



John E. Long Career Coach

John is a Global Career Development Facilitator and Professional Career Coach. He works with a broad range of clients seeking assistance with career exploration, career development and career transition. John has specialty training in the interpretation of personality and career assessments, such as the MBTI®, Strong® and WPI®. He also focuses on work-life balance, time and stress management, and examining life roles.

John offers customized services to identify what motivates each client and to clarify aspirations the client can pursue with passion. Coaching is about support, encouragement, and action to meet the client's needs and achieve meaningful results.

SERVICES OFFERED

- Career Coaching
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A NEWSLETTER OF PERSONAL
AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
FROM JOHN E. LONG, GCDF, CPCC



Using Dreams to Improve Your Business

Do you ever wish you had a Magic Eight-Ball to give you accurate guidance on career decisions? You may be surprised to know you already have one: your dreams.

Most of us know that a good night's sleep decreases stress, increases memory recall, and improves overall functioning. Less well-known is that our nightly dreams also work to keep our psyches healthy and help us access our full potential. With just a little practice, we can learn to tap into this valuable source of information and use it to enhance every aspect of our professional and personal lives.

Every dream, no matter how small or strange, has a message for us. Dreams give us hints of what is to come, point out opportunities we are missing, and suggest creative solutions to problems we face. In the 1970s, producer Jerry Weintraub dreamt of a dazzling marquee that read: "Jerry Weintraub presents Elvis at Madison Square Garden." He followed his dream and brought Elvis back on the road, making millions.

To find out what your dreams are telling you, here are some things to listen for.

The yes/no feeling after waking. Jessica felt stifled by her job but was afraid to quit and strike out on her own. After a tumultuous day she went to sleep early and woke in the morning with a peaceful feeling of resolve, knowing that, in spite of her fear, leaving her job was the best decision.

Questions answered through imagery. David

was considering changing careers when he dreamt of viewing his recently deceased father through a window. He interpreted the dream as saying that grieving was currently more important than making a big career move.

Literal dream messages. Samantha was searching for a job and dreamed of having an animated phone conversation with an old colleague. They hadn't spoken in years, but she took a cue from her dream and called him. He had just started working for a new business that was hiring—and Samantha got the job!

More Ways Dreams Help In Business

Dreams assist us in managing change. Phyllis's workplace was undergoing restructuring but she thought her position was safe. She dreamt of walking into the office to find her desk bare and her coworkers gone. Several days later her whole team was laid off. Her dream had prepared her for the change even though she hadn't wanted to admit it.

Dreams give us great ideas. Paul McCartney woke with a song in his head that he was sure belonged to someone else. He played it for friends and they all assured him it was new. Convinced, he turned his dream song into "Yesterday," one of his biggest hits ever.

Dreams are like having an inner coach. If you're struggling with career or personal goals, check your dreams to see if a great solution is waiting in the wings. Often all it takes is listening to realize you had the answer all along. ●

Top 10 Techniques for Working with Dreams

Like guests to a party, dreams have to be invited, and then treated well. Here are 10 ways to begin:

- 1. Before going to sleep, state your intention to remember your dreams.** Like priming the pump, this may take a while, but soon your dreams will flow.
- 2. Try to wake before your alarm goes off.** Nothing erases a dream faster than being startled awake.
- 3. When you wake from a dream, lie still.** Translate the images into words before opening your eyes.
- 4. Keep pen and paper beside your bed** so you can start writing before the dream fades.
- 5. Better yet, keep a dream journal** to record your dreams and recurring symbols. While some images may be universal, your dream language is your own.

6. Don't judge your dreams. They speak in metaphor, image, and pun. As with any language, it takes time to learn.

7. Don't take your dreams too literally. If you dream of a death, it doesn't necessarily mean that person will die. Read books about dreams to learn more.

8. If you want help, ask for a dream, and then seriously consider its answer. Often dreams answer the question behind the question.

9. All dreams come for our benefit—even "bad" ones. Have the courage to face what your dreams are telling you.

10. Share your dreams. Working on dreams with others is a great way to learn about dreams. ●

Self-Quiz

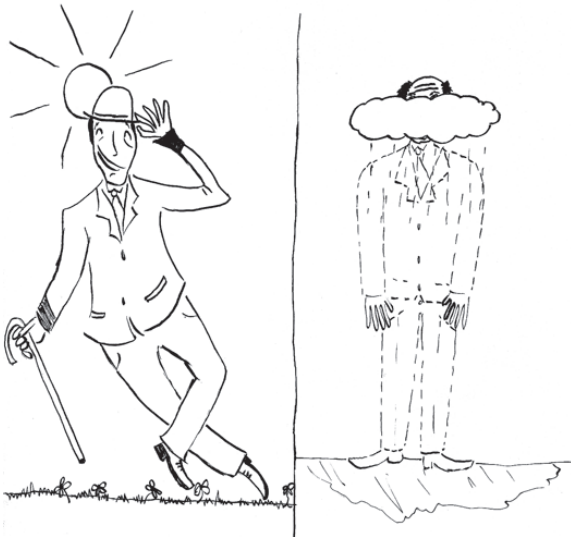
Are You Living in Sync with Your Values?

