Backwards

Includes "Forwards"

A Workbook on How to Do Effective Heart-Centered Goal Planning

Why Common Abundance Manifestation Approaches Are Sabotaging Your Success

by Mark Silver
Sufi Master Teacher
Fourth Generation Entrepreneur

In the Name of the One,
the Infinitely Merciful,
the Most Tenderly Compassionate,
this book is dedicated to the Face of the Real.

Anything of the Truth that is written here has come from the One,
and any mistakes or omissions are from my self.

Gratitude

I want to express my deep love and gratitude to the people who have made this possible. Without their gifts, hard work and generosity, this would never have come to pass.

My Heart of Business collaborators: Kate Williams and Holly Glaser.

My family: Holly, Sam and David, who loved me through the extra hours.

My Sufi guide and community: I am forever a student and the teachings here are ones I've been given.

My Brain Trust: Eric Klein, Jennifer Louden, Michele Lisenbury-Christensen, Michael Bungay Stanier, and Molly Gordon who have compassionately kicked my butt for years now.

The Heart of Business Team: Eric Grey, Jason Stein, Judy Murdoch, Susan Lucibello, Trisha Cupra, and Yollana Shore.

Dave Navarro, http://www.TheLaunchCoach.com , whose big heart inspired greatness in us.

Heart of Business students and colleagues: All who are traveling this path with me are teaching me through your dedication, hard work and love. You inspire me to keep showing up.

Backwards, a guidebook by Mark Silver

May the peace and love and mercy and justice and freedom of the Real be upon all of the holy prophets, guides, knowers, teachers and each one of us and all of our hearts, so that we may become of the family of the Real.

Copyright ©2010, Mark Silver. All rights reserved.
Please share this guidebook, and what you learn, freely with whomever you wish. I ask that in sharing this document you keep all links live.

Published by Business Heart Press
Mark Silver and Heart of Business, Inc.
4074 NE 7th Avenue, Portland, OR 97212 (503) 282-3037
http://www.heartofbusiness.com

Table of Contents

The Overview

One-Page Summary of the Teachings 4

The Three Teachings

Teaching One: The Promise of Abundance 5
The relationship between abundance, limits and the human heart.

Teaching Two: Why Focusing on Results Shuts Things Down 10
A thirteenth century Sufi sheikh explains why it's ineffective to focus on outcome.

Teaching Three: The Revealed Path 13
Understanding the hidden abundance all around us, while knowing you can't just have anything you want.

Relax, You're Not In Control 19
The last word is love.

The Workbook

Heart-Centered Goal Planning 21
An effective, tested approach to getting results.

Moving Into Action: Fifth and Final Step 34
Three insights about productivity and project management.

Productivity Resources 39
Other people and tools who are smarter than we are.

About Us 43

The Overview

I'd like to explain, in a straight-forward, easy-to-understand way, why the common manifestation techniques you've tried haven't worked and then offer an alternative that is effective and will feel good to your heart.

There are three parts that need to be unpacked to fully understand this manifestation thing.

The first part is understanding where the promise of abundance comes from and the difference in qualities between the physical world reality of the ego or personality, and the unseen realms of the heart.

Abundance is a teaching of the heart. Limits and boundaries is a teaching of the ego. Blur these two and you're in trouble. The kind of trouble where you end up deep in debt and unable to get out, or precious environmental resources are used up and we all suffer.

The second part is understanding why focusing on results in the physical world shuts manifestation down. Intention and focus is powerful, but where you place it is the key. A Sufi sheikh from the thirteenth century illuminates the issue beautifully. Because manifestation descends from the unseen realms into the physical world, focusing on the results you want in the physical world distances you from where the manifestation comes from. You do need to focus... but on the relationship with the aspect of your business or life you are struggling with, not on the results you think will solve your problems.

The last part is understanding the revealed path. If you combine the sense of abundance being of the heart with a focus on having a healthy relationship with the aspects of life that are troubling you, you will discover rather than attempt to attract what is waiting for you. Understand this and you realize that goals and outcomes are revealed rather than chosen as you journey forward.

People who hit their numbers and their goals will admit, if pressed, that they pick the numbers and goals that "feel right." They don't just choose what they want. To put it in different words, they consciously or unconsciously surrender to what's coming and do the work to prepare to welcome it.

Relieved? Inspired? Curious? Let's dig in.

The Three Teachings, or, It didn't Work For You, Either?

Many people have come to Heart of Business worn and frustrated by New Age abundance theories. They've invested sincere energy into practicing these teachings only to end up exhausted and depleted.

It's definitely made me curious. So many good people with good hearts and great intentions are practicing and teaching these abundance techniques, which seem to work for some yet for many others not at all.

Manifestation, co-creating, making yourself attractive; whatever you call it, there has been a great deal of hubbub in the last few years about whether or not you can draw in "untold riches," or whatever it is that you are wanting. The promise of attraction techniques is simple and powerful: if you can think it, you can have it.

Yet this hasn't proven true for many. The disappointment and disillusionment I've witnessed has disturbed me enough to want to understand what's going on and hopefully bring some clarity to this issue.

Teaching One: The Promise of Abundance

We have been promised abundance. Many different traditions proclaim something like "Abundance is your birthright." Yet when we look around our lives, we have to wonder, Where is it? Sure, some people seem to have a lot of abundance, but so many people are struggling all over the globe.

To understand, first I need to explain the layers of reality on the next page.

Here's where it gets a little tricky: everything is Source. It's not like layer four isn't completely, totally, and inseparably One with Oneness. But there are Veils separating them.

The Layers of Reality

To understand what is going on with this promise of abundance, I first need to explain what I mean when I refer to "layers of reality." Sufism describes our experience of reality as having four layers. Despite differences in number or description, the essential idea of a layered reality is consistently recorded across all religions and mystical paths that I know.

