

## VISION AND INTENTIONAL ACTION

Week #3 of a 4-Week Series, "The 1% Rule"

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*So this guy walks into a restaurant with a full-grown ostrich by his side. And they sit down and the waitress comes to take their order. And the guy says, "Well, I'll have a double cheeseburger, large fries and a coke." And then she turns the ostrich, and the ostrich says, "I'll have the same."*

*And so she comes back in a few minutes with their order, and she says, "That'll be \$22.94." And the guy pulls out of his pocket exactly \$22.94.*

*And so they keep coming in day after day. And he'll have his double cheeseburger, large fries and a coke, and the ostrich says, "I'll have the same." And then he always pulls out the exact same amount of money. And day after day, this keeps happening.*

*And so after about five or six days, the waitress says the next time they come in, "So would you like the usual?" And he said, "No; today I'm going to have a Porterhouse steak with a baked potato and a salad, and your best glass of cabernet." And the ostrich said, "And I'll have the same."*

*And so she brings it and says, "Now it's \$68.74." And he pulls out \$68.74. And the waitress just can't help herself. She says, "You know, I just keep noticing; you keep pulling out the exact amount of money every single time. How does that work?"*

*He said, "Well several years ago I was cleaning out my attic, and I found this lamp. And I just rubbed on it and a Genie appeared and granted me two wishes. And my first wish was that, if there was anything I wanted, I would always have in my pocket exactly what I needed -- the exact amount of money."*

*The waitress said, "That's brilliant! Most people just ask for a million dollars; but you've got it set that, for the rest of your life, whatever you need will always be there!"*

*He said, "Yeah! Whether it's a gallon of milk or whether it's a Rolls Royce, I always have all the money I need."*

*And she said, "Wow! That's amazing. But what's up with the ostrich?"*

*And he said, "Well, my second my wish was to have a chick with long legs who listens to every word I say."*

[Congregation laughs and applauds] Alright.

So if a Genie magically appeared and granted you two wishes, what would you wish for? What would you like to have in your life? What would you like to experience? What would be the greatest goal and the thing with the most amount of meaning that you could have in your life, if you could have it now?

Or how about this? How many people have a clear, written-down vision of your life for the next three to five years? Anybody?

Here's an interesting thing: As much as we all say we want to achieve greater things and happiness and success, 83% of Americans do not have goals; 14% have some goals and plans, but nothing written down. And only 3% have clear, written-down goals. Clear, written-down vision.

Now I have to say, I have goals; I've always had goals and intentions. And I have some written here; some written there; and a lot in here [points to his head]. But I would say I'm in the 14%; I do not have a three- to five-year clear plan and vision written for my life. And what is amazing is that I -- and we, as Unity "peeps" -- know the importance of goals! We know the importance of vision and intention. And

yet, we underutilize the incredible power we have and the access to certain processes and practices to manifest our goals and dreams.

Today is Week #3 of our four-week series on the book, *The 1% Rule*, by Tommy Baker. And that's really about the idea that the best for success is to do small, incremental actions every single day to move towards whatever it is we want to achieve. That will actually produce the greatest level of results, rather than trying to "hit it out of the park" or just find instant success.

And the reason he wrote the book is ... Two reasons: That many human beings have a pattern of getting excited at the beginning of some big goal -- making their lives better; making lots of money; losing weight. And then after a few weeks, they fade and fizzle, then totally give up. and then six months later, try it again! Get excited; promise they'll do all this stuff. And there is just a continuous pattern where we feel disappointed and discouraged.

And the second one is: We believe stuff about success that just isn't healthy and true. Like, we think to call ourselves a success, we need to make a million dollars ... It's always over-the-top "big stuff" ... you know, we're not a success unless we have something huge. Another one is: We think that it can -- and we would like it to -- come overnight. We want to be instant successes. We want to hit it big right off the bat. The third one is: We think that there's a perfect and right time. "Wait until we get all our ducks in a row." The challenge about that is we just tend to procrastinate and never actually start or never finish. And the final one is: We tend to think everything should go the way we planned it. And once we hit a roadblock or adversity of some kind, we tend to just give up.

