

Living With Intention | September 14, 2005 Volume 2, Issue 4 | [Subscribe](#)

Greetings! As you may have noticed, this issue of *Living With Intention* has been a bit delayed due to the tragic and unexpected passing of my hard drive (RIP) and the ensuing adventure of re-establishing my technological command center. Incidentally, I am now a strong proponent of frequent and thorough computer back-ups. Whew, doesn't life always seem to provide an array of "growth opportunities" for us?

This issue of *Living With Intention* covers a critical topic critical to designing a wildly fulfilling and remarkably successful life; knowing and using your unique gifts. I'll also overview a success strategy called Mastermind Groups, which will change your life for the better in more ways than you can imagine. And, as usual, you'll find recommendations for resources that can help you design the life of your dreams.

The resource I'm most excited about is the recent release of Volume Two of my *Living With Intention Audio Program*, and the October publication of my book, also called (big surprise!) *Living With Intention*. **This week only save up to 40%** on a variety of *Living With Intention* packages. Don't miss out...**this sale ends on Friday, September 16th**. Click [here](#) for more details.

As always, thanks for reading and for [encouraging others to subscribe](#). And remember, enjoy the journey.



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Ideas for a Wildly Fulfilling Life... Softball Sagas and Signature Strengths

I am arguably the world's *worst* softball player. Or certainly in the lowest identifiable percentile of softball skill level. I'm one of those players who garners comments from people on the sidelines, such as "Wow, she must have a lot of *other* gifts because softball is definitely *not* one of them."

During my first game I sustained a pretty severe concussion when the pitcher slammed the ball into the side of my head. He was quite certain, I'm sure, that he had calculated his trajectory correctly, assuming that no adult woman could run as slowly as I did. Well, he was

wrong and wound up launching a missile-worthy throw straight into the left side of my skull. I think there's still a dent there. Maybe that should have been the sign that this just wasn't my game. But I didn't pay attention. I kept on lurching, hiccupping, and laughing through many entertaining attempts to master the game.

It actually took me two full seasons to score a run. If I remember correctly, it was the last game of the second season when I finally made it home for the first time. My team's sole mission for two years was to steward me across home plate in a triumphant run-scoring parade. Every game held new possibility and every game left their hopes dashed. They coined little mantras to chant me on, stood with baited breath on the rare event I actually hit the ball, and offered a heartfelt "maybe next time" after each valiant attempt.

On the day I actually scored the run, my teammates were so elated that every single one of them rushed in from the field to celebrate with me in a rowdy display of support while the other team stood dumbfounded at their positions, wondering what madness had ensued. I mean, it was just a run, right? Not the last game of the World Series. But we were all drunk with joy over my bold triumph against all odds.

My most memorable example of my genetic predisposition to softball ineptitude happened on one of the rare occasions when I actually hit the ball. Because I wasn't accustomed to hitting it, I had to take a second or two to process that I was supposed to start running to first. So, shocked and amazed as I was, I started running. By some miraculous coincidence, it seems that the other team didn't think I would hit the ball either (why would that be?), so they were also unprepared to act. When I realized they were fumbling around missing the renegade ball, it dawned on me that I might, indeed, make it to first base. Only I'd have to run faster to do that.

So, I hit my own little personal turbo charge button and started sprinting towards first. The only problem is that my *upper* body started running *faster* than my *lower* body. Perhaps you know where this is going. Gravity is such that one cannot sustain one's upper body running faster than one's lower body for very long. I made this observation at the point that I was at about a 45 degree angle from the ground. I thought to myself, "I wonder how long I can keep this up?" I then realized that evidently I wouldn't be able to do it much longer.

I hit the ground with the force of a speeding freight train (courtesy of my rather ineffective but powerful turbo charge), and proceeded to roll four or five times until I finally came to rest at the side of the dugout. Yes, it was the fence that stopped me from careening any further out of control.

The crowd was deathly silent, wondering if I had broken any bones, wounded my psyche for all of eternity, or a combination of both. Thank goodness neither case applied and I started laughing until I nearly turned blue. Well, actually, I guess I kind of did turn blue because the combination of the dust storm I churned up in my rolling wake, combined with my uncontrollable laughing fit, resulted in an asthma-induced coughing fit for the better part of 20 minutes.

This incident is the talk of our circle of friends, and when people say "it couldn't have been *that* bad," I sheepishly have to affirm that, "yes, it was that bad. And unfortunately I have many, many witnesses to attest to it."