Fulfillment in life is related to how well you are living in alignment with your values. Values are not morals or principles. They are the essence of who you are—not who you think you should be. For instance, money is not a value, whereas the things that money might buy, such as free time, risk-taking, and being of service are values. When you're aligned with your values, you feel inner harmony, your choices are more easily made, and your actions are in accord with your true self. Take this quiz to see how well you are living in sync with your values.

True False

- 1. I have spent time clarifying my values and can easily articulate them.
- 2. My values are my own. I have not simply adopted them from parents, teachers or other outside influences.
- 3. I based my choice of occupation on my deepest values.
- 4. My values are in alignment with the company I work for (or own).
- 5. My business associates and I regularly examine how we are living up to our values and mission.
- 6. I turn down money-making or status-building opportunities when they conflict with my values.
- 7. In resolving disputes at work, I look beneath the apparent problem to see if values are being dishonored, and then I seek ways to honor them.
- 8. Anyone looking at my life from the outside would see what I value.
- 9. I use my values as a guidepost for making decisions. I ask if a particular choice would bring me closer to—or further from—a core value.
- 10. When I feel upset, it's almost always because my values are being trampled—either by me, someone else, or the situation.
- 11. I am not easily swayed by others' opinions when they conflict with my values.
- 12. To remain open and flexible, I am willing to re-examine my values to determine whether something is still true for me.
- 13. I find creative ways to honor all of my values—even when they conflict with one another.
- 14. My work values are in harmony with my personal and relationship values.
- 15. If I live according to my values, I will feel satisfied and successful throughout my life.

If you answered false more often than true, you may wish to clarify your deepest values and bring your life into greater alignment with them. Please don't hesitate to call if you'd like support in doing this. ●



What's holding you back from letting your light shine brightly?

Relevant Reading

The Accidental Entrepreneur: 50 Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me About Starting a Business, by Susan Urquhart-Brown

Dreamwork: Techniques for Discovering the Creative Power in Dreams, by Jeremy Taylor

How'd You Score That Gig? A Guide to the Coolest Jobs—and How to Get Them, by Alexandra Levit

On Leadership: Practical Wisdom from the People Who Know, by Allan Leighton

The Answer: Grow Any Business, Achieve Financial Freedom, and Live an Extraordinary Life, by John Assaraf & Murray Smith

Go Green, Live Rich: 50 Simple Ways to Save the Earth and Get Rich Trying, by David Bach and Hillary Rosner

“There is nothing like dream to create the future. Utopia today, flesh and blood tomorrow.”

—Victor Hugo, author (1802–1885)

Becoming a Workplace Warrior

Another day, another deadline. You gulp caffeine and forge ahead, like the steadfast worker you are. A good soldier never gives up the fight, right?

Only if you view work as a battleground.

There's a decisive difference between soldiering on, gamely shouldering the workload you're assigned, and becoming a workplace warrior. Soldiers take orders; warriors take responsibility. While it's wise to be a team player and complete projects to the best of your ability, even executives can push the envelope so severely that instead of helping the company, they're hurting themselves.

Continually operating in overdrive can lead to physical, mental, or emotional harm.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the following signs of burnout are cause for concern:

- Chronic cynicism and sarcasm
- Irritability with everyone, from co-workers to clients
- Loss of energy
- Disillusionment about your job or future
- Sleep problems
- Headaches, neck pain, lower back pain
- Abuse of food, drugs or alcohol

We each carry the potential to embody conscious power. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. demonstrated highly developed warrior energy. In business, the most effective leaders are warriors: they champion change in themselves and in others, respect boundaries, communicate clearly, and act from integrity.

Unfortunately, we sometimes act out the "shadow side" of the warrior, says cross-cultural educator and corporate consultant Angeles Arrien, Ph.D. Instead of coming from presence and purpose, we behave like rebels without a cause, either resisting authority or hiding behind a veil: withholding our talents while attempting to ride others' coattails to glory.

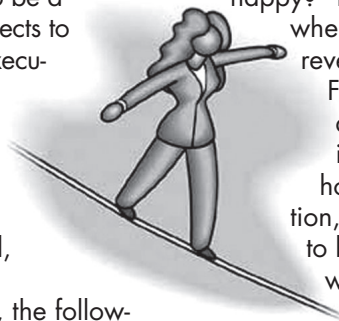
From Bravery to Courage

Moving from soldier to warrior—or from victim to advocate, since self-sacrifice is the flip side of claiming our personal power—entails a subtle perceptual shift. It's a small but significant step from being brave, which means ready to endure a challenge, to becoming courageous: able to do what frightens you. "Courage" derives from *coeur*, the French word for heart. A warrior, therefore, is one who comes from the heart.

