



*How to be a
Life Change Artist*

By Annette Huygens-Tholen

www.annetteeffect.com.au



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About the author



Annette Huygens-Tholen (Author, Speaker/Educator, Master Results Coach, Olympian)

2000 Olympian, Annette Huygens Tholen represented Australia for 15 years in both indoor and beach volleyball. The Olympics was the realisation of a 25 year dream and afterwards, Annette was looking forward to retirement and being able to settle down. It wasn't as easy as she thought and she often returned to her sport to once again feel fulfilled. In 2006 Annette was introduced to NLP and other technologies for working with the mind and it turned her life around.

Now a Master Results Coach and NLP practitioner, Annette has recently published her first book, "Success beyond Sport" where she uses her own experience and her studies to teach 8 Winning Points for success. Her passion is helping athletes and everyday people to learn how to change their mind to change their lives and discover emotional and financial success. The book is supported by an online community, workshops, teleseminars and coaching.

Annette was a guest speaker at 2009's Institute for Athlete Retirement and Transition Conference and she also teaches seminars for the world's biggest NLP Coaching and Training Organisation -The Christopher Howard Companies.

Websites by the author...

www.annetteeffect.com.au

www.successbeyondsport.com

www.annettehuygenstholen.com



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this e-book designed for those who would like to change one or more aspects of their lives and/or would like to be better able to cope with the change going on around them.

I will be sharing with you keys to being an artist of your life to create the success that you want. These are the keys that I used in my life, first without knowing them, to realize a 25 year dream, and now that I know them, with greater purpose to create the life of my dreams.

When I was 10 years old I dreamt of competing in the Olympic Games, inspired by Nadia Comaneci, the darling of the 1976 Olympics. I started off in gymnastics and injured my spine and ended up playing volleyball, first indoor and then beach. I represented Australia for 15 years and competed in beach volleyball at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

I lost my way after retiring from sport. Even though I had achieved great success I didn't know specifically 'how' I had done it. I didn't know how to apply myself to success in life beyond sport.

My life had completely changed and I felt out of control. I was used to change in my life - I had already moved cities 5 times to follow my dreams; and I didn't know how to deal effectively with the change in my direction. Sport had been my core identity and now that had changed too.

I had a physiotherapy degree to go back to but that wasn't fulfilling. I kept going back to volleyball. It took me 3 times to retire as I kept going back to what I knew.

That was until I started discovering about the power of the mind and how my thoughts created my results. I started attending seminars and courses, read books and most importantly started setting new goals to drive me forward. I studied Neuro-linguistic Programming, Hypnosis, Quantum Physics and other tools for the mind in order to understand the science behind success so that I could help others change their lives for the better.

I realise that if I knew then what I know now, I could have achieved a lot more. I would have been more specific in what I wanted, and taken even more action to follow my dreams. That's why I have written this e-book - to help you make the changes you need to live the life you desire and deserve.

Here, I want to share the basics that will help you to become a life change artist - whenever learning something new you want to start with the basics.

Please read it with your full attention and take it all in because I really want you to 'get' something by the time you are through reading. Act on the steps so that you can make change in your life.



THE PROBLEM

Change can be a challenge for many people - they either fear it or don't know how to create lasting change. Some people are paralysed by thinking of the big changes they need to make and others figure "if it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

Yes, there is a comfort in things staying the same, but there is also a discomfort associated with this. The longer one stays in their own comfort zone, then the more likely they are to get 'stuck'. It means when they want or need to change, it can feel like something is holding them back.

One of the things that can make change difficult can be related to a person's motivation and focus. Although well-intentioned consciously, a person might unwittingly be sabotaging their own progress by unconsciously focusing on the wrong thing.

For example rather than thinking about winning, a person thinks "I don't want to lose." The problem with this is that our mind doesn't hear the word don't. And so what happens is that you get a picture of losing in your head and that's what you then get. Or you'd be thinking about not wanting to 'be stuck' or in a particular situation, and the picture that comes to your mind is that exact situation that you don't want.

Your unconscious thoughts or beliefs can hold you back from where it is that you really want to go. And so if you want to be rich but a part of you believes that you can't or that rich people are bad, then it will not happen. If a parent tells a child that he/she is not good enough and says it often, then the kid will grow up thinking he/she is not good enough. Even though unconsciously you want to create success, that unconscious part of you can hold you back.

