

DARE TO DREAM AGAIN

If you're not living your dream then whose dream are you living?

Eugene Moreau



transition • relationship • communication

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Introduction

Congratulations on your commitment to unlocking your dreams and taking the first step to experiencing the extraordinary life you were meant to live. You're a courageous person.

This journey is not for the faint hearted. Yet the desire for significance is so strong within us all, that to deny it is to deny ourselves our greatest need. 'Dare to Dream Again' is a journey that will take you from mere survival and the temptations of hollow success, to the level of life called significance.

This book is written from a bank of personal pain and experience. I became aware of my transition to significance in 2005 but if truth be told, I began several years before, only I didn't know it. It's just taken me a few years to come to grips with what's been going on inside and be able to talk about it in a coherent and meaningful way.

You may be one of the many who already have a clear idea of what your dream is, and all you simply need now are the tools to help you on your journey. This book will give you those tools.

You may have an inkling of a dream, but need help to identify it in greater clarity and then figure out how to achieve it. This book is written for you.

No matter who you are, or what stage of life you are in, this book exists to help you discover, clarify, and then pursue, with passion and purpose, the dream you have inside.

I have come to the liberating conclusion that there is no standing still for people who have dreams. When you dare to dream, you find that what was once normal is no longer acceptable. When you dare to dream, fulfillment is the only meaningful accomplishment. A fulfilled life has meaning, momentum and direction.

So, I invite you to leave the boundaries of the past behind, start your journey from where you are now, no matter what your age or where you are and dare to dream again.

I encourage you to dream of the life you've always wanted but you've never had a chance to pursue. I challenge you to dream big. I urge you to dream with direction.

Your journey starts here.

Eugene Moreau

Fellow traveller daring to dream, leaving Almost.

" Follow your intuition and curiosity... trust your heart even when it leads you off the well-worn path... You have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future... The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it... Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary."

Steve Jobs
Apple

Why the fable?

Fables have been around as long as people. For thousands of years, people have used the fable as a means for illustrating moral lessons. From ‘Aesop’s Hare and the Tortoise’ to more modern efforts such as ‘Spencer Johnson’s: Who Moved My Cheese?’ fables have been delivering important life lessons from generation to generation.

Storytelling has long been acknowledged as one of the most effective methods of communicating important life changing information. Almost every great storyteller over the last 3,000 years has used this art to get his or her point across. It is by far the most important aspect in the continuance of a culture. It is through story that a reader can experience the passion and energy of an event, and be inspired by it, long after the characters are gone.

Since the day we were born, we have been living one story after another. Like permanent recordings playing in our heads, we replay every event, victory and failure in our lives. We remember interactions with people that are important to us, and we attempt to make sense of them. We then use these recordings to help us make sense of the world we live in. I have chosen to write a fable to help you dare to dream again.

It’s my desire that you find threads of your own life in the conversations between Alex and Oliver. When you do, pull on those threads and you will begin your own journey out that place called Almost.

Now, let’s meet Alex and Oliver and get to know them.

Alex Andrews

To everyone who knows him, Alex is a happily married father of two. For the past twenty years he has worked hard to develop a credible name for himself as a professional business consultant and training specialist.

He is well thought of in the marketplace and if you were to interview his colleagues, associates and friends, you would hear a common theme “Alex is well balanced. He is happy and successful. He has a great marriage and his kids are fantastic. He’s just an all-round great guy!” That's what his friends and associates would say, and they would be wrong.

The reality is that Alex Andrews is stale. His marriage has become mechanical, lacking in passion and connection. His relationship with his children is shallow, and every day they are growing more distanced. He isn't sure if it is he or they.

The reality is a daily ritual of masked boredom and frustration, something he has become very accomplished at, has replaced the passion he once had for his beloved business.

The reality is that when he lays his head down at night he knows this is not what he wants his life to be. Every night the same questions bounce around in his mind: “Is this it? Is this all there is to life? Is this all I can ever expect? Have I missed the chance to make my life meaningful?”

