

lifevisioning

A Transformative Process
for Activating Your Unique Gifts
and Highest Potential

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SOUNDS TRUE
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Introduction

How to Become “Yes!”

THROUGHOUT OUR FORMATIVE years and into adulthood we are given prescriptions, admonitions, exhortations, and instructions for doing our life, yet little or nothing about becoming our authentic self and living our life purpose. For that, an introduction is required, which is the ultimate purpose of the Life Visioning Process™ (LVP) and this book. Through visioning, you will be introduced to the You of you. And the moment you come into your own being you will say “yes” to it, all of it.

As a way of inviting you into the journey, I’d like to take you back with me to when and how Life Visioning originated. LVP was literally a homebirth that took place in the privacy of my meditation room, followed by its public debut in my living room. But first, a brief history. On May 18, 1985, I graduated from the Ernest Holmes College School of Ministry, and on July 1, 1985, I became a licensed minister in the United Church of Religious

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Science (recently renamed Centers for Spiritual Living), which is a part of the larger New Thought movement. At the time, I was a full-time licensed prayer practitioner and spiritual counselor, on the faculty of the school of ministry from which I graduated, and director of training in its prayer ministry. Outside of that environment, I conducted my own seminars and workshops.

Even though I was a licensed minister and was invited to speak at various spiritual communities, I did not have my own church. And that was just fine with me! I had my weekends off, which worked just great for a father with two young children and someone who greatly enjoyed their personal downtime. After all, wasn't I already giving enough time to supporting others through my ministerial calling? A rhetorical question, obviously, a justification for resisting that voice within that kept urging me to surrender, to step out and embrace the calling I allowed myself to acknowledge only for fleeting seconds. In case you're wondering why I graduated from ministerial school if I wasn't planning on having a church, it's really pretty simple: I love being in a learning atmosphere. And, for clarification's sake, being a minister is about more than having one's own congregation.

Then came the invitation—a rude intruder into the even tenor of my days. A spiritual community at which I had been a guest speaker a few times expressed their interest in having me as their senior minister, a position for which I had to candidate along with other applicants. When their selection committee reviewed my credentials, I learned in a roundabout way that they didn't want to submit my name to their board

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of trustees, who were entrusted with making the final selection. It seemed that my being African American would be problematic in conservative Orange County. Now, I enjoyed a good relationship with the congregation, so this callousness and bigotry came as a hurtful shock. The short version is that I spent a good deal of time working on forgiving those involved, removed my name from the list of candidates, sincerely blessed everyone, and lovingly moved on.

Having done so, however, did nothing to silence the voice that continued to echo in my meditations, during times of affirmative prayer, self-contemplation, even in the shower—any time there was a moment of silence there it would be, announcing that the ministry was my life purpose. During that time of great resistance, I was often reminded of a verse from the poem “The Hound of Heaven,” by Francis Thompson, wherein he shares his personal and mystical story of trying to hide from God:

*I fled Him down the nights and down the days
I fled Him down the arches of the years
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind, and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
From those strong feet that followed, followed after
But with unhurrying chase and unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat and a Voice beat,
More instant than the feet:
All things betray thee who betrayest me.*

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Eventually, I surrendered. And when I did, I became the “yes” to what was seeking to emerge in, through, and as my life. Upon bellowing out this “yes” in front of my meditation altar, what is today known as the Life Visioning Process was birthed.

It all began with this simple question: “What is my life purpose; what is seeking to emerge in, through, and as my life?” My inner tone was adamant. I was determined not to leave my meditation seat without receiving an answer. That may sound like an arrogant gauntlet to throw down before God, but the truth is there was within me a fierce determination to live nothing less than my true calling in life. Besides, according to many spiritual authorities, God has been handling spiritual tantrums since the beginning of time!

When I intuitively caught that I was to found my own spiritual community, it was no longer possible to retreat into any false humility about not being worthy, adequately spiritually prepared, or any other excuses. So I began right where I was, confident and grateful for the clarity of what was revealed and every step in the process that graced me into that place of awareness.

In that spontaneous first visioning, I caught that I was to call together a team of like-minded individuals who would become “visioneers,” and that together we would midwife what was required to support the vision’s next expression. That sounded pretty wild, yet workable. So I brought together in my living room a team comprised of colleagues, clients, and friends for our first group visioning.

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I led them into the first step, which is to meditate so that the mind and heart may merge into a feeling tone of unconditional love. With our hearts now opened, I explained the second step, which is to place a question before the intuitive faculty of the Higher Self, which in this case was: “What is the highest expression of a spiritual community devoted to being a beneficial presence on the planet?”

We continued to meditate upon that question and after about twenty minutes we began sharing what came through and recorded it for later reference. (I recommend you also keep a journal near you when visioning so that you may capture your responses, feelings, and insights.) We had a collective realization that it was time for a trans-denominational, culturally inclusive, creative community whose teachings would encompass the universal truth principles of the world’s spiritual traditions about our connection to Source and the laws governing the universe.

