselves on a daily basis of all the things that come our way keeps us grounded in gratitude instead of wishful thinking. At any given moment during the day we can stop in the moment and be thankful. Keeping a record of these moments, journaling, is what Professor Emmons recommends. When life becomes overwhelming we can look back at our musings and see just how lucky we really are.

Indeed, further results of the University of California's study show that a daily gratitude intervention (self-guided exercises) with young adults resulted in higher reported levels of the positive states of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, attentiveness and energy compared to a focus on hassles or a downward social comparison (ways in which participants thought they were better off than others). There was no difference in levels of unpleasant emotions reported in the three groups.

As we are told not to sweat the small stuff so why not be grateful for the little joys in our lives? I just got back from running to

the store. Upon entering the house, which was warm and toasty compared to the rainy, cold day outside, I was greeted by dog with tons of kisses and love. He now lays by my feet as I type away. The house is peaceful and quiet like my own personal sanctuary. I glance out my windows and see nothing but the foliage that envelops my home. These are the little moments that we can become attuned to in gratitude. There are hundreds of such moments in any given week if we are mindful of them. They add up and build upon one another to create a more centered, abundant and positive perspective on life.

Furthermore, the research reports that grateful people do not deny or ignore the negative aspects of life. Again, my intuition tells me that given the perspective that gratitude gifts us, we are undoubtedly more equipped to handle life's challenges. One's attitude can determine how effective one is in coping with what life throws in our direction. Our perspective on life determines our reality. If we approach things with a perspective grounded in say the belief that life is unfair, everything that turns up will look unfair. But as we practice gratitude, we are endowed with its gifts of optimism and the necessary energy required to take on our lives.

How can you start to practice gratitude? Begin with the art of mindfulness, being totally present in the moment. Notice all the little things that surround you, things you might take for granted if you hadn't stopped to really look. Offer acknowledgement of these small gifts much like my moment in a warm and peaceful home with my dogs. Write them down in a gratitude journal. The little things make up the fabric of our days, our months, and our years. Oftentimes we hardly notice them because we are so caught up in the task of living. As they say, stop and smell the roses.

Stop and consider what you have been given in life.

Are you blessed with financial security?

Do you have loving children, a supportive family?

A nice home?

Are you in good health?

Do you enjoy your work?

Do you have wonderful friends?

What does nature give to you?

Do you have a supportive and loving mate?

Concentrate on what you do have and not what you lack.

Research also tells us that the act of giving back to the world has much the same effect as gratitude. Interestingly enough, Emmons' study also found that participants in the daily gratitude condition were more likely to report having helped someone with a personal problem or having offered emotional support to another. The act of gratitude and the act of giving back therefore reinforce each other and lead to the inevitable ...more fulfilling, meaningful and happy lives.

These are things that we all know to be true in the abstract and, yet we can take them from the abstract into the specifics of our own existence. Start practicing gratitude today. Pull out a notebook and write down just one thing. Commit to adding to this journal everyday. An appropriate time might be before bedtime when you have time to reflect on your day. Think of all the good things that occurred. Perhaps a brief but meaningful exchange with a child or a friend. Maybe a great cup of coffee. When you put down your pen and paper, you might just go to sleep easier. That's yet something else for which to be grateful.

Gratitude
is the Best
Attitude

Intuition, Insights, Signs and the Law of Attraction

This is the nature of genius, to be able to grasp the knowable even when no one else recognizes that it is present. ~Deepak Chopra

Do you listen to your gut instincts? Or have you had a sense about something that told you that you were on the right path? Better yet, have you had a strong reaction to something when it was the WRONG thing for you?

These kinds of questions I would include in the Intuitive category for finding your brilliance.

Let me share a story with you.

When I was just getting started in my business, back in 2003, I used to attend a lot of networking events. And I mean A LOT of networking events. Almost every day of the week! Sometimes twice a day! I loved to meet new people and to ask them a bunch of questions about themselves. I seemed more like a reporter uncovering a story than like a person who was promoting their own business. I remembered saying to a few friends of mine that I loved networking so much that I wished I could get paid to network! A few months went by and I got an email from one of the groups I networked at saying they were taking applications for an Executive Director position. Of course, you know I just had to apply. And, as fate would have it, I got the job! I was able to network all the time AND earn an income.

I consider myself very intuitive. In fact, I have come to realize that if something comes to my attention in the form of a subtle sign at least twice, I take notice. I used to say three times but now that I trust that the universe will always find the best solution for me, I only need the sign twice! Sometimes, it's that small inner voice that is telling me what to do next or maybe it's the phone call or email I got that makes me look closer. I even get messages from opening up a book in a huge library to the exact page and paragraph with the sentence I am supposed to read.

I'll let you in on a little secret. I've been a professional astrologer in the past. There, I said it.

Are you still with me?

I don't consider myself in the "woo-woo" category but in the "a-ha" category. I feel very connected to what we are divinely guided to be, do and have. I have a gift of knowing what a person should "look closer at" or take the time to strengthen or embrace more of a certain thing.

I'm sure you also have your own intuitive way of knowing what some of your natural talents and gifts are. Sometimes, all you need to do is take a moment, slow down, and FEEL how your mind and body responds to a certain thing. You'll instinctively know when you have a HIT or not by the reaction you get.

