

Chapter 1

The Starting Line

According to science, the approximate odds of being born is “one in four hundred trillion.” After coming to terms with that number, how does that make you feel? Becoming a human being is not only a blessing but also an opportunity. You were put on earth for a specific reason, so why waste it? Granted, your calling will not magically appear, and work on your part is required. If acquiring your dreams were easy, everybody would do it.

Your adolescent years quickly turn into life-changing moments. Do you remember when the school bell rang, signifying the beginning of SUMMER? We were as free as a bird without a care in the world. As time goes on, that bell serves more as a timer than a release. Childhood is an adventure filled with big dreams and limitless energy. Pretending to be a doctor one day and an astronaut the next is a rough life. Playing outside with your friends until the street lights flickered serves as a lifelong memory. Sadly, those pickup basketball games would end, and not one of us knew it was our last playdate. Peer pressure was introduced and you wanted to be cool like your friends, right? As the teenage years approached, you saw your circle of friends getting smaller and cliques being formed. The group you chose set off a chain reaction, good or bad. Year after year, you saw innocence slipping away.

At the age of sixteen, I decided to get my first job at the local grocery store. It was nothing fancy, but it put gas in my Jeep and provided more discipline in my life. Being a teenager, you lived for Friday night games and the after-party. Soon the football would be traded for a diploma and the unknown that awaits every graduate. At times, I felt my high school didn't set me up for the next phase of my life. I was an average student at best, but honestly, I didn't like school. I had some excellent teachers, but some of my teachers were only there to collect a paycheck and didn't care if their students passed or failed. If money was the motivation for the teachers and not the success of their

students, we were doomed from the beginning. Once graduation approached, I wasn't exactly happy, but I was most certainly nervous about my future. During the ceremony, I scanned the student body and subconsciously picked out the winners and losers up to this point. Can you guess which category I put myself in? I felt the pressure of not knowing what my passion was and thinking I was behind my peers. Walking across that football field under the lights to receive my diploma was just a check in the box. Having officially completed high school, I entered the rat race of life, constantly trying to figure out my purpose while my peers went on to various colleges and lead successful lives. Time is a valuable asset that should be used as an ally.

Your comfort zone is holding you back from the greatest version of yourself. The biggest risk you can take is not taking a risk at all. You are here to live, not exist. If living for the weekend sounds like living to you, close this book right now. Take control of your emotions and man up! Despite your childhood, economic status, or ethnic background, we all have a calling to share with the world. Think back. Growing up, what burning desires and dreams kept you awake at night? Do they keep you up now? To fully understand this concept, you must explore various categories and hobbies.

How often do you look back on your past and say "What If"? It's more than a simple question when your future is hanging in the balance. Understand that life is a journey worth traveling!