"The 1% Rule" really kind of shares four things. Number one: It invites us to acknowledge any myth or idea we have about success that's just limiting and unhealthy. Like thinking that we're going to hit it big. The second one is to trust the process of doing simple, consistent acts and actions towards our goal. The third one is to praise ourselves when we make our daily progress. You know, "*We did this a little bit better than yesterday*" or, "*We learned this*" or, "*We made a mistake, but we discovered something even better from that mistake.*" Celebrating it every day instead of looking like, "*Oh, I'm still so far away!*" It's like celebrating that we're actually improving and developing. And then the last one is: Fall in love with the process. Because success takes time, and there's no point in trying to pretend it's otherwise. And there'll be bumps in the road, so you're prepared for adversity. And then your successes actually help you get more engaged and energized and excited to be a part of the process.

And so if you've missed Part #1 and #2, you can check those out online. Today we're going to look at three more things that help deepen our practice of "The 1% Rule." And the title of the message is, "Vision and Intentional Action."

Studies show that the most successful people have a vision. That a prerequisite for a happy, successful, fulfilling life is having a vision. And you know why visions are so important and powerful? Because they give us direction. They give us a purpose. Visions actually channel our creative energy and abilities. And they keep us driven; they keep us focused; they keep us motivated and energized. They help bring out the best talents in ourselves. And they're also a vehicle for us to help make a bigger difference in the world and helping other people.

The Book or Proverbs says:

*"Where there is no vision, the people perish. But happy is he who keepeth the Law."*

And so it says: When you don't have a vision, what'll perish is your joy and your passion and your energy. But "*happy is he who keepeth the Law*" means that, when you have a vision, that because you are a creative being and you are meant to express your gifts, that will bring your happiness. Having a

vision actually helps us bring forth our creative power and helps bring forth the purpose that we're here for. And that's what makes us feel happy. Having a vision is a powerful and important thing.

When Jesus said, *"Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and the door will be opened unto you,"* what he's saying is: Take time and think and consider what you really want to ask for. Get clear!

When he's saying "seek," he's saying take time and think about what is it you want to seek; where do you want the door to be opened? And visions really help us get clear. Because clarity is such an important ...

How many people have ever been unclear and unsure, uncertain? Anybody? [Congregation laughs] And when we put that kind of energy out to the universe, what do you think we get back? One of the most powerful things we can do is take time and devote energy to get clear about what it is we want and want we want to desire and create.

Everybody know who Stedman Graham is? Yeah; he's Oprah's boyfriend. He's also a great teacher and leader and a leadership consultant. He has a quote that really triggers to me something important about clarity and vision. And here's what he says:

*"When you have a sense of your own identity, and the vision of where you want to go in life, you then have the basis for reaching out to the world and going after your dreams for a better life."*

But it's the first line I like. He says, *"When you have a sense of your own identity."* To me, the first level of clarity -- before having the big life vision -- is to have a greater sense of who you are; of your identity; of who you came here to be. Of what are the gifts and talents that you have to share with the world. When we connect with our inner being -- when we connect with our most authentic self -- and have that clarity first, of who we are, then setting the vision in the areas of health and finance and career, relationships and spiritual life ... then they become even more powerful. Because it flows from that clarity of our own essence and who we are and who we have come here to be.

Last week we looked at opening up to possibilities. But today is about getting clarity. Taking those possibilities and getting clear about what it is that we are here to do and what we want to do. And there's a simple four-step process of clarifying your vision. And these are all in Scripture!

The first one is **BE STILL AND KNOW**. The first thing is to quiet and calm and center ourselves in Spirit. To center ourselves in the presence and the power of God; just to let go and open ourselves fully.

The second one is to **ASK**. *"Ask and ye shall receive."* Well, ask, "Spirit, what am I here to do? Spirit, what are the talents that I'm here to help other people with? What are the things that I am here to achieve and experience and share?"

And then the third one is to **LISTEN**. The voice of God is always speaking; the question is: Are we tuned in, and are we quieting ourselves enough to be receptive and just listen? Listen to our intuition; listen! Our spirit knows; our body knows. There is wisdom within if we'll take time to listen!