The master key to change is to align your conscious desires with your unconscious thoughts.

The pictures, sounds, feelings and self-talk you create in your mind are the instructions your conscious gives to your unconscious mind. If I say, don't think about the pink frog, did you not just get a picture of a pink frog in your mind! If you didn't, you would have at least thought of it and then thought of an alternative. You cannot NOT think about something without thinking about it. That's because your unconscious mind doesn't recognise 'don't' or 'not'.

Being specific about what you want and being positive about it will help you to make long-lasting effective change to create desired results.

Let's break it down to 5 Steps to keep in mind to become a Life Change Artist.



1. THE 'WHY'

Before you start changing your life it's a good thing to know why? Unless you have a good reason why to change, then it is unlikely that you will change. Because change is not always easy to do, there needs to be a little bit of pressure to have to change.

To find a reason change, you may look at your current situation (career, health, relationship or finances) and look at what is the cost of not changing. What will happen if you don't change? To get you started on the pathway to change, it may need a little fire under you to spur you to do something about it.

If things are going pretty well for you, and that it will still be pretty good if you don't change, then maybe you might look at the benefits of changing. What will changing one area of your life allow you to do? What more can you experience in life? In this case, thinking about a bigger vision and how you want to be remembered at the end of your life may be the thing that inspires you to change.

Even if you are pretty sure that you want to change, you may at times need to come back to your 'why' to push through any challenges that arise in making the change.

2. THE 'WHAT'

Now that you know why you want to change, it is time to get clear on the 'what'. At a big picture level you may wish to change one aspect of your life - career, relationships, health, finances or something else. Some people want to change it all, but it helps to focus on one area first. Just by focusing on one you will get change in other areas too as they are all inter-related.

Now that you know what area of your life you want to change - What specifically do you want? What do you want to achieve in your career? What financial goals do you have? What kind of house would you like to live in? What places do you want to visit? What are you looking for in a relationship? What lifestyle do you want?

What specifically do you want? Your mind is pretty amazing and it will set you on a course to where you want to go.

Let me remind you of a story that we all heard when we were kids, '*Alice in Wonderland*'. An excerpt from it describes exactly what I am talking about here. When Alice comes to a fork in the road when she is in Wonderland. She comes up to the Cheshire Cat and she asks, "Which road should I take?" And the Cheshire Cat says, "Well, that depends. Where do you want to go?" And Alice says, "Well, I don't care." And the Cheshire Cat responds, "Well then it doesn't really matter which road you take."



When you start thinking about where you want to go, you will find the right path to take. If you went to a travel agent to book a holiday and didn't say where to, then you might end up in a country town versus Tahiti or wherever it is that you really want to go.

You will also want to be specific with 'when' you want to have what you want. Often people will state 'someday' and the thing about someday is, someday never comes. "Someday I'll do it."

So be specific about 'where', 'when' and 'what' and also the numbers that you want, a particular income or net worth. Give yourself a head start by dreaming now what it is you want, to give you all the time you need to get on course.

This is because you have this thing called RAS, which is a *Reticular Activating System*. It is like your mind has internal radar and when you decide '**what**' you want your RAS will be on the search for it and opportunities that will allow it to happen.

Our mind is focused on what we are looking for. Which is why when we set specific goals, we naturally begin to see things that will help us accomplish those specific goals. We start attracting things that will help us to get where we want to reach. Therefore, the first thing is '**what**'.

Take a moment now to write down some specific goals that you want to achieve – this year, in the next or perhaps in 5- 10 years.

3. THE '**How**'

The next thing is the '**how**'. How can I? Often, people think about the 'how' before 'what'. They first ask how they can do something and, thinking that it is impossible can stop them thinking about the 'what'. Their own mind gets in the way by questioning what is possible. The experience is that when you put out the 'what', the '**how**' becomes easier. Be sure to pay attention to the order in which you do things.

Many people will block this process by thinking "I can't..." As soon as you think you can't do something, then that becomes your reality, and it can prevent solutions coming through. I know people who often limit what they do by saying "I can't afford it." When I stop and ask them if this is really true, they consider their finances and realize the money is in fact there, they have just unconsciously chosen not to spend it in a certain way.