The Law of Attraction to Create Your Dreams

You have heard all about the Law of attraction. You've watched the DVDs, read the books and listened to the audios. You have visualized and affirmed your goals. Yet, still you have not realized your dreams. Isn't it time you decided once and for all that you deserve the life you have always wanted? Believe me when I tell you that you can have, be or do anything you can imagine. Wherever you are at this present moment you can be where you want to be sooner than you think. Let me show perfection behind the Law of Attraction.

Are you aware that a mere 2% of the world's population holds around ninety percent of the entire world's wealth? A mere 2% of our world's population openly admit that they have everything they want and are living their fantasy life. But how come only 2% of the population achieve their most worthy and desired goals? It probably wouldn't surprise you to learn that most of the 2% that have all the

wealth are the same people who are also living out their fantasies (independent of money). They have perfect relationships, health and social lives. Is it that these favored few are just born lucky? Is it simply their destiny to go through life with effortless opportunity after effortless opportunity while you are you destined to scramble about for the scraps from their table?

These people create their own lives. They build a world that they love and enjoy spending time in it. They are creators. They create their own lives and carve out their own destinies. However, it is not only this small minority of the planet that can create their lives. Every one of us creates own life, everyone – without exception!

There is a fundamental truth behind all reality. Do you want to know what it is? Good, let me tell you. The fundamental truth behind reality is this: Your thoughts are creative. Not some of your thoughts but all of your thoughts and you have, on average, 50,000 thoughts every day!

What are your thoughts creating?

The only difference between the creative 2% of our world's population and the other 98% is how they think! They think differently from the rest of the world. It is through our thinking that we send out powerful vibrations that begin a process of manifestation that is governed by the Law of Attraction!

What you think about, you bring about!

The Law of Attraction an almost mystical concept for many of us and hard to believe for many more but it exists nevertheless, and you ignore its eternal workings at your peril. Wake up! Whether you just want to play a bit with the concept, or you plan to become a fully conscious attractor of the life you want, you owe it to yourself to check it out!

If this great law doesn't really exist, then you have lost nothing and gained some new ways of finding out what doesn't work. If,

however, and you will assuredly find that this is true, you discover that it does exist and you can use it to attract whatever you want, you will have the keys to the Universe! Do you think it's worth the risk and a little of your time to investigate this Law?

We all know about those people who drift through their lives attracting opportunity after opportunity after opportunity. We all know someone who sits idly while things fall into their lap (usually, from our point of view, undeservedly) or those that have an unnerving knack for being in the right place at the right time. Do you understand that they have a certain quality that you do not? Do you know what it is?

This characteristic or quality has been referred to by many names. Being in the 'flow' or being in the 'zone' are two of the most commonly used. It is the quality of being at ease in life and just allowing life to come to you rather than chasing after it all the time. They live lives that seem to be almost effortless and attract almost effortless opportunities. I know of people who believe it is just "the luck of the draw" and others who swear that it is a mathematical certainty that someone, somewhere has to be that lucky – they truly believe it is all just a matter of averages and from a population of six billion someone has to be born lucky.

It may appear that these people are overly favored by some omnipotent being or just by life at large. However, neither is true. It is only because these people think and act in a unique way than the rest of us do. They have made "luck" and "coincidence" a habit.

The rest of us live with a mentality that believes life must be hard and anything worth achieving must come with sacrifices and struggle. It is a type of victim mentality that immediately sets the Law of Attraction into motion and brings us more life experiences that confirm our current belief!

It is time you studied this great “Law of Attraction” and come to understand exactly how it works. Don’t you think it’s time you put it to work in your own life and begin to create the life of your dreams?

In Closing

There is no crystal ball that you can gaze into that will magically tell you what your brilliance is and how to access it, there is however a process of self-discovery and your own personal journey you can go through if you are willing to take the time to explore it.

Remember, you are the master of your own fate.

Don't let anyone take your brilliance away from you or tell you that you don't have anything to be proud of. No one on this earth should ever have that much power over you.

Stand tall.

Take ownership.

You have a unique combination that no one else will ever have.

Don't keep it to yourself.

What's Next?

If you would like to continue to explore your brilliance and take it to the next level, I'm here to help.

I host several live, virtual workshops each year.

One of my favorite workshops is on creating a Vision Board.

It's a way to manifest the life of your dreams using the law of attraction. When you make a Vision Board, you get crystal clear on what you really want to create in your life.

You can learn more about the next one I'm hosting at www.VirtualVisionBoardWorkshop.com

I want to personally thank you, for taking the time to read this book and for giving me the honor of helping you to **MAXIMIZE YOUR BRILLIANCE!**

xoxo,

Darlene

Darlene is a first-class coach. She's the woman you want by your side when you are about to embark upon a life-changing project. She inspired me to think beyond the confines of my ordinary thinking to achieve new levels of success. I highly recommend working with her.

Shannon Arvizu Hall, Ph.D.

I've known Darlene for several years both professionally and as my friend. She is knowledgeable, professional, intuitive, empathetic and she genuinely cares about the people she serves. She is a great listener and she asks all the right questions to dig deeper and get to the heart of the issue. During my coaching call with her, it was as if she could read my mind because she said the exact words my husband had been saying to me. This confirmed what I need to do in my relationship and I was clear on an important decision I needed to make. I highly recommend Darlene as a coach.

April Yvette

Darlene is on the ball, witty and amazing! I believe her recommendations are up to date, savvy and fabulous. The energy she projects is contagious.

Kathy Salas

I have known Darlene for several years now and I have worked with her in many capacities. Darlene is a polished professional who gets the job done right and on time! I highly recommend Darlene as an individual of the highest integrity and knowledge.

Terri Arscott

lets get social



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