And then the fourth one is to **WRITE IT DOWN**. Write it down; write it down; write it down! Do you know something interesting? If you were to set a goal and not write it down, and then take that same goal, but this time write it down, you would have a 42% better chance of achieving it! Isn't that amazing? There is something powerful about writing it down! Part of me thinks it's clarity, but a part of me thinks we're putting an energy out there. We're putting that intention -- not just here [points to his head] -- but it's here and here [points to an imaginary piece of paper]. And it is a powerful thing! Write it down! That's why it's stunning only 3% write it down. It is a powerful thing.

So the first thing is to do that four-step process about who you are and who you came to be -- about your true identity and your most authentic self. And then do the different areas of life: your health; your career and finances; relationships; and Spirit.

Now, for most of us -- and obviously by the fact that only 3% are doing it, most of us aren't doing it! -- it's tough. Here's what I'd recommend.

**FIND A PARTNER** -- whether it's a prayer partner; your partner; your spouse; a family member -- and do it together. Do it separately but do it together. There is something powerful about that process. I joined this journaling group, and there were eight people in it. And everybody got the same question, but each of us worked on our own stuff individually. Working on yourself individually together ... and I'll tell you, it was so uplifting and so powerful! It was absolutely amazing! It is something I would recommend; if you have a hard time starting, just do it!

Because I guarantee if the eight of us were on our own, probably at least four of us probably wouldn't have done the journaling! I mean, it's just the truth! So support yourself and utilize it! If you have a tough time doing this, find someone to do it with. I bet you know at least one or two or three people that you could call right now and say, "Hey, want to sit down for an hour and do this process?" and they'd do it with you. It is very effective, because clarifying your vision is a powerful, powerful step in terms of practicing "The 1%" and transforming your life.

The second one is what I would call **SUBTRACTING FOR SUCCESS**. How many people would say you have a full life? How many people would say your life is so full that your garage is full; your closets are full; your calendar is full? [Congregation laughs] Your life's just full! Any very full life people?

My closet -- with my shirts and all that stuff -- is so full that my clothes are pressed up against each other. Just looking at the closet, you can't find ... I went looking for an orange shirt the other day; I couldn't find it, because everything is pressed up against itself. And so went looking for one shirt, and I found that shirt and I found two others I thought I'd lost or didn't have anymore! [Congregation laughs] That's how packed in it was!

And when that happens, life is saying to you, "*You've got too much! Too much!*"

One of the things is: When we think about being happier, the first thing we think is more. More! Because more is better! First thing -- I want to be happy; I want more success; I want more money; I want to have more fun; I want to have more friends; I want more stuff! I want more! Because we think more is necessarily better. And more will necessarily lead to happiness and success.

And I would say that sometimes that is true. But I would also say that sometimes happiness starts by just subtracting and releasing and letting go of things that no longer serve us. I mean, one of the things that makes letting go and subtracting so important for happiness is that, when your life is so crammed -- whether it's your mind or your closet. Wherever things are so stuffed, there's no room! There's not only no room for any new things, but there's no room for peace. There's no room for creativity and calmness and inspiration ... And new ideas and new opportunities and new possibilities.

Sometimes letting go and releasing is a gift of freedom! Opening a new sense of space is such a healthy and wonderful thing that it blesses us! And you don't necessarily need to fill it with something else; sometimes just releasing and letting those things go is a powerful and important thing.

Here's a quote by Tommy Baker:

*"Right now 50% of what is in your life is not serving your vision."*

Let me say it again!

*"Right now 50% of what is in your life is not serving your vision. You've allowed relationships to stay around because they're comfortable. You grew up together or went to the same college. You visit environments that used to serve you but now hold you back. In the context of business, we are doing countless tasks, yet 20% of what we do creates 80% of our results."*

So my question is: What is the busy stuff you're doing in your life right now that is not helpful? That is not productive for the kind of life you want to live? And the kind of vision that you want to attract? What relationships and what places just no longer serve you or are not healthy for you? What are the things in your life that really need to be released? That really need to be let go?