Ask Better Questions

I will often going to sleep asking myself 'How can I.....?', filling in the blanks with whatever is currently challenging me. For example, in 2007 I was in an



Adventure Club that was going to South Africa. I looked at my bank account and my expected income in the coming months and it didn't look like I would be able to go. My initial thought was that "I can't go" and then I got curious and asked myself "How can I go to South Africa?" Only a couple of days later I received a phone call with extra work and a trip to London which would allow me to go to South Africa on the return flight - I only had to pay the \$400 difference, instead of a whole \$2500 airfare. I got off the phone and celebrated with myself thinking "that's how I can go!"

"Whether you believe you can, or believe that you can't, you are probably right"

- Henry Ford -

If you are waiting for someone to lead you to your goal, you will end up waiting a long time. It is up to you to reach your goal! It's about taking responsibility for your own self. It's not always easy. There will be things that challenge you, obstacles and hurdles getting in your way. But if you let that stop you, then how important is your goal? How important is it for you to do whatever it takes to get there? So keep asking yourself '**how**' can I achieve that? Take that responsibility. Yes, you could point the finger but that is not going to get you where you need to go. By taking responsibility to get to your goal you will be much more likely to achieve it.

A life change artist is always looking to create opportunities and to find a way to make things happen. You have an amazing mind with untapped resources and you will get the answers you need when you ask the right question.

...and Expect an Answer

Through my coaching of clients I have noticed that sometimes people do ask themselves "how can I?" or "why is this happening to me?" without really expecting an answer. What would happen for you if you start asking yourself a question expecting an answer?

Develop the curiosity to find out what the answer is. Expect an answer rather than whining or complaining about how bad things are. Ask good questions and you will get answers when you start looking for them. Ask yourself before going to sleep.

Start playing around with it as it can't hurt and see what you come up with!

Believe it's Possible for You

Excuses may get in the way at this stage. People often prefer to defend why they can't do something than find a way to make it possible. It helps to write down your excuses because then you can see how your mind is limiting you and your results. All your excuses that you have are all in your mind! Yes, even the excuse that you have no money.



We all have our own outlook on life and our own beliefs. These determine what we can and can't do. When you can change your beliefs (and you can) then you can start to get the dramatic change that you desire.

Change may be achieved simply through awareness of the problem, but most often some work may need to be done with a coach to go back to the original source of the belief to enable a fresh look at the situation.

If you want to know more about beliefs and how you can change them, contact <http://bit.ly/30minCoach> for a free 30 min consult.

It Takes Commitment

A commitment means you are taking responsibility to do whatever it takes to get to your goal. Any obstacle that comes along, get around it or go over it. Be prepared to do whatever it takes if it means that much to you.

If you set a path to somewhere is it going to be a direct path? It would be nice if it was but generally there would be obstructions that you will have to get around and if you look for the way, you will get around it.

Did you know that the first rocket to the moon was on track 3% of the time but 97% of the time it was not? They had to keep making adjustments. A plane from here to Los Angeles doesn't stay on-course. It is continually making adjustments, getting feedback from the autopilot to keep headed in the right direction. You want to do the same thing. Some things don't go to plan and may throw you off course but it is how you respond to those things that will determine how you keep going towards your goal.

Constantly monitor your results so that you stay as close to course as possible.

How do you treat a loss? Do you give it such great meaning that you think you are a failure? If you think that, then you will be – a failure. Compare this to thinking "Ok. I lost that one. What can I learn from it?" What can you learn so that you can keep going towards your goals. Asking a lot of good questions will actually enable you to keep going.

There is no such thing as failure, only feedback. There are results we either like or results we don't like. It is what you do with the result that matters. What do you learn?

Michael Jordan missed more shots than he actually made in practice. It's about learning and being prepared to go out there and lose in order to win in the long run.

"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed" – Michael Jordan



Richard Branson, Donald Trump and Warren Buffett have made errors in their life and career, errors from which they learned and had a great impact on their ultimate success.

So take on every challenge as a gift. When you see every challenge as a gift, you realize it makes you stronger and it that it is going to make you even better.

Remember a time when things didn't quite work out as you had liked in the past. Didn't something better come along? Didn't it actually work out for the best? Let the missed opportunity be a guide post towards where you really need to go.

As long as you keep the end goal in mind, and stay committed to reaching that, you will find a way.

4. BE

Before you start taking action you need to identify with the person you need to be in order to achieve the results you desire. Who do you identify with? Do you identify with your career, your achievements and what you do? Do you identify yourself as a winner? Do you identify yourself as capable of achieving your goals? How would you behave or act if you did have a more desired identity?