1 Oneness, Source, God. This layer is that completely immersed and drowned experience that All-Is-One, and there is no difference between you, a chair, and your mother-in-law. It's all from Love, and it all returns to Love. Actually, in this layer there is no you, chair or mother-in-law. "Just" undifferentiated Oneness.

2 The Qualities, a.k.a. "the Soul." This layer is formless, yet has individuated essential Divine qualities. Sufism talks about the 99 Names of God: things like Love, Strength, Wisdom, Compassion, Truth, Justice, Peace, Friendship, Gentleness, Appreciation, and on, and on.

3 The Unseen World, a.k.a. "the Heart." This layer is the realm of angels, spirit guides, jinn, and other creatures. Also the realm of the deeper emotions.

Note: Just because information or guidance comes from a being in this realm, doesn't mean that information or guidance is always best for you. There is plenty of illusion that lives here.

4 The Physical, 3-D World, home of the Ego or personality. This is where you, I, and our businesses live most of the time.

The Veils of Perception

For us to experience human life, we must be able to experience separation. Me, you, the chair, the house, the cat, Mt. Hood. All are separate, and all are One simultaneously.

Ultimately, the separation is an illusion maintained by veils that stop us from seeing Oneness. Some of these veils can be beliefs, ideas, pictures. Some we can work on lifting, others are lifted through grace. Some cannot be lifted while we are alive.

With That, Let's Tackle Abundance

Abundance. There is plenty for everyone, and the Divine wants you to have an easy life and easy provision.

This is an absolutely true and proven teaching. However, there is one problem. Abundance is not a Fourth Layer, in-the-world teaching. It's a Second-Third Layer, or heart-and-soul, teaching.

You see, the definition of "ease" changes depending on what Layer you are perceiving it through. If your in-the-moment experience is Fourth Layer, then you might define "ease" like this:

"I'd love to have a million bucks, and live on the beach, and do nothing but whatever my whim of the moment dictates. Of course, I want to help people and be of service, but I want my material life to be really easy."

However, at the heart and soul level the definition of ease changes radically. When we're talking about receiving provision and work, ease of heart sounds more like this:

"I'd love to have work that supports me in helping people and making a difference in the world, and doesn't conflict with my values or hurt anyone."

The Sufi teachings put it this way: your heart experiences the abundance of ease and freedom when your work: (1) benefits others and is of use, (2) does not incur any "sin" or "karma" problems with your own heart, (3) is honest.

Your heart experiences abundance and ease when your work benefits others, does not incur any sin or karma, and is honest.

This teaching about ease and abundance in provision is a teaching of the heart and has nothing to do with whether you are a millionaire or not.

This teaching about ease and abundance in provision is a teaching of the heart, and has nothing to do with whether you are a millionaire or not. Is your heart at ease with your work in the world? That's the question. You have been promised that there is work that can support you that will bring ease to your heart.

Not exactly what our egos want to hear, but notice if your being relaxes knowing that you don't have to measure success and abundance by anything in the Fourth Layer world.

One More Thing About Abundance

The further from Layer One we get, the thicker, heavier, and more disconnected our experience of reality. The slower, less plentiful, and more boundaried it becomes. Source is unlimited, and yet the physical world is a limited place. Source has always existed outside of time. The physical universe was birthed from Source and exists within time and space. It's finite.

We have a limited amount of time on the planet. There is a limit to how much fresh water is available. There is only so much fossil fuel in the earth.

There is an unlimited amount of the Qualities in the Second Layer. You can have an ever-expanding amount of Love, Strength, Compassion, Forgiveness. These nourishing qualities can never run out.

However, your bank account can empty. So can your fuel tank. People do die of cancer, among other things.

Then Does My Business Have to Live in Poverty?

No. You can work toward having a thriving business, to increasing your bank account, to enjoying the physical world more, absolutely. Remember, however, you aren't the only person sitting at this world's table. Spending some time deciding what is "enough" is critical.

Without accepting limits or considering what is enough, we end up with McMansion sub-divisions and other types of excesses that have led to the

United States and other industrialized countries using up far more than our fair share of the pie.

It's insane and cruel to think that the teeming billions of people around the globe living in poverty could have whatever they want by simply focusing intensely on it. But they can, and many of them do, experience far more happiness—Love, Wisdom, Compassion—than those of us who live in material-obsessed cultures.

Get what I'm saying? Plenty of Love for everyone, but not plenty of Mercedes for everyone.

Creativity, ingenuity, and technology can go a long way toward more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of resources. And accepting limits is a part of being mature.

Heart-ease of provision. Abundance of Love. Acceptance of Physical Limits. With these three life reserves, you stand on solid spiritual ground.

Now that we've tackled abundance, let's look at the problem with focusing on results, or trying to get what you want.

Pay Attention! You Aren't Being Judged!

When your bank account is empty, or your life is otherwise troubled, it doesn't mean anything spiritually about you and your path. This is an important distinction, so that you don't mistake the natural limitations of the physical world as some kind of judgment on your soul. Bringing acceptance, sincerity and curiosity to those limits can be incredibly helpful to your heart. Plus, you may find more than you thought was there.

You cannot just reach up to layer one and manifest whatever you want.

Teaching Two: Why Focusing on Results Shuts Things Down

Popular approaches to achieving abundance often speak of focusing on what you want, starting with the end in mind, and using your choice and positive thinking to make what you want appear. Many people have told me that they have tried this approach and found themselves utterly exhausted, used up, with very little to show for it.

To understand what's happening, let's talk about manifestation and where things come from.

The Basics of Manifestation

Where do miracles come from? They come from Source, God, the Divine, the Ineffable Mystery, Oneness, Allah, HaShem, whatever you want to call it. Okay, that's great, but we still need to get a little more detailed than that.

Remember the four layers of reality discussed in the last section? They come into play here.