In *Peaceful Warrior*, a film based on the autobiographical novel *Way of the Peaceful Warrior* by Dan Millman, a wise elder named Socrates helps a young man discover his purpose after a career-shattering accident. Socrates tells Dan, "A warrior does not give up what he loves; he finds the love in what he does."

When Socrates asks, "Are you happy?" Dan replies that he *will* be, when he attains his goal—thus revealing his need for training.

For a warrior, happiness is not an external objective but an internal condition. The same holds true for balance, satisfaction, humor, etc.: when we are able to bring those qualities to work with us rather than seeking them outside ourselves, we begin to become warriors.



Developing Your Inner Warrior

In her book, *The Four-Fold Way: Walking the Paths of the Warrior, Teacher, Healer and Visionary*, Arrien delineates six leadership skills of the Warrior's Way:

1. Show honor and respect.
2. Align words with actions.
3. Respect limits and boundaries.
4. Be responsible and disciplined.
5. Demonstrate right use of power.
6. Follow the 3 Don'ts of Leadership: when there is much to do, don't be afraid; when there is nothing to do, don't be hasty; don't make judgments about "right" and "wrong."

There are numerous practices and processes for moving from victim to warrior. Some that Arrien recommends:

- Spend time in nature every day.
- Set aside daily time for exercise or movement, such as Tai Chi or yoga.
- Name the people who have inspired you and discern the qualities in them you want to emulate.
- Explore how your rebellious or victim behaviors have served you, then transform these patterns into warrior tools to liberate your true power.

Developing your inner warrior is work, but it can pay off as it leads to greater success, vision, and integrity. ●

BEYOND the Box

The following questions are designed to broaden perspectives, to open vistas, to widen the lens. There is no one right way to approach them. You can journal about them, talk to friends, create art, ponder them while driving or working out, dance them—whatever helps you explore "outside the box."

1. What ideas have my dreams been offering me?
2. What's the relationship between my dreams at night and my waking dreams for my life?
3. What are my core values?
4. In what area(s) of my life am I out of alignment with my values?
5. Whose life am I living?
6. What's the relationship between values and dreams?
7. How are values like street signs?
8. Where have I been a soldier? A warrior?
9. How does operating in overdrive show up in my life?
10. How have I been a rebel? A victim?
11. What are the qualities of my warrior self?
12. How am I hiding my warrior self?
13. What is right use of power?
14. How is lowering my tax load like lowering my cholesterol?

Thinking Ahead: How to Reduce Your Taxes This Year

Last year it was green tea and red wine. This year it's dark chocolate and pomegranate juice. Each new year brings with it the latest discovery meant to postpone our own demise. What's this got to do with taxes you may be wondering?

It was Ben Franklin who originally tied death and taxes together as the only two certainties in life. But there's a third certainty: that we always do what we can to postpone both.

Though you can't avoid paying your taxes, by employing some of these simple strategies you can ensure that your next tax bill will be a little less painful.

Maximize Your Deductions—It sounds obvious but is so often overlooked. A deduction is simply an expense that reduces your taxable income. The best way to maximize deductions is to find out what you're eligible to deduct and make sure you follow through by keeping records and receipts. Some key deductions are: start-up costs, education, professional services (lawyer, accountant, etc.), vehicle, equipment, charitable donations and business travel.

Tax Credits—Purchasing a hybrid vehicle this year? Paying tuition? Perhaps you're paying for child day care (or even summer day camp)? If so, you may be eligible for a tax credit. Unlike deductions, tax credits directly reduce your tax dollar by the amount of the credit.



Hire Family Members—What's the advantage? By hiring family you may avoid paying federal unemployment tax and avoid withholding income taxes and social security. Before adding cousin Chester to your payroll, ensure that he's being paid reasonable wages for reasonable work that benefits the company.

Hire Independent Contractors—If you can't (or don't want to) hire family, consider hiring an independent contractor. The advantage is the same as hiring family (see above). Just make sure they qualify as an independent contractor under IRS rules.

Hire a Tax Professional—Do you cut your own hair? Do you fix your own car? Chances are you hire a professional to do what you can't (or don't like to) do. So, if you're not an accountant, why waste time dealing with your taxes when you could be working on your business? By hiring a tax professional you free yourself up to do what you love to do. Besides, it's a legitimate deduction!

Being proactive in reducing your tax bill means you can avoid the stress that often accompanies taxes. Who knows? That reduction in stress could mean you'll live to see the next life-prolonging discovery—fingers crossed for donuts and ice cream.

Remember: the tax code changes every year. Always consult a tax professional for guidance on any tax reduction strategies. ●

Euripides, Greek dramatist (484 BC–406 BC)

“The wisest men follow their own direction.”

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