I think it's an important thing that every one of us needs to consider. What do I need to subtract? What do I need to take away? What do I need to stop? What do I need to release myself from. Because again, it opens up a sense of peace; a space; and possibilities. I would say that ongoing success requires periodic subtraction, because it just opens up a flow of energy. And I will say that subtraction will always create an addition of space, peace, happiness and greater success.

Are you willing to subtract for success? Because it is a powerful and important thing. I would create a list of maybe three or five things of what you think is important to let go. You don't have to do it all at once; do it progressively, one thing at a time. Some things you might need to wean off of; some things you might be able to cut off. But this principle of subtracting for success is a powerful way to open our lives to greater levels of happiness.

And the final one is **INTENTIONAL ACTION**. How many people here have ever been really busy in a day -- you had a whole bunch to do -- but you got nothing done? [Congregation laughs] Anybody ever have that experience? Sometimes we think "busy" means progress ... and we all know it doesn't!

And you know what the thing that stops us the most from being productive? We think it might be skill; we think it's time; we think it's other people. We think it's all kinds of different things, but it isn't. It actually comes down to one thing. The number one reason why we are not as productive is **FOCUS**. In our fast-paced moving, Redbull-drinking, multi-tasking "*I don't have enough time*" culture, we are so distracted! Pulled in so many different directions it is difficult for us to stay focused.

A recent study showed that we spend 10 hours a day looking at screens of some type, whether it's your computer or your phone or your whatever. Ten hours! I mean, it is no question we get so pulled and are so distracted that it's hard for us to be productive.

Cal Newport wrote a book called *Deep Work*. And what he says is that we are so distracted that we can't do deep work, which is defined as concentrated work that we give all our attention -- our undivided attention and energy towards. And so busy a culture we are, that if we really want to do deep work and put focus and attention on what we're doing, we need to set up **BOUNDARIES AND RULES**.

And the first one would be to **pick a time and a place where you have no interruptions**. How many people ever find you get interrupted consistently in your work and in your life? Interruption. Do you know they say, on average, in an eight-hour work day that there are 50 to 60 interruptions? And as many as four to 12 interruptions an hour! Eliminating the interruptions so you can give your undivided attention to whatever you're doing is powerful stuff.

The second one is: **Don't check your emails all the time**. Not just during the time for your deep work, but on a regular basis. Don't keep being addicted to emails and your phone and your texts. And I'll have to be honest; I'm addicted to my emails and my phone and my texts. [Congregation laughs]

I've got to say; I have to be there; my life makes no sense. I feel disconnected from the world! I went on vacation about five years -- to Cabo for a week. And I forgot my phone! And I thought life was over; how

could I ...? You know what happened? Best vacation of my life! [Congregation laughs] We need to set boundaries! And we need to unplug from these things that we're so plugged into.

And then the last one is: **We've got to learn to say "no."** Anybody ever say, "yes" to something that later you regretted and you wished you hadn't? I think we all have. And you know why we need to learn to say "no"? Because when we say "yes" to other people, we're saying "no" to ourselves! And it's taking so much of our time and our energy. And not that you don't say "yes" for certain things ... But I know we have all had that pattern of saying "yes" consistently to things, even to our own detriment. Even when it robs us of our time and energy of working towards our vision or even our own self-care. We will say "yes" to others but avoid and neglect our own self-care.

So it is so important for us to learn how to be focused: to give our undivided attention -- cut out the distractions -- so we can invest in doing work that's going to further our lives; further our vision; further our levels of happiness.

Do you know it is said that 75 minutes of deep work is actually more than most people get done in eight hours of work? However, we need to practice and build focus like a muscle. So the first thing you do is try and start with 20 minutes of deep work: of focus; giving your undivided attention; getting rid of the distractions. And start from there. Because it will start to make a huge difference and become a habit and a positive pattern that will make us more effective and actually joyful and enthusiastic about our work.

Tommy Baker says that **once a day we should ask this question: What can I execute right now that will show that my vision and my desire is not only possible, but is coming true?** He said when you ask a question, you engage. You engage yourself! That's why I ask so many questions. I mean, it's just powerful.