In this illustration, consider the pure, fully-illuminated yellow square as Source, undifferentiated Oneness. Source then places a "veil" before it to diffuse some of the light. And then a second veil. And then a third.

As you can see from the illustration, the more veils, the less direct and pure the experience of yellow. At the same time, the contrast between light and dark is increasing. Although this veiling is experienced as a separation from Oneness, it is also what allows us to express our individuality, to be human and alive.

Without the veiling, we all just melt back into the One Ocean, which we eventually do anyway.

Of course, don't get too hung up on the metaphor. It's just a metaphor to describe an indescribable reality. Nevertheless, it's a useful image in coming to understand the problem with self-generated manifestation.

The abundance teachings seem to say that if you reach up into Layer One with your thoughts and intentions, your will and the Divine will merges, and the things you want come your way.

It sounds nice, and it certainly has the potential to work like that, since all the pieces are in place. Yet often it doesn't, and to understand why it doesn't we need to listen to a Sufi sheikh from the thirteenth century.

Let Me Introduce You to the Sheikh

Sheikh 'Ibn 'Ata'illah As-Sakandari was a mystical Sufi born in the middle of the thirteenth century. If you're like all into Sufi lineages, you've probably heard of him. If not, he's just another one of those countless obscure mystics that have lived throughout the ages.

He wrote a book, *Kitab at-Tanwir fi Isqat at-Tadbir*, that was recently translated into English, "Illuminating Guidance on the Dropping of Self-Direction." It's a piercing, difficult book, with some very challenging passages in it. And it completely illuminates why popular manifestation and abundance techniques are compelling, yet "off" somehow.

The essence of what the Sheikh described was this:

**The more you focus on what you want,
the further away you are from that which brings it.**

This teaching directly contradicts the "start with the end in mind" prescription that many abundance-attraction techniques include. The Sheikh's words illuminated so clearly for me how this kind of single-minded focus is both ineffective for manifestation and painful to the heart.

"And it lasted until I tried to hold onto it..."

The first of the four layers of reality is the layer of the ultimate Oneness, the source of manifestation. As humans, we sometimes taste this reality during transcendent experiences. People have described this state something like this: "All feelings of being separate just disappeared. Everything was one, all bathed in love, just perfect exactly as it was. And it lasted until I tried to hold onto it."

Nice, huh? The perfect place to manifest from, except for one little thing. While you're accessing that reality, all of your personal will has whoooooooshed out of the picture, making it impossible for you to impose your personal choices on the realm of manifestation.

That last sentence, "And it lasted until I tried to hold onto it," is where the heart-pain comes in. When we are driven by personal, ego-centered choice, it disconnects us from the Source of love. To spend a lot of time focused on results and outcomes can leave us really distanced from that love, while leaving our hearts feeling barren.

Not only is your heart left feeling barren and alone, but by letting your ego obsess over material wants, it's cut off more and more from the Source of love. This is why so many people are manifesting nothing and finding their hearts aching.

If focusing on results doesn't really help, do you just shlump down on the curb, your head in your hands, and give up?

Don't Give Up Yet!

It's really clear that intention, thoughts and beliefs do affect how you experience your world. The question is, where is it most effective to place your intention, how do you work with your thoughts to support a healthy relationship with your heart and the world around you?

This brings us to the third teaching, the revealed path.

Teaching Three: The Revealed Path

It's fascinating having twin children. Our adopted sons, Sam and David were born by the same person and arrived within 30 seconds of each other. They are being raised in the same home and are having pretty much the same experiences in their life, yet in many ways they are radically different from each other. As I write this, they have attained the ripe old age of 17 months. You can't really say they've engaged in much conscious choosing.

They are, each of them, on their own path.

Religions and spiritual paths the world over use the metaphor of "path" or "journey" to describe our spiritual lives. There's a reason for it. You are on a path.

Not just any path, your path. You had a unique starting point in this lifetime that no one else had, even if you have a twin sibling, and you will have a unique ending point when you pass from this physical world, just like everyone else.

Your path is unfolding in ways you can't predict and can't influence.

Are You Really Choosing Your Results?

In speaking with umpteen people who have, at times, successfully arrived at their goals or "manifested" something they wanted, there's a little secret you should know. They didn't really choose what it was they were trying to get.

Well, they seemed to have chosen. But when pressed, each of them told me, "Well, I chose the number/goal/thing that seemed right to me." Meaning, they didn't just say what they wanted, like choosing out of a catalog. They chose to go after what felt right, often discarding higher or more ambitious goals.

I'm going to make the assertion that they didn't choose at all. Instead, they had a sense of something that was on their path, and they walked their path. They actually let go of their ability to choose, accepting instead what seemed to be coming toward them.

Notice the difference between discovering previously unseen treasures on your path versus claiming responsibility for manifesting them. The first does take some conscious effort and deserves celebration, while the second places a heavy burden on your heart and soul.

How much easier on your heart to pick a tomato off a vine and accept it as a gift, rather than claiming responsibility for having made the tomato grow there for you? How much effort is saved from the futility of trying to make the vine produce another tomato right then?

Your path is unfolding in ways you can't predict and can't influence. You can't choose whether you grow up in the middle of a war zone or surrounded by peaceful prosperity.

Because you are a unique creation of the Divine, you fit your path uniquely. You can, in a variety of ways, go off your path, but you won't end up on someone else's. You'll just end up in the wilderness that runs alongside your path. This is why trying to emulate someone else is so spectacularly painful and ineffective.

Emotions are just like the weather, they come and go. The danger comes in believing that it needs to be sunny all the time.

There's a Sufi teaching that says, "The only power the self has is the power to cover up the Truth." Meaning, your ego self can't do much except distract you from your path through worries and attempts to control. When life is uncomfortable, and by uncomfortable I mean excruciatingly difficult, your ego-self wants out. It wants the pain to stop, and for things to be better. It wants to stop struggling with debt and instead have three dozen clients and a million bucks in the bank.