But I always follow up that story with the qualification that *we're not all gifted in the same ways*. Some people (obviously not me), are talented softball players or sports stars. Others are good with numbers, cars, gourmet cooking, or kids. I'm pretty skilled with words and people. My unique abilities, or my signature strengths, involve sharing information and resources that help people make meaningful changes in their lives. And because I know what I do best and work to apply these skills every day, I use my unique gifts both to help others and to feel fulfilled myself.

Fortunately, I'm surrounded by people who use their gifts in ways that support me to use mine, for instance, Nola, my database wizard who keeps me organized and connected; Kerri my techno-guru, who publishes my ezine; and Debe, my bookkeeping diva who is turning my financial systems into a well-oiled machine. Now, I can *do* all of these things—manage databases, ezines, and accounting records - it's just that, like softball, it's not necessarily pretty when I do it. It's far more productive and less stressful when *they* exercise *their* gifts in these areas and allow *me* to exercise *my* gifts with words and people. When we do that, everyone wins.

And you can do the same. All it takes is learning your uniquely brilliance and applying it every day in every way you can. Your inner genius is second nature to you—it's what you feel you do best, what yields the best outcomes for you, and what others notice about your unique abilities. When you're working in your area of expertise, you'll have nearly unlimited energy, creativity, and growth opportunities associated with it. And, you'll find that both you and others realize tremendous benefit when you're using those strengths as often as possible. So, how do you do that? Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

- 1) **Take the “Signature Strengths Survey.”** Log on to www.authentic happiness.org and click on the link to take the “VIA Signature Strengths Survey” (located in the top left-hand corner of the website). This survey takes about 20 minutes and will help you identify some of your key strengths. Then, look for ways you can use those strengths each day in the different areas of your life—work, relationships, parenting, self-improvement, or other roles. The more you apply your strengths, the more successful and fulfilled you'll feel in all of these areas.
- 2) **Ask people.** Select at least five people from different areas of your life (family, friends, work, etc.) and ask them what they think are your unique gifts—gifts that show up across ALL areas of your life, not just in professional settings. When they respond, simply record their answers and see what themes emerge for you about your signature strengths. Again, look for ways to apply those abilities in all areas of your life on a daily basis.
- 3) **Use other resources and strategies.** Check out chapter five in my book *Living With Intention* (or the corresponding audio program) for a wide array of other resources for identifying and applying your unique gifts in meaningful ways. See the resources section for more information.

So it's true that we're not all born to play softball (thankfully, because if we were I'd be in major trouble). But we are all born with a set of one-of-a-kind and gifts and strengths. Once you hone in on those, you'll find an unlimited source of fulfillment and success. Give it a try and see where your strengths lead you!

Ideas for A Remarkably Successful Life... Mastermind Groups

I've been reading for a couple of years now about a success strategy called “Mastermind Groups,” and have been intrigued but until now haven't had the chance to dive in and try the technique myself. What is a Mastermind Group? It's a group of 5 or 6 people, preferably representing different professions, who get together on a regular basis to support one another in reaching their goals, help problem-solve challenges, provide information and encouragement, and increase all member's likelihood of success and fulfillment in life.

In August, I had the pleasure of attending Jack Canfield's Breakthrough to Success Training in Las Vegas (which I highly recommend!) and walked away with my very own Mastermind Group. My group, the Las Vegas Dream Team, is an international contingency of the most forward-thinking, energetic, kind, and innovative people I've met in recent years. In the short time we've been working together they have helped me achieve some major goals I had wanted to work on for a long time.

My team is currently meeting via teleconference every two weeks and we also pair up with an “accountability partner” each week to help us maintain our focus on recent commitments and weekly goals. It's really a group form of coaching, networking, brainstorming, and accountability that yields outstanding outcomes for everyone involved.

If you're interested in starting your own group, here are a few steps to take, based on Jack Canfield's recommendations (see his book, *The Success Principles*, for more detailed information):

1. Assemble a group of 5-6 people with complementary goals and interests to yours, including people who have achieved a level of success in areas where you'd like to succeed;

2. Set a standing time when you'll meet;
3. Set a standing agenda that includes the following elements:
 - Hold an invocation or call for spiritual guidance or positive energy for the group
 - Share what is new and good for people
 - Share progress made since the last meeting (accountability for what you committed to last time)
 - Negotiate for time (identify how much time each group member will get to ask for and receive feedback, and determine if anyone needs additional time to work on a particular problem or opportunity)
 - Allow each individual his/her allotted time to ask for and receive brainstorming, feedback, or support
 - Gain a commitment from each member to "stretch" in the coming week(s)—work toward a goal, or do something they wouldn't be likely to do if they weren't accountable to the group
 - Conclude with an expression of gratitude for the group process or other things in their life.

