The Dialogue

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DEDICATION

This book is for the entrepreneurs, those busy working and those seeking for the meaning of success – I hope this book will give you the answer.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For my loving wife, Emily, my two beautiful daughters, Marin and Mariries and my wonderful son, Reeve.
1. JACK

How does a man decide that he is satisfied with the measure of success he has attained in his life?

When can he then stand back and look at what he has achieved, breathe a sigh of relief and enjoy the fruits of his labor?

Jack worked a forty plus hour a week job as an app programmer. He made good money. He had a happy fulfilling marriage to his wife of three years, Jenny, a woman who loved him with every beat of her heart.

Their daughter, Meg, was the apple of his eye, a sweet little girl whose sun and moons gravitated around her father.

With all this happiness, and success, how then can it still go wrong?

Jack was a college-educated man from a good family. His parents were still married, and happy, as were his grandparents, who were not only still alive, but still having all of their mental faculties, managing to have a rip roaring good time during their retirement.
2 JENNY & MEG

It started with an idea that Jack had for a while. This one was perfect, and not one person in the tech world had come up with it yet - a 3-D hologram app.

He worked on it for months, at home after hours, late in the night. He would drink copious cups of coffee or nasty energy drinks, typing in code, doing research.

Jenny, his wife, knew what he was trying to do, for her and for their daughter.

She checked on her husband often, bringing him sandwiches sometimes, sometimes just to put her arms around him and kiss the top of his head. Jack really needed that. It was during those times that he felt like Superman. He could do all things. *It was safe to follow his dreams.*

Jenny was a patient woman. She knew Jack wasn’t sleeping around, or gambling or any other bad thing that sometimes husband do to distract themselves from their wives.

This was the main reason she supported him, his late nights, nights she spent sleeping alone in their king sized bed, half empty now.

She did worry though, as wives often did when their husbands were so hyper focused on one thing that the other areas of their lives went astray. He hadn’t shaved in days, he looked like he had lost weight, and there were bags under his eyes.
"Honey, come to bed." Jenny was wearing her black silk nightgown, by design, the one dress she thought could rouse her husband out of his work induced stupor and maybe make him want to take her to bed and make love to her, which hadn’t happened in over a month.

Jack turned to his wife, hearing the note in her voice. Her soft voice. She was wearing the negligee he had bought her for their last wedding anniversary.

She looked beautiful. She also looked sad.

Jenny never raised her voice to him. He knew she was trying to be patient with him but he also knew she was lonely, and that it was hard for her that he spent so much of his time working, both at the office and at home.

Last night, he had asked his wife to read Meg her favorite bedtime story, Goodnight Moon. At first she had opened her mouth to object and then pursed her lips together, gave him a soft smile and said…

"Okay honey, I will read Meg her story, but you will come in and say good night won’t you? You will tuck her in before she goes to sleep? She misses you, you know."

And just when he thought she would add more, she was gone, down the hall and to their daughter's room reading the story and telling Meg her father loved her so much, but had to work right now. He would be in to tuck her in a little bit.

By the time Jack had got to a place where he felt he could take a break, it was will past midnight and both his daughter and his wife were asleep.

Jack walked into Meg's room and watched his daughter as she slept. Dark thick eyelashes, like her mother. Plump cheeks, cute little snub nose, thumb in her mouth. Jack sat down beside his sleeping daughter and sang to her. It was the song his half Irish mother had sung to him. "Tura Lura Lura, Tura Lura Lai”.

He had a pure voice, he sang softly and he gently disentangled his daughter's thumb from her mouth and tucked her arm under the blanket and kissed her on the cheek.
Then, he went into his bedroom and snuggled with his wife, who didn’t wake up but rolled over and wrapped her arms around him, her head on his chest, and making him smile.

He looked at the clock. “Maybe if I catch a few hours of sleep I can make up the time tomorrow night.” It was nearly midnight when Jack closed his eyes in respite.

It was the first solid night of sleep since he had come up with the idea for the app.

*He was so close now.* So close to success.

He could send his daughter to private school; he could buy a bigger house and a better house.

He knew that Jenny was tired of hearing him say that he couldn’t spend time with his family because he had to work.

He couldn’t go to dinner with his parents.

He couldn’t have dinner with their friends.

He couldn’t take his daughter to the pediatrician; his wife would need to go.