The reality is that Alex wakes up most mornings with the feeling that he is at a dead end in his life. Being busy is

not the issue. He is consumed everyday with doing things, always busy, always moving. The issue is fulfillment, not busyness.

The reality is that when Alex least expects it, at moments when he is completely caught off guard, he will feel this desperate plea for help from deep within, from a place where words don't exist. It is a plea that longs for a life of fulfillment and meaning.

The reality is that Alex Andrews is living in Almost.

Alex Andrews needs desperately to dare to dream again.

Oliver Kinsley

Oliver is a retired investment banker who has lived life inside the box, playing it safe. Oliver did not reach the age of 63 by making risky adverse decisions and as a result, has become a man of wisdom and profound experience.

Oliver has been married to Kathryn for forty-three years and like everything else in his life, his marriage has not been without a few close calls. Oliver and Kathryn have four children, all of whom are now adults, and five grandchildren.

Even though his name is still on the sign outside the six-story building that is home to the Kinsley, Jones and Willoughby Investment Banking firm, he chooses not to work any longer. At the age of 51, Oliver made a conscious decision to focus his life on serving people who are experiencing ‘a change of season’ as he came to call it.

This all came about due to a chance meeting over ten years ago with a man in a cafe. The man, at least fifteen years his junior, was sitting at a table with a look of immense sadness on his face. When he looked up to smile at Oliver, his eyes looked empty – it was an emptiness Oliver recognised from a long time ago in his own life.

Something about this man compelled Oliver to help, and before he knew it, he was sitting at his table and they were locked in conversation. The conversation was so beneficial to both of them that they began to meet once a week and over the next six months Oliver witnessed an amazing transformation in the man.

The satisfaction associated with helping people move from survival to success and then from success to significance was beyond anything he had experienced before.

That first year Oliver worked with four people and each time it felt more right. He didn't advertise or promote what he was doing. He simply relied on something he came to call Destiny.

Oliver found that people were either drawn to him or that he was positioned to meet them.

Either way, something inside him connected with them and each time it was life changing, for both of them.

This went on for several years until eventually Oliver found himself looking forward to the 'unlocking' sessions more than anything else. One day he came to the realisation that this was how he wanted to spend the rest of his life.

He woke up every day looking for the opportunity to help people change themselves and make a difference. A week after celebrating his fifty-eighth birthday, while he and Kathryn were holidaying, he turned to her and said, "I think I want to spend the rest of my life helping people dream again. I want to help people leave that place of quiet, personal desperation where the dream for life is missing. I want to spend the rest of my days helping people find fulfillment. I have a few good years left in me and I think that's a good way to spend them. What do you think?"

Kathryn just sat with a slight smile on her face, as she watched the rekindled passion in her husband's eyes. She recognised that look, and knew that it was something

Oliver had simply had to do. She also sensed that their entire married life had been culminating to this point. Her mind flashed to those times when things were not going so good for them in their relationship, or their financial life, or when the children were growing up. She remembered the very early days when their marriage was under siege, or so it felt at the time.

Kathryn knew that what Oliver was talking about was the most important decision he would ever make. She also knew that he was uniquely gifted in helping people make meaningful transitions in his life because of the life journey they had shared.

She looked into her husband's eyes and said simply "I think that is a great idea."

And so the story begins...

*Living in
a world
you
design.*

*If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you.
If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do will destroy
you.*

The Gospel Of Thomas

1

Is this all there is to life?

I

There was nothing wrong, but still Alex couldn't sleep.

It had been like this for weeks now. Something was out of balance and he could not get a grip on exactly what it was. He wished he could talk with Aimee but they hadn't connected on that level for a few years now.

It was not that there was anything wrong with their marriage; it was just that they simply hadn't connected on a deeper emotional level for a long time.