We then went to the third step and asked, “What qualities must we cultivate to manifest this vision?” This question is pivotal, because we cannot manifest what we are not willing to embody in consciousness. So, in effect, we were asking what we needed to become in order to be in integrity with the vision. The fourth step was to ask, “What qualities must be let go in order to manifest this vision?” followed by the fifth step, “What qualities do we already possess that will serve this vision?” Before sharing the revelations of steps three through five, we went directly into the sixth step of giving a collective “yes” to what came through, followed by

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the seventh step of expressing gratitude for the vision and what it would take to bring it into manifestation.

Reminiscing on that incredible evening of catching the vision for what is now the Agape International Spiritual Center, the joy is as tangible today as it was then. It brings a smile to my heart when I recollect the innocence of the moment when, at the end of the day, our financial resources to launch Agape added up to a grand total of \$17. We weren't at all discouraged. On the contrary, our spiritual resources were unlimited!

In November 1986, Agape International held its first Sunday service. Twenty-six years later, we have expanded our ministries, departments, humanitarian outreach programs, classes, and staff to support our 10,000-strong local community and thousands of worldwide friends via live video streaming. Vision teams continue to lead us every step of the way. We've never stopped saying "yes!", and the vision just keeps on growing, thriving, and evolving.

Standing in Your Own "Yes"

The Life Visioning Process is a life-changing spiritual technology of conscious participation in the evolution of your consciousness. Whether you are now ready to step into the highest vision for your life or are endeavoring to ready yourself, visioning is a trustworthy guide and ally on your life path.

I urge you to keep in mind that visioning is not a personal delivery system for dropping at your doorstep the baubles of the world. It's about the evolution of who and what you are as a unique, individualized emanation

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of Source and what you have come on the planet to learn, express, and contribute. It’s a way of providing yourself with tangible evidence that you are not here to be a passive bystander or spectator, nor to be blindly pulled along by society’s ever-changing tides. Visioning is an adventure into your own deepest Self to discover there all the gifts, talents, skills, and requisite qualities of consciousness to live a most excellent life, a life of YES.

A Map of the Journey

Our venture begins with chapter 1, which explores the terrain of our eight fundamental life structures of ego, belief, relationship, health, finances, livelihood, spirituality, and community, and how the application of Life Visioning replaces a sense of lack, limitation, anxiety, and worry with a consciousness of genuine trust in the fundamental goodness of the universe and our own Self. You will learn about the five foundational qualities for practicing visioning and how to develop your own intuitive voice.

After becoming grounded in the basic principles of visioning, we move into chapter 2, where we are introduced to the Four Stages of Evolutionary Growth. Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 offer an in-depth description of the stages, a glimpse of which follows.

Stage One describes individuals living in Victim Consciousness, a mind-set that claims that things outside of oneself are responsible for our life circumstances, be it God, the devil, parents, mates, teachers—anything that keeps us from accepting self-responsibility for our life.

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Stage Two identifies individuals who are immersed in Manifester Consciousness, using the laws of manifestation to acquire all the things they are convinced will make them happy. While they are taking self-responsibility for what shows up in their life materially, they have not entered their inner sanctuary to discover there the real treasures they seek by amassing materially.

Stage Three begins our entry into a consciousness of living “in the zone” of attunement with universal principle. Stage Four describes the mystical union of oneness with Source while fully participating in all that it means to be fully alive to our human incarnation.

Many powers beyond our individual ego lead us to our deepest purpose, and sometimes that walk includes moments, days, or months of walking in seeming darkness. These are the times when we find no succor from the God of our understanding or those around us. In chapter 8 we learn what it is to incubate in this void as a preparation for giving birth to a greater reality in and for our life. We are led into a realization that occupying this spot of extreme discomfort is exactly what is needed for the next step in our evolution.

Chapter 9 supports us to till the ground of consciousness through an understanding of the difference between visualizing and visioning, a requisite for moving into chapter 10, which gives instruction for practicing the Life Visioning Process. Chapter 11 takes us back to the eight life structures and how to integrate into them what is revealed during LVP.

A Source Beyond Ego, a Grace Beyond Luck

There is a life occurrence or a sequence of events unique to each of us that breaks through our self-imposed limitations, our egoic self-will, beckoning the Authentic Self to come forward and announce itself to us. Whether you credit it to karma or that which seeks to emerge through us, the wisdom in this grace knows exactly what conditions will cause us to exclaim, “Enough is enough. I give my consent to my next level of growth.” We then set out to identify the qualities we must acquire when the truth is just the opposite: we are already fully equipped with what it takes to live the highest vision for our life. All we have to do is tap into it, to discover it within ourselves and put it into action. Visioning shines the light upon our inner treasure house, illuminating our natural wisdom, joy, compassion, intelligence, love, tranquility, creativity, and generosity.

It is a source beyond ego that provides the inner guidance that will lead us to transcending our current limitations. It lets us know we face nothing alone, that we are indeed carried by the Creator-Life walking in our feet, working through our hands, beating our hearts, and breathing through our breath. This Great Mystery is the motivating power within the Life Visioning Process. It is the underlying urge to evolve into our innate wholeness.

May each and every one of us say “yes” to accepting our life purpose, which is born out of love, thrives in love, and merges in union with love’s source.