Ouch! Ugh! You know from prior experience that resisting the pain won't get you out of there. Yet that's what we want to do. Unfortunately when we do, our self "covers up the truth." When we cover the truth, we can't see our path.

Accepting where you are and loving the path has a benefit that trying to "manifest" your way out of the struggle doesn't. Facing your pain allows it to teach and transform you in ways that uncover previously hidden resources available to you on your path.

There's an important part of the healing and growth process that includes acceptance of pain and grief as normal human experiences. You are not in danger of falling off your path simply because you have negative or painful thoughts.

Because you are discovering the path in front of you, not creating it, the danger is actually in ignoring or pushing away negative thoughts and feelings. The pain of those feelings is a wake-up call that can help you see your path more clearly, if you give them the time and attention they deserve.

Emotions are just like the weather, they come and go. The danger comes in believing that it needs to be sunny all the time. We need the rain, the storms, and the darkness. One of the biggest reasons I wanted to move to Oregon was because it rains so much, and the earth is so lush and green from it.

Please don't judge yourself because you sometimes have emotions and thoughts that are painful. It's just the weather system. If you let yourself be present in the storm you might very well feel washed and renewed afterward.

Yes, I'm Talking About Destiny

Path, as described, could also be called "fate" or "destiny." Because our freedom-focused feel-good culture doesn't tend to like the idea of anything interfering with happiness and free will, we'd prefer to think infinite choices lie in front of us, but they don't. I'm sitting in Portland, Oregon, and no matter how much I choose, I can't walk out my office door and suddenly be in Paris with my friend Michael. At the very least it takes cash, a passport, and some hours of travel via airplane.

Our choices are always limited by what is. Nevertheless, we do indeed have choice.

The choice is whether we decide to fully walk our path or not. The choice is whether or not to embrace where we are, allowing an intimacy with our current situation to reveal what is already here with us, and lead us onward.

The choice is whether or not to embrace where we are, allowing an intimacy with our current situation to reveal what is already here with us, and lead us onward.

It's not the choice to "be rich in 30 days" (unless that's on your path, but don't bank on it.) It's not the choice to avoid anything challenging or difficult.

Yet it's the most important choice. If you drop that burden of trying to "manifest" and instead bring your attention to being awake on your path's journey, there are surely many treasures lying unseen and unclaimed at your feet. While they might be a bit different from what you were imagining, they will likely be more fulfilling.

Relationships Not Results

Any results you see in an area of your life or business come as the fruits of the quality of relationship you have with that area. If you have a tomato in your life and want more of them, it makes a lot more sense to focus on maintaining a healthy relationship with the whole tomato plant, than it does to focus on the end of the vine where the tomato appears.

To have a healthy relationship with a plant, you want to pay attention to what nourishes the plant, including the soil, water and air around it. Keep the air clean, the soil nourished and watered according to what the tomato plant needs, and the tomatoes come, because growing tomatoes is on a tomato plant's path.

To focus on relationship means that you need to make a subtle distinction between the fruit and the plant in your business and your life. For instance, if you have been struggling to reach a goal of a certain amount of income, say $5,000 per month, that $5,000 is the tomato.

The plant is "income." I'm suggesting that you stop trying to manifest $5,000, or any particular amount of money, and instead focus on having a healthy, Divinely-inspired relationship with "income."

I'm not saying the amounts don't matter. And I agree that having a healthy relationship with your finances includes understanding the financial needs of your household.

What I am saying is that there's a difference between knowing that your household needs $4,892 to make it through a month and focusing on that number in trying to manifest it.

In this example, when you open your heart to having a healthy relationship, you don't know yet what's on your path and what it's going to look like, so trying to force $5,000 to appear is not really honoring the unknown mystery of your path. What if in the process of gaining a healthy relationship with your income, you find that instead of $5,000 it feels right in your heart to reduce your income and live on $3,000 for a period of time while you develop a business idea?

Or, in another scenario, what if your heart reveals that you have to ask for help from a family member, and in the process of humbling yourself to ask, you let go of a belief that your family isn't there for you and a profound healing happens?

We rarely know what we need. Through humility, sincerity and a willing-

ness to nurture a healthy relationship with the different aspects of our lives and businesses, the true abundance and healing available to us on our path is revealed.

Although it's an organic process, even organic growth can benefit from structure, as anyone who has put a cage around a tomato plant will tell you.

It's Really All About Neediness

All of this fuddle-muddle about manifestation, goal-setting, and attempting to get more is at heart about neediness. If the impulse to have, get, be, or do more is coming from a hidden, or not-so-hidden, desire to fill a gaping hole of neediness, then any actions you take are doomed to failure.

Unresolved neediness is why actions are sometimes ineffective or effective but not nourishing.

The thing is, neediness is not the problem. Our judgment and resistance to neediness is the problem.

Sufi teachings say that the essential human state is one of neediness. Needy is who we are. It's not a very popular teaching, so it won't hit any best-seller lists, but think about it for a moment.

Geniuses, artists, high-performers the world over have said again and again that their best work "comes through them." In past ages, people have described this experience as "inspired by God" or "taken by the Muse." The holy grail of "flow" refers to this feeling as having your ego-self absent, having something move through you effortlessly.

This illustrates the human being as a vessel. In order for that "something else" to come through, we have to be empty. That emptiness is the neediness.

Because the emptiness is uncomfortable for our egos, we tend to do anything we can to fill it up. We try to achieve more, be more, have more.

I want to encourage you to be less and to welcome that emptiness in. Within the emptiness of the human vessel the alchemy of Divine inspiration reveals the fullness of the path you are walking toward love. It is from that

Do not drink to quench your thirst. Rather, develop the perfect thirst, so that you never stop drinking.