Alex and Aimee had been married for twenty years and while they were no longer two love-struck teenagers, as one would expect, they were quite content with each other. They had established a well-managed and comfortable routine.

Maybe that is the problem, thought Alex, as he lay there staring at the alarm clock. Maybe my marriage is falling apart and I don't even see it. Maybe that's why I can't sleep. Maybe we are heading in different directions and don't even know it. Worse still what if we do know it and we don't even care?

While this was a possibility, Alex knew that his marriage was not what was keeping him awake.

He knew that he and Aimee were okay, despite the current issues they both had to deal with, especially since Sharon had turned sixteen. The house seemed to resemble a war zone and Alex would sometimes delay coming home just to stay out of the battlefield. He didn't remember it being this way with Trish, their oldest daughter, who was now at university studying commercial design.

It wasn't work that was keeping him awake either. In fact, the business was doing well. Clients were in the pipeline and the quality of work was as high as it had ever been.

There were no issues or challenges that were not being handled. What was keeping him awake was a sense of 'emptiness'. One he couldn't shake. He thought as he lay there, *why do I have this feeling that something is just not quite right?*

He didn't really have a close relationship with any colleague or friend with whom he could discuss this. Even if he did, he doubted that anyone would understand. To be honest, he didn't want them to think he was losing it! That would truly be the last straw.

He couldn't share what he was feeling with any of his clients. Besides the fact that it would be like committing professional suicide, there really wasn't anyone he felt he could trust to have this kind of conversation with.

So, he lay in bed waiting, pondering, restless and unfulfilled. Then the alarm buzzed, and the daily routine began.

Twelve hours later Alex looked at his watch and reflected on his day. He had successfully won a new client, then, he had received a phone call from another client with a 'quality' referral. As he stood in his office collecting his papers and a few files, he couldn't help but feel a sense of achievement about his work. He made a decision to take a walk around the park before he went home. Not far from his house was a wonderful community park, with a huge pond and excellent walkway around it. Deciding to celebrate, he stopped off to grab a coffee and take a slow walk. The walk around the pond was relaxing and he came here often to reflect and just get away from it all.

As he was walking, enjoying the pond and the quiet of the evening, having one of those private conversations he often had with himself, he noticed a man sitting and throwing bread to the ducks in the pond.

It was the words written on his hat that Alex noticed first. The man was wearing an old softball hat on his head with the words '*Dare to Dream Again!*' written across the front.

The man had an overcoat on that was obviously of excellent quality, and well used. His pants were rolled up halfway to his knees. His shoes were casual and there was a thermos and a loaf of bread on the bench next to him. He looked like he had been there for a while, as the bread was almost gone. Alex guessed his age to be around sixty. His hair was grey with a streak of black visible just below the hat line.

As Alex looked at him and smiled, the old man spoke, "When you find the answer, come back and let me know what it is."

Alex was thrown and then realised the old man must have had heard his internal conversation. Alex had been saying to himself, *“Is this it? Is this all there is to life? Is this everything I can hope for?”* Somewhat embarrassed, Alex said, “I’m sorry, I must have been talking to myself out loud.”

That’s when Alex noticed the old man’s eyes. They were so blue as to be almost black. What really stood out was the penetrating sharpness that both challenged and invited a conversation. Alex felt drawn in by those eyes and little did he know that he would be challenged often over the next few years by those intense, black eyes.

“Don’t worry, I talk to myself all the time,” said the man on the bench, smiling. “Those were some tough questions you were asking.”

Not wanting to be rude, Alex humoured the old man and asked, “Don’t suppose you know the answer to any of them?”

His response took Alex by surprise. “I know the answer for me, but only you can know the answer for you.”

The moment of silence stretched out, like a rubber band, and while Alex stood, wondering what that cryptic answer from this stranger was supposed to mean. The old man went on. “From personal experience I’ve found the quality of life you end up with is the result of your choices. Once you’ve made a choice, well, that’s your destiny, unless you change it. That’s a choice as well, to change things in your life.”