The process is an easy but immensely powerful one. I've been stunned at the value my Mastermind Group has already added to my life (Thanks, Las Vegas Dream Team!). I'm grateful to *them* and I'm making an emphatic recommendation to *you* to try this strategy yourself. If you're looking for someone to help you get started, see my recommendation for Cynthia Hallanger's programs under "Women Making a Difference." Give this process a try and see what an impact it will make on your life.

Resources That Will Change Your Life

Living With Intention Audio Program and Book—Order by September 16th and save^ up^ to 40%!

There's an art and a science to living deliberately. Living With Intention comes from exploring your priorities and passions and capitalizing on your skills and gifts. Yet busy lives and competing commitments can make it tough to spend time and energy to reflect on what's really important to you and what you want to do next.

Living With Intention offers a proven solution to help you make purposeful life choices and find meaning in all you do. Using a unique combination of information, inspiration, and reflection, this audio program will guide you in creating a vision for who you want to be and how you want to design your life.

Volume One shares three critical foundations for designing a wildly fulfilling and remarkably successful life:

- *Disk One, Powerful Perspectives*, focuses on creating an attitude of possibility and opportunity using simple ways to reframe your thinking and your life.
- *Disk Two, Get Vivid, Get Busy, and Get Support*, details the best strategies for building a vision and complementary goals that ensure your fulfillment and success.
- *Disk Three, Energy, Focus, Outcomes*, highlights practical ways for directing your time, energy, and expertise to achieve outstanding results in everything

you do.

- *Disk Four, Worksheets and Reminders*, offers a host of great resources for putting your new-found knowledge into action.

Volume Two continues with three additional fundamentals for creating a life of meaning and purpose:

- *Disk One, Enduring Happiness*, introduces the science of life satisfaction and the top techniques for weaving more joy and contentment into your days and your life.
- *What You Do Best*, covers proven approaches for identifying your unique strengths and gifts, along with the best ways to use them to create the life you want.
- *Disk Two, Disk Three, Balance and Resilience*, explores how to tap into the power of positive stress while minimizing the impact of negative stress in simple but powerful ways.
- *Disk Four, Worksheets and Reminders*, provides another set of resources for helping you translate ideas and information into results.

Living With Intention Book

The softcover book integrates all of this great information in one easy to read, simple to navigate resource.

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Women Making a Difference... Ideas to Help You Thrive

As I mentioned in the Mastermind Group article above, if you are a woman and you're ready to start Masterminding but you want some assistance getting started, I have the perfect resource for you. This fall, a friend and fellow coach, Cynthia Hallanger, is offering two tailored Mastermind processes for women, one for women business owners and another focusing on procrastination. Here are the details:

Fast Track, for women who are newly in business. This 12-week program combines the support, brainstorming and accountability of a traditional mastermind group with core

components of marketing for new solopreneurs. You will be able to create “elevator speeches,” fine tune your target markets, develop successful networking strategies, and create a marketing plan.

This incredible course is limited to six women. It will provide focus and motivation for YOUR business and is especially valuable for solo service professionals—healing arts, consultants, insurance, etc. In addition to in-person meetings, we will also hold teleconferences for your convenience. You will be matched up with an accountability partner.

Procrastination Busters. Are you dreading the upcoming holiday season? What about that BIG de-cluttering project—the garage, the basement, your office or the spare room? The techniques and tips you will receive will provide you with a lifetime of tools. Using a combination of in-person and teleconference meetings enhanced by weekly activities with an accountability partner from the group of six, “Procrastination Busters” is designed for your success. With relief, you’ll move on to what you would REALLY like to be doing with your life.

To take advantage of either of these fabulous courses, simply call Cynthia at 509.838.7570 or e-mail cynthia@challangercoaching.com for more details.

Best wishes for a beautiful autumn!



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Published by Deanna Davis, PhD, co-owner of Applied Insight. Deanna is a life and business coach, professional speaker and writer who helps people design wildly fulfilling and remarkably successful lives - on their own terms. Deanna is an admitted laughaholic and a strong proponent of adding chocolate as a key component of the USDA Food Pyramid. For information about her professional speaking and coaching services, contact Deanna at deanna@appliedinsight.net

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