Sufi Teaching

alchemy that I want to encourage you to not set goals, but rather to prepare to receive what's coming.

Relax, You're Not In Control

The subtleties of spirituality can so easily go astray. Profound teachings that have been shared for millennia can do harm when misunderstood and misapplied to the physical world.

Thankfully, the Divine is in the driver's seat, and the ego, yours and mine, as much as it kicks and screams, is really a back seat passenger. The less we lean over the driver's seat trying to grab at the steering wheel, the more we can relax into our role of witnessing, Remembering, and following, and thus the more nourishing and engaged our life can become.

It's one of those funny paradoxes: the more you relax and witness, the more engaged you are. The less you strive for outcomes, the more connected you are to That which brings those outcomes.

What makes it all possible is love. Love and compassion and caring is what the heart thirsts for. When we get it, all of our striving seeps away, and we're able to truly be present in our life and to be the Divine servants our hearts were born to be.

You cannot reach these things from the tongue or papers or just by opening a book and reading...your example is exactly like one who is lost in a desert, dying of thirst...then drink like the camels who are so thirsty, having passed many days without water, who come at last to the spring and drink and drink and drink.

***Sufi Sheikh Sidi al Jamal,* Music of the Soul**

Forwards

A Workbook on How to Do Effective Heart-Centered Goal Planning™

Heart-Centered Goal Planning™

Heart-Centered Goal Planning™ is something that has been used effectively for years by many, many people. It will help you deepen your relationship to different aspects of your path so that the richness and abundance available to you can become more visible.

As I've said, the quality of relationship you have to whatever area of your life or business is critical to the results you see from that area. The quality of your relationship to your goal determines what's possible. It also determines whether you have enough life force to follow through with your plans.

The key is to understand why you want to achieve the goal in the first place. The focus of the Heart-Centered Goal Planning™ process is about coming into a healthy relationship with your goal area.

Honestly, most of our goals are to some degree an unconscious attempt to cover up our neediness. This very same neediness can become the doorway through which we find our Divinely-inspired relationship with the area most related to the goal we had been reaching for.

This is not a mental exercise. Involve your whole self in the process and you will find an intimacy with your path that dispels illusion and keeps you grounded and moving forward.

First Stop, Remembrance

Throughout this exercise, I refer to the Remembrance, which is a Sufi practice of connecting to the Divine through your heart by repeatedly calling the name of the Divine into your heart. You can use any practice you already

have that allows you to connect with a deeper sense of truth and gets you out of the whirlwind of thoughts and ego. And, if you're called to, I invite you to try the Remembrance.

The essence of the Remembrance is simple. You find a name that for you calls to Source, the Divine, God, Love. Repeat the name, calling it silently or softly into your heart as if through an open doorway and listen, feel, sense, or perceive any response in the silence afterwards. Then call again. And again for as long as you wish to stay in remembrance. It is not a mindless chanting, it is a calling out from the neediness that we all have.

The intention of this practice is to remember that there is so much more than we can sense, and that we are not alone. One of the questions I like to hold in my heart when I'm in Remembrance, especially in the face of challenging situations, is this: "Is love available even here?"

If you're interested in the details of how to do this Sufi practice, check out any of our free resoureces below.

Free Remembrance Resources

Getting to the Core of Your Business

The Remembrance Challenge

Guided Remembrance

Click it to go get it.

An Overview of the Process

There are five steps to Heart-Centered Goal Planning™.

Step 1: Stopping and aligning in your heart using Remembrance or another similar practice.

Step 2: Honestly assessing your current relationship with the goal area, the aspect of your business that is most related to your goal, with the understanding that the quality and nature of your relationship with that area affects the fruits of that relationship.

Example:

I'm wanting more clients, so my goal area is "client load." As I sit in Remembrance and ask to be shown the quality of my current relationship with my client load, I begin to see that although I do want more clients, because I want the financial rewards, I'm also afraid of having my freedom restricted. I realize that my relationship with having a full client schedule include feeling tentative and nervous. Humbling to see it, but I recognize that it's true.

Step 3: Asking in your heart for a healthier relationship with your "goal area" based on Divine qualities. Then, through your heart, accepting and beginning to embody these qualities.

Example:

At first I think I should have an open, peaceful, trusting relationship with my client load, but it feels forced. So I take a deep breath and let go of my assumptions about what a healthy relationship looks like and ask to be shown.

(cont)

I'm surprised that after a few minutes of Remembrance, my heart starts to feel a sense of strength and love. I ask to really taste those qualities. As my heart fills with them, I see that clients are wanting to lean into my strength and trust my love. At the same time, they are wanting to trust that I can take care of myself. And they don't mind if part of my strength is setting limits on my schedule, when and how I see my clients. Whew... deep breath... relief.

Step 4: Feeling two levels of results possible from the new relationship. The first result is rock-bottom certain. The second is the horizon or biggest results possible if you were to embody this new relationship.

Example:

From an embodied place of strength and love I can see that carrying five clients is a no-brainer, that I could hold as many as twelve. It's a little bit less than the fifteen I think I need, but if I surrender and accept twelve, I can see that it's like climbing a ladder. As I develop the strength to hold five to twelve clients, that will stretch me to be able to hold more down the road.

Step 5: Moving into action, including finding and scheduling the supporting projects and tasks.

Example:

Okay, now that I have the strength and love, my marketing and infrastructure tasks look completely different! Time to get to work... (More on moving into action at the end of this section.)

Remember that you can go through this process as many times as you need. The first time, just pick a goal area and dig in.

