

Questioning Your Way to Success

"The direction of the mind is more important than its progress."

~ Joseph Joubert, French Moralist & Essayist, 1754-1824

Getting from Intention to Manifestation is a process. Envisioning it is certainly the first step but if you'd like to be a little more engaged in the process, these simple questions will help you achieve what you want.

There are countless apps designed to help one achieve goals, ranging from diet and exercise, to being more organized, to simply uplifting one's mood. For those less inclined to make change via an app, I've heard of some who journal, use to-do lists, or even pray and meditate on the desired outcomes. Of course, hiring a coach helps too. (Hint, hint...)

I am not judging any technique. If you're dedicated to your goals and willing to do the work, however you choose it, more power to you – especially in this ever-stressful world in which we find ourselves. That said, if you personally felt stuck and would like to make some changes; whether health-related, financial, or emotional, this four-question process is ridiculously easy to use and amazingly effective.

Question #1:

Suppose I was successful; how would I know?

It seems silly to start here, but the reality is oft-times we fall short of our objectives because we've never defined the outcome clearly. We say "I want to feel better," or "I want to get more fit." Whereby those are lofty intentions, they're not concrete enough to drive us to an endpoint. Sure, they might get us started, but we'll often stall because we don't know when we've arrived and the journey feels daunting and without end.

It's more effective to state a goal such as "I will walk 30 minutes three times a week;" or "I will take time each day to write down five things for which I'm grateful."

Being able to identify a clear change in behavior is essential to achieving goals.

Question #2:

What has to happen for that objective to occur?

Obviously, if we were doing what we needed to do, we'd already be where we want to be. Since we're not yet "there," something must adjust. To that end, we have basically four options: start a new behavior; stop an existing behavior; do more of an already-existing behavior; or do less of an existing behavior.

Behavioral changes therefore might be, "put a 30-minute activity appointment in my calendar on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday;" or "reserve 10 minutes each morning to record those things for which I'm grateful."

The trick here is not to line out an entire series of changes, but to define one simple, effective adjustment you can make to move forward.

Answering these questions

honestly and in order will

guide you easily and painlessly

to the results you want.

Intentions Affirmations Manifestations

FROM "WHAT IF..." TO "WHAT NEXT..."

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Question #3:

Can I do that?

If you are not in complete control of the behavioral change, success is left up to fate.

For example, if — in Question #2 — you stated, “Find a walking partner;” that leaves you stagnant until your find someone who shares your goal. Even if you do find a walking partner, what happens if she gets sick or decides she doesn’t want to continue your joint-regimen? You’re back to square one.

It doesn’t mean you can’t bring others along on your journey, but the path must be structured to move you forward irrespective of whether anyone else helps or hinders you.

By the way, if the answer to Question #3 is not “Yes,” that means your goal in Question #1 is wrong for you. Make it smaller or rework it.

Special Bonus Question:

By When?

You’ve outlined your goal, determined what you have to do, realized it’s indeed in your control, and committed to doing it. Next step is to set a deadline. By the way, “ASAP” is not a deadline as everything else will take higher priority.

Without deadlines, there’s no urgency. Without urgency, there’s very virtually no chance you’ll move forward.

Question #4:

Will I do that?

This requires brutal honesty with yourself. Sure, technically you can do that, but will you? Answers such as, “As soon as...” or “When the weather changes...” or “I’ll try...” are merely fancier ways of saying, “No.” There’s no judgement in “No,” but it highlights a truth; that truth being, “I’m not going to.”

Either commit to doing it or go back to Question #1 and start again.

Repeat these four questions until you can get all the way to the end. Most times, you’ll have to go through this process several times, each time whittling down your objective, until it all fits. Once that happens, the final bonus question kicks in:

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