It helps to get a role model - someone who has already achieved what is that you want to achieve. You can model that person tapping into what identity they might have, what they believe and what is important to them. You may need to guess. Consider why they behave like they do.

Many successful people act successful before they create the results. There is something in the saying 'fake it until you make it' because you are telling your unconscious mind you are already successful. The unconscious mind cannot tell the difference between real or imagined, and so the more you act successful the more you will attract success.

What emotional state do you need to be in to get the results you desire? If you are thinking sad thoughts, your shoulders are hunched over and energy is low then you are probably going to find it hard to spur yourself into action, let alone inspire others.

Now think of a time that you felt joyous or happy, sit up with head up and shoulders back and feel an energy surge within - what can you do in this state of mind?

Many people wait for circumstances to feel happy or confident or optimistic, etc. This is really a hit and miss approach to life. When you take charge of your emotional state than you are stepping into Life Change Artistry. Decide how you want to 'be' and then produce the result that aligns with that. Being precedes



doing and having, not the other way around. Be confident to produce results that inspire further confidence.

One thing that I specialize in is helping people change from where they are to what they want to be. I got into that as a result of my own experience. I was all over the place before I got into this career because my identity had always been of a sportsperson versus a businessperson. When I realized that all the skills I had as an athlete were all the skills I needed as a businessperson I was able to see the business person I always was.

So think about what identity do you need? Are you going to be successful? If you decide you are going to be a success, then you will. And if you start acting like **'I am'** a leader or **'I am'** wealthy or, whatever it is you personally want, then you will get there.

5. Do

It's time now to apply all the principles from above and do something. All the planning, learning and change in thinking is of no use unless you take action. Your path will be a series of small steps that get you to your desired outcome.

Often by going through the first 4 keys, the actions you need to take will come clear. It may be that you need to act by contacting people to help you; you may need to put together a business plan and then act on that plan.

If you have decided to quit smoking then do something to enforce the change - you may need to tell people of your new habit or you may need to ask people to not smoke in your house. For those of you wanting to improve health then it's time to start some form of exercise or work out what foods you are going to eat. What do you need to do to create an amazing relationship?

Many times the thought of big actions will prevent people from taking any action at all. So start small. Rather than going on a crash diet, what are some small changes you can make today -eg leave something on the plate to reduce portion size; eat 1 apple per day. For exercise, do just 5 or 10 minutes; better than promising to do 1 hour every day and doing nothing because you don't have the time.

Put your actions on paper. I like to plan on a daily basis, a weekly basis and a 3-monthly basis - this keeps me on track and moving forward. Find a system that works for you. I highly recommend the work of Steven Covey (First things First, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People) for better time management skills.

Keep asking yourself on a daily basis what is one step you can make today towards your goal.



SUMMARY

Change is possible and even just a little change can have a dramatic effect on your results. Change is ongoing as one continues to adapt to a changing world, and the more you see what you are capable of, then you realize you can stretch yourself even more.

Above all, I want you to know that you CAN do it! You can do whatever you want when you set your heart to it and when you decide what you want. When you write down goals, dare to dream beyond your current capabilities. We often overestimate what we can do in a short time and underestimate what we can do in a lifetime. For the short term (3-6 months) set some 'realistic goals' that will help you achieve and start getting some success and building towards that.

When thinking about 2-3 year end goals, dream big! Dare yourself because you have got 3 years to manifest it and get all the things that are going to allow you to do it. When you were young, you used to dream of things that you could do and you would never think, "Oh I can't do that!" Go out there and dream it. Learn to dream again and dream big.

That is my important message for you -

- You can change
- Figure out why you want to change
- Get specific on what you want
- Believe it's possible for you
- Commit to getting what you want.
- Be the person you need to be
- Take action and do something



FURTHER HELP

A coach can help to keep you on track with your goals. It helps to align your focus, find ways around obstacles and it is also great to have someone on your side, supporting you. Consider now what a difference a coach can make to your results, making it even easier to change.

Annetteffect provides personal coaching, specific to your needs and adapted to your changing situation, using the following tools and techniques

- Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP)
- Results/Performance Coaching
- Neurological Re-patterning™
- Hypnosis
- Time Line Therapy
- Business, task management and other tools

Find out more at <http://www.annetteffect.com.au>