Some common goal areas:

- **Income**
- **Clients**
- **Systems**
- **Marketing**
- **Products**
- **Offerings**
- **Money**
- **Accounting**
- **Teamwork**
- **Delegation**

The Exercise: Heart-Centered Goal Planning

First, Choose Your Goal Area

Take a moment now and choose your goal area. The goal area is the part of your business or life you are wanting to see different results in. First let me remind you of the subtle distinction between a "goal" and a "goal area."

A few pages above, in the section entitled "Relationships Not Results," I explained that if "$5,000 per month" is a tomato, then tomato plant is "income." To generalize this to any goal or goal area you might be working with, replace "tomato" with "goal" and "tomato plant" with "goal area," and you'll be on the right track.

Remember, you can repeat this exercise as often as you like, with as many different goal areas as you like.

Goal area to be worked on:

_____

(Example: *Income*)

Step One: Start with Remembrance, not asking or looking for anything.

The first step to Remembrance is stopping–allowing yourself to notice how you are feeling in the moment, physically and emotionally. Close your eyes and bring your attention to yourself, away from all the distractions of the moment. As you notice how your body feels and how you feel emotionally, take a gentle, full breath, and allow yourself to feel exactly how you are feeling. No need to change or fix anything.

Begin Remembrance with your attention in your heart, deepening your remembering that there is a larger reality available than you can currently perceive.

Take 5 to 10 minutes in Remembrance. It will help make the exercise much more powerful.

Free Guided Remembrance Audio

It's about eight minutes, and will help you connect with your heart.

Click it to go get it.

Step Two: Now that you are in Remembrance, include your goal area.

Ask to be shown in your heart what your current relationship is to the goal area. Let yourself be honest, and let yourself be willing to be surprised.

I would describe my relationship to my goal area as:

Example:

It took a moment to settle in, but once I could put aside my goals for my income, I realized that my relationship to income was one of fear and contraction. There was a feeling of not really wanting to deal with it—wanting it to be taken care of. I realize how horrible I feel when I think about income.

Allowing yourself to feel this relationship, even if it doesn't feel good, imagine that your goal area is a friend, or someone you know. What sort of results would you expect from that relationship? What do you expect would happen?

Example:

I remember feeling a similar way about someone I knew years ago, and it was not fun. I would go out of my way to avoid her, and I didn't see much of her... it's kind of obvious now, but I get why my income isn't where I want it to be.)

Step Three: Ask in your heart what qualities of the Divine, the larger Reality, it wants you to have with your goal area.

Again, leave the results aside, and focus on the quality of the relationship. When you have a relationship with a friend or loved one, it's not effective or fun to start by focusing on results (eating dinner together twice a week). Instead, focusing on wanting a warmer, closer, more loving relationship with them may be more satisfying. Then it may become obvious that dinner twice a week is the perfect way to create more intimacy. Dinner alone, however, without the intention of intimacy, may or may not create the intimacy you desire.

Using the Remembrance, allow yourself to ask in your heart for the qualities of the relationship that would take it to the next level of healthiness. Allow yourself to be willing to be surprised, as if you really don't know what those qualities are, and are open to whatever comes. Describe what you get below:

Example:

Again, it took me a moment to settle in, but as I opened my heart, I felt that the qualities of the new relationship could be love, attention, respect, and, surprisingly but not surprisingly, accountability and responsibility. To have a good relationship to my income, I need to be responsible with it and accountable to it.

Once you get the qualities you could have in relationship to the goal area, again using Remembrance, allow yourself to ask in your heart to receive those qualities directly. This is a good place to feel some humility. Let your head bow, and let your heart bow, and open yourself to asking for and receiving these qualities in your heart.

How does it feel? Take your time with this part. Let yourself receive as much as you can.

Example:

I felt a little silly bowing at first, but I could feel my openness and willingness to really accept change. And then, as I asked in my heart to receive love, attention and the rest, I could feel a warmth, and a strength, in my heart. I realized I have always felt at the whim of income, and now I feel a sense of strength and confidence that has long been missing.

Step Four: Now that you are full of the qualities of the renewed relationship, let's see what results are possible.

You will be asking for two levels of results.

The first level is rock-bottom-certain. If you were to embody this new relationship, what results are you certain about, that you feel in your bones will just naturally happen within your goal area?

Example:

Regarding my income, I can tell that as I feel this love, strength and accountability, it's a no-brainer that I can make a $3,000 per month. I was wanting more, but I can feel the certainty of $3,000, and I can't complain.

The second level of results is what's at the horizon—the greatest result possible. In asking for this amount or possibility, most people really need to let go and surrender, because the results are often far larger than you expect, and there is a certain amount of humility required to let very big results come about through your actions.

Let yourself bow a little more deeply, and ask from a sincere, unknowing place to be shown the largest possible results, the horizon, that could emerge from your new relationship with your goal area. Feel the difference between mental, pie-in-the-sky thinking, versus this embodied, solid certainty that you can taste. Let it be as large or small as it needs to be. The important part is that you feel it with certainty.

Example:

Wow, as I bowed with humility, for the first time in my life, I could really feel more than $10,000 per month income. I could also feel how I must be in greater service for my business to grow to that size, to be able help that many people.

Results Too Small?

What do you do if the goals you are certain about feel as if they are smaller than you want or need? There is nothing to do but accept them. It's much better to be authentically where you are than to vainly continue striving for more. However, don't worry. Just as the horizon continually moves forward with every step you take, you can repeat this exercise, each time embodying the new relationship and stepping into the next level of new results. I guarantee that you will move into a much bigger arena, even if it takes some time.

Great job! You are getting very close to realizing your dreams. For that, we need action. So, on to Step Five.

Moving Into Action: Fifth and Final Step

Once you have your goals, how do you get there? There has been a tremendous amount of work done by people far smarter and more organized than I am on the subject of "to-do" lists and the like. Rather than try to outdo them or sum up everything simply, I want to share some of the most helpful insights I've had on this subject, and then point you toward resources on how to break your goals down into doable tasks.