And so asking the question: What can I do right now that will show that my vision is not only possible, but is coming? And so just the engagement of it: It makes us think, "*Okay, what is the most important thing? What is the thing I could do now?*"

And the second thing is to **make sure it is something that will move the needle.** That it is something that will make a difference. It's got to be an action that makes a difference. If we came up with three actions, we would usually know which one is the one that's going to create the biggest change and make the greatest difference. Which would be the most effective.

And the third one -- which I think is the most important -- is **be intentional in that action.** That when you take that action, your intention and mindset is, "I'm getting better at this. I'm moving closer to my goal and dream. That great things are happening by me engaging in this action." There is something powerful and amazing about doing something with intention.

Arnold Schwarzenegger said you could lift weights and work out and you'd get benefit. But when you lift weights and work out and think, "*I am getting stronger; I am getting more buff; I'm going to win Mr. Olympia.*" [Congregation laughs] When you do it with that intention -- when you add an action and intention -- it absolutely multiplies exponentially the power of that action. If you're studying; if you're researching; even if you're eating or exercising ... when you do it with intention, the higher level of effectiveness and producing results is absolutely incredible.

So how many people here have ever been on a path towards succeeding some goal and you got derailed or sidetracked, and you just gave up? Or your enthusiasm just diminished significantly? Anybody understand that feeling? It happens to us!

So acting with intention is important. And then sometimes we get derailed. Sometimes things don't go as well.

So here's what happened to me recently. Over the last several months, I have been working on three things: strength; endurance; and flexibility. And you know when you work for a long time, and you don't see results, but then you finally start to see some progress? Well, in the last month or so, I've been starting to see results. Now for me, walking 3,000 steps a day consistently is a good thing -- and so I've had that over the last few weeks. Started going up and down -- mainly up -- stairs. Been lifting weights; doing my diet. It's been going great.

So on Friday when the doctor had to do this procedure on my foot, and I can't put my shoe on for five weeks, I was broken-hearted and bummed out. So it took a little bit of time, because I've been on a real high, really enjoying this whole process and progress. And so I had to tell myself, *"Okay; still be intentional. How can I still be intentional in this little adjustment period that you've got here?"* And so I've decided, *"Okay, I can be more intentional in the stretching that I do; I'm more intentional in working with dumbbells; I'm more intentional with my diet. And I'm going to do this, and this is going to help me keep moving until I can get back fully on track."*

You know, sometimes life is going to knock us. And we have to say, *"I'll still be intentional. I still have my goal. I can find some work-arounds; I can find some ways to adapt."* Sometimes tough stuff happens and you know what? You've just got to roll with it. And I literally have to roll with it [slightly rolls wheelchair] for the next several weeks! [Congregation laughs] But it's important that we don't let things stop us. If we have to get creative -- if we have to adjust -- you just have to adapt.

And I have to say, what's interesting -- and it's only been since last Thursday ... But I would say my intention with my stretching is better than it was before. My intention in working with my dumbbells is better than before. My intention with my diet is better than it was before. So sometimes these things can push you in a direction where you can actually end up getting more out of it. And then when I do get back on track -- hopefully -- there'll be an up-leveling of success in that area of fitness.

But I just want to encourage you: Whatever you're going through now, if you have to do a little work-around because of some little bump or setback, just do it! Just do it!

Woody Allen said, *"Eighty percent of success is just showing up."* And I would say 80% of success is showing up with intention. Because it's how you show up. And when you do it with intention, it magnifies the power of the activities that we do.

You know, it's really true what they say; successful people, it is proven, that the most successful people have a written-down, clear vision. And I really invite you to take time -- five to 10 minutes -- to be still; and then three to five minutes to ask; five to 10 minutes to listen; and five to 10 minutes to write. Because it will clarify your goal; your vision; and your intention ... especially when you base it on being clear about who you are and then get clarified on the different areas in your life.

And when you support it with intentional actions -- when you get focused by setting certain boundaries and disciplining yourself -- I'll tell you: amazing things! You'll do some deep work and some powerful work.

So I asked this question a few weeks ago. What if you set your clear vision and did your intentional action every day for the next 30 days? What would your life look like? Or how about the next 60 days? Or the next six months? I guarantee that your life will get better and better and better if you commit to the process, the practice and the progress that is a part of "The 1% Rule."

God bless you all!