Alex stood unmoving. He felt like he was a deer caught in the headlights of a fast approaching truck.

The old man seemed not to notice the look of frozen shock on Alex's face as he carried on talking. "Life is lived from within, not from without. Too many people try to answer that question from without and they always end up walking in parks asking themselves 'how did it end up this way?'"

Alex just stood there, stunned. Who was this guy? Was he someone he had come across somewhere before and couldn't remember? Before he could find anything to say, the old man continued, "Do you believe in destiny?"

Alex was wrestling with two thoughts at one time. The first thought, fuelled by his feelings of hope and desperation was '*Is it possible that this old man is a real messenger, sent to help me?*' The second more logical thought was '*Is this guy for real?*' followed by the thought that the strange old man was getting suddenly stranger.

Alex hesitated and said, "I think....I mean...maybe..... well.....I'm not sure...I think I believe in destiny. Why do you ask?"

The old man threw some bread into the pond, opened his thermos and poured some coffee into a tin cup.

"Well, I was sitting in my house, reading, when I felt an urge to get out and see the day change from light to dark. It never ceases to amaze me. I always enjoy it."

"Anyway, I had this feeling that today I was going to have a moment of destiny but I didn't know where, or for that matter, with whom. Then you came walking down the path. You looked troubled and as you walked closer I heard you question yourself. I knew this was a moment of destiny because many years ago I asked myself the same set of questions, 'Is this it? Is this all there is for me to

hope for in my life? Have I reached the end of my pursuit for meaning, for significance?”

At hearing those words, Alex was overwhelmed with emotion and he struggled to hold it in. The old man gestured to the bench and invited Alex to sit.

It was a surreal moment.

Sipping his coffee the old man said, “My name is Oliver Kinsley. Believe me, I know this is strange but I am convinced our meeting today is not accident or an innocent coincidence. Can I share a little of my story with you?”

Alex was stunned into silence and could only resort in a nodding of the head response. Oliver continued, “I have a blessed life now. It hasn't always been this way. I have a beautiful home and I live a short walking distance to this wonderful park.

I have been married to the same woman for 43 years with four children, all of them grown, and five grandchildren. I almost did not have any of this. There was a time that I lived in this very cold, miserable place called Almost.”

The moment Oliver said the words ‘lived in this place called Almost’ Alex felt something inside him break down. It was a moment of instant recognition. There were no further words needed, he finally knew what that emptiness inside of him was. He was living in Almost. Alex was desperate to hear more and Oliver sensed a hunger in this man sitting beside him and decided to hold nothing back.

“How would you like to live in a world that was designed by you?” he asked.

“What do you mean...live in a world designed by me?” asked Alex

Oliver sipped his coffee, “Remember I said life is lived from within and not from without?” Alex nodded.

“One day I came to a point in my life when I had to change the way I was looking at the world. It seemed that everyone else was controlling what I was becoming. I was not the designer of my life, someone else was. I did not feel in control because I was not in control. I was not living my dream. I was living someone else’s dream.”

He paused and shifted his eyes to look straight into Alex’s. “I was not being true to myself. I thought I was, but I was even lying to myself about that.

“My life was filled with selfishness, dishonesty, ugliness, sadness, depression, emptiness and pettiness, stress, pride and self-centeredness, all disguised as success.

“It was a very isolated place. What I wanted in my life was fulfillment, happiness, honesty, generosity and passion. I wanted a sense of completeness. It was one life-impacting event that brought me to the conclusion that I had to redesign the world I lived in or I would lose everything that was important to me. I had to find a new, fresh dream or lose it all.”

Oliver went on to share with Alex that life-changing event. “The life I was building was based on a bad design. I made choices that were not in alignment with a balanced, healthy existence. As a result, I found myself laying my head down at night to sleep, but not being able to. When I did sleep, I wasn’t resting.”

When Alex heard that, he knew exactly what Oliver was talking about. He went on.