I also want to remind you to allow your actions to rise out of the healthy relationship with your goal area based in the qualities you sense during the exercise. When you are moving toward your goal, things will, from time to time, go higgledy-piggledy, either because it looks like you might miss your goal, or because you just start feeling contracted or nervous. When this happens, surrender any outcomes you are working toward, instead remember and reconnect with having a healthy relationship with your goal area.

Remember, neediness is the doorway and the qualities come to you when you ask from a place of humility. This is what returns you to a healthy relationship with your goal area.

Bring that healthy relationship, and the qualities you identified that support it, back to your tasks and then continue. Ahhh... so much more relief than getting fixated on outcomes.

Sometimes the outcomes change in mid-journey, and that's ok. If you're grounded in the relationship, the results can change without rattling you.

The Three Insights of Project Management

The three insights? They are relatively simple, you may have heard them before, but have you really let them sink in?

Insight One: Projects versus Tasks

This is an oldie but goodie. Simply put, a task is a to-do that can be completed in one step and in one go, while a project is a larger to-do that is made up of tasks. It is painfully paralyzing to name a project but think of it as a task.

For instance, let's say you are trying to launch a new seminar in your business. It's really obvious, I hope, that that's a project and there will be many tasks involved. What happens, however, is that you then start listing tasks:

- Set event date.
- Write sales page for website.
- Hire magician for after-event party.

Whoa... can you see what's happening? Every single one of these three "tasks" are actually multi-step projects. Writing a sales page involves a lot of thinking and planning around what you're going to say, what gets included, finding graphic images, deciding on the price, setting up a shopping cart button, etc. You may find there are 20 to 30 steps involved in writing the sales page.

It may seem insane or overly fastidious to identify all the individual steps, but if you don't, you risk two things. The first thing you risk is just plain and simple self-mutilation. You look at your to-do list of 15 things and you wonder why you can't get a simple 15-item task list done.

Without identifying the individual tasks, you won't realize that writing the sales page is actually a two-week project. You won't be realistic and gentle with yourself. You'll hurt yourself. You'll yell at your loved ones. It won't be pretty.

With the tasks all listed out, you'll realize that there's nothing wrong with you when you haven't finished the sales page by Tuesday. You'll have the spaciousness and compassion for yourself to know it's a two-week project that will take a fair amount of focus.

The second risk you take is getting stuck in the mud. How many times have you faced a to-do list, completed items one, two, three, and then…stuck. Can't get to four. Can't do it. No matter how you try, you just can't get it done.

It may be because you haven't identified a missing item "3b," or "3c," or even "3z" that comes before item four. That missing item will be your poltergeist, throwing books at you and leading you back into a hole of dark despair that leads you to question the reason for your existence.

Well, maybe it won't be that bad. But it won't be fun.

So make sure when you write down a task it really is a task. If you discover it turns out to be a project, identify the tasks within it. You'll breathe a lot easier.

Insight Two: The Three Types of Projects

If you look at a typical project list, it only consists of production time, actually getting things done. But this isn't the whole truth. Any goal or project worth its salt is going to stretch you in many different ways, and you'll end up with more than just "action" projects.

So let me introduce you to the three types of projects, so you can include them appropriately in your own goal planning.

Action Projects: These are the projects we've just been talking about. You know you have an action project when it's about getting something accomplished. You write, do, call, act in some way that has an outcome to it.

Learning Projects: You don't know everything already, so sometimes you have to learn. It may be you need to learn about a software application you want to use. Or you may need to learn more about sales or copywriting. Or you may want to learn more about low-cost royalty free stock images, where to download them, how to find them, how much they cost.

Whatever it is, if you don't give learning the spaciousness of being a project, you'll either get stuck thinking you should already know what you don't, or you'll "steal" time to learn. Painful, and unnecessary.

It's okay to give yourself an hour or two to click around istockphoto.com and other related sites. It's okay to spend an hour or two watching tutorial videos on Apple.com about iMovie. It's okay to curl up at a cafe and read a book or pdf about copywriting.

It's okay, it's critical, to give yourself time to learn what you need to learn. And it's going to be more fun, spacious, and realistic if you plot it in as a project.

(Getting) Support Projects: These are projects you get support for doing what you are needing to do. Maybe you want to ask friends to help set up your seminar space with you. Maybe you want to ask a friend to give you feedback or help you brainstorm through something. Maybe you want to outsource help to your virtual assistant.

What is often forgotten is that getting help takes time. It takes time to ask someone. It takes time to ask someone else if the first person isn't available. It takes time to explain what you want, and to give feedback. It all takes time and involves multiple tasks.

If you don't give yourself the spaciousness required to get support, then you'll come to the conclusion that it's easier to do it all yourself, which it isn't.

Make sure you have Learning Projects and Support Projects liberally sprinkled among your Action Projects.

Insight Three: Only Three On Deck

Some people say one. Some people say four or five. I say three.

I'm talking the maximum number of major projects you can focus on at a time. Whatever the number, the truth is that you can't get it all done. And too many projects in the "get'em done now" category can drive you crazy.

By "major project" I mean something like "launch seminar," not the mini-projects like "hire magician for the after-seminar party" that make up that major project.

What if you've gone through the Heart-Centered Goal Planning™ exer-

cise and your heart sees that the following projects are needing to happen this year to help build your business: Launch blog, create and launch seminar, do free call to build visibility, write manifesto and launch to build visibility, hire virtual assistant, create first digital product and launch, create and launch signature coaching package for clients?

Well, you can do all of that in a year, maybe even more. And yet there's seven major projects there.

I would suggest picking three of them as "on deck" and put the other four "down below." When you complete one of your active projects, you can move on to one of the waiting four.

This is another sanity-inducing measure that will keep you from thinking something is wrong with you.

Don't Forget Your Heart

You did a lot of heart-centered work to come into right relationship with your goals. Don't forget your heart as you move into action within projects. Keep reminding yourself of the quality of relationship you want to have with the goal area.

Take some time to access that quality of relationship in your heart, and see what project ideas pop up from that. Or brainstorm a list of projects and tasks, and then pausing to drink in the nourishing relationship with the goal area, scan the list and see which ones feel alive to your heart.

The heart, and love, and Source are present in all things. In order for your projects be expressions of that deeper relationship with Source, stay in touch with heart as you move into action.

Productivity Resources

Here are a few of my favorite productivity resources, both people and tools.

People:

There are lots of people out there who do productivity work. Books like *Getting Things Done* by David Allen, among others, have been invaluable.

I'd like to point you to two people I know personally, who I think are doing tremendously inspired and helpful work in the realm actually getting things done.

Charlie Gilkey, Productive Flourishing
http://www.ProductiveFlourishing.com

Jennifer Hofmann, Inspired Home Office
http://www.InspiredHomeOffice.com

Read their blogs, take their classes, hire them.

Tools (some of these are affiliate links):

What we use for:

Click on the logo or link to check out the tools.

Managing information	EVERNOTE
Project/task management	Omnifocus
Contact Management/Collaboration	Solve360
Email list management	AWeber COMMUNICATIONS
Website management	WordPress
Collaboration	**GoogleDocs**
Time Management	**iCal**

I hope and trust that this Heart-Centered Goal Planning™ teaching has been nourishing and relaxing for you. If you want more, we're here for you.

I wish the very best to you and your business,

Mark Silver

Why We're Doing It

For those of you doing transformational work in the world, you need to be effective in the marketplace. Of course you need to support your families, and we want you to do well with that. But there's a bigger reason.

Our economy is dysfunctional. Billions of dollars/pounds/Euros/yen are spent every year on things that are not only nonessential, but downright harmful.

If transformational businesses can be effective in the marketplace and help people direct money and resources toward the healing, growth and change that we desperately need as a culture and as individuals, then we have a chance of surviving this next century.

You have started or want to start a small business that is dedicated to making a difference in the world. It could be accounting, it could be naturopathic medicine, it could be consulting or coaching, it could be spiritual healing, it could be organic farming. Whatever it is, you want to make a difference to the people you touch, and you want the world to be a better place.

We want you to be effective in the marketplace, and part of the movement that is more and more rapidly helping to shift the priorities and values of our culture toward one that affirms and sustains life.

Please Join Us

The best way to tell if you and we click is to check out our Business Heart Toolkit, and to sign up for our newsletter. See if what we're talking about supports the love in your heart and the effectiveness of your business.

For the free Business Heart Toolkit

Perfection
is a quality of the
Divine

And we're only human. Although we have, in a state of loving mania, pored through the included text and audio, bugs, problems, mistakes, typos and all sorts of things can slip through despite our best efforts.

If you have a question, issue, find a problem or what looks like a mistake, let us know. It's only through connecting with each other that we can hope to experience the true Essence of the Divine, and, in the process, produce excellence.

Go to the link below to drop us a line:

http://www.heartofbusiness.com/contact/

About the Team

Mark Silver

Sufi spiritual nut and business tenderizer, my roots in business go back four generations to my great-gandmother who ran a stocking factory in turn-of-the-century Poland. After several careers myself, including running a magazine, a painfully under-talented graphic design business, and running around on an ambulance as a paramedic, my spiritual journey connected with my business journey. Since 1999, I've worked with thousands of entrepreneurs and self-employed folks in the areas of money, marketing, strategy, and just plain doing well in business.

Trained at the Jaffe Institute (now known as the University of Spiritual Healing and Sufism) in Organizational and Business Healing, I blend my skills as a Sufi healer and designated master teacher with heart-centered business practices. My vision is for your heart to deepen into knowing its own truth, and from that knowledge your business becomes profitable and sustainable.

I live in Portland, Oregon with my wife Holly, our twin sons Sam and David, two cats Rafi and Kira, and as much rain as you care to soak up.

Kate Williams

Ever-evolving with the business, I've taken on many roles–systems creator, project coordinator, editor, random administrator, communicator extraordinaire, pseudo-techie-type support person, and Oasis ring-leader. I wound up here after leaning into some of Mark's teachings as a business owner myself—WordTurners, freelance editing, writing, and coaching. Prior to that, I was a director at the National College of Natural Medicine—a community and lifestyle I have been involved with for over 25 years. Past lives have included being a naturopathic clinic co-owner, art framer, massage therapist, nursery worker, waitress . . . you get the picture—I'm not an easy niche fit.

I've found a home here for my collaboratively creative entrepreneurial spirit. As for education, it includes volumes of life experience, personal growth adventures, several self-employment journeys poised atop an MA in English and a BS in Natural History and Creative Writing (read: nature lover with a science twist).

A Southern California native, Portland, Oregon has been home for 25 years. My pack includes Nancy, my partner, Toby, the Standard Poodle pup, and Ruby, the guru kitty.

Holly Glaser

These days I'm mostly a mom, happily. Sam and Dave are my responsibility, my entertainment and my teachers. Yet I've been with Heart of Business since the beginning in one form or another and am quite fond of this business.

My favorite jobs here have been content editing, working with clients and co-teaching with Mark. Now they call me the Heart Monitor, and I work behind the scenes with our growing team.

I have the same Sufi training as Mark and many things in common with Kate, including a love of nature and a past incarnation as a massage therapist. I've been dedicated to learning and teaching healing in one form or another since I graduated from college. Partnering with Mark has magnified and deepened this for me considerably!

My degree is in Political Economy and Social Strategies for Environmental Protection. I basically studied how to change the world. The question in my heart has always been, "What is the most effective fulcrum for change?" Happily, Heart of Business is the answer.