He knew that at some point, her patience would end. If she could just see what he was trying to do for them
3. FINALLY, IT ARRIVED

The day came when his app came into fruition. He had found a way to integrate 3-D Holograms with digital technology so that when people sent each other photos or videos, they could download his new app. And then the video or photo would display in 3-D outside the phone.

It was called *The Hologram Light* and it would be able to make Jack some extra income every month.

He had spent months on it, and decided to charge $0.99 for each download. Most of the apps available on Apple were around $0.99 to $1.99 each. The way Jack saw it, even if he made an extra thousand dollars a month, it would help his family.

He really wanted to take the girls to Hawaii. He and Jenny had spent their honeymoon in Jamaica, at Dunns River Falls, which had been an amazing week, but Hawaii would be sweet.

For a while after the grand unveiling of Hologram Light, things in the Cooper house, went back to normal.
4. JACK IS PROUD… AND HAPPY

Jack came home from work at his programming job by six o'clock every evening.

Jenny would greet him at the door or in the kitchen, with a big kiss, dinner would be simmering on the stove, his daughter would be in her playpen nearby or sitting in the high chair playing with her dolls.

One day, Jack came home early.

Jenny was out with Meg when he pulled into the driveway.

It was a Thursday afternoon at around four. Jack walked into the house and took off his suit jacket, hanging it neatly in the closet. He took off his shoes and walked into the kitchen. Finding neither his wife nor his daughter in the house, Jack rummaged in the refrigerator looking for something to eat. He found a few things to snack on but got an idea in his head.

He pulled out a whole ham and placed it in a large casserole dish. Cutting up pineapple and placing the rings with toothpick on the ham, he then pulled a bag of white rice out of the pantry and carefully measured one cup of rice to three cups of water. Then, he poured pineapple juice over the ham and rice and placed the dish in the oven. He put the stereo on and danced around the kitchen.

Jack heard the front door open from the kitchen. He heard the sweet voice of his daughter and then her little feet as she came running into the kitchen…
“Daddy!”

She squealed and threw herself bodily into his arms. His wife followed and smiled when she saw that her husband was home early.

This was a rare surprise.

Then she sniffed the air. “You made dinner too?” She laughed.

“What’s the occasion?” she asked. Jack pulled his wife into his arms and danced her around the kitchen. “You’ll see.” He winked at his daughter, who had just learned how to do that, and she winked back.

Over dinner, Jack explained to his wife that due to the rising popularity of his new app, he was able to do something he had wanted to do for a long time.

Then, he pulled a small wrapped box from under the table and placed it in front of her... Jenny smiled; she unwrapped the blue paper and took the gold bow off.

Inside the box were an envelope, a hula doll, a pair of Gucci sunglasses, and green orange and white plastic lei. It took her a few moments to figure out where this was going and then she reached for the envelope, tearing it open in her zeal.

Inside the envelope were three tickets to Hawaii and a color brochure for the resort they would be staying at on the island of Maui. Malekulani, a five star resort close to the black sand beaches!

Jenny squealed with delight and then got up out of her chair and did a little dance. She had always wanted to go to Hawaii but it seemed so hideously expensive, and they had agreed they would spend the money on a house, rather than buying expensive cars and expensive trips. Their plan was to have the house paid off in ten years. That way they would never have to worry about a mortgage.

All those nights of sleeping alone, with Jack practically living in his office, were now worth it.

She was hoping she would never have to live that way again.

Jenny loved her husband very much but she found it really hard having
to do everything herself and not have any time with him. Also, she missed the attention from him that she was used to getting.

Well, that was in the past now and they were going to Hawaii. “When?” She asked. Now Jack’s smile got bigger. “What else Jack?” she was curious to know.

This was the sticky part. He had put in his letter of resignation that very day, effective two weeks from today. Jack would be starting his own company, creating applications, getting paid for them, rather than getting paid a salary and having the fat cats in upper management getting the gold from his work. He would no longer be a peon and he was exhilarated, but he knew his wife would be worried.

“In two weeks, we can go to Hawaii love. We have 8 days and 7 nights. Then, I start my new company.” Her face went blank.

“What do you mean?” She took a step back to gain her composure. “You just quit? Without discussing anything with me?”

Jack explained to her how they now had enough money to not only buy a house, go to Hawaii and pay off credit cards, but that he had another idea he had been working on that he did not want to share with the company he worked for.

“This could revolutionize the way people buy online. People won’t have to use their credit cards anymore, so their financial risk is gone. It will go positively viral!” He explained to his wife how Wallet Light worked and as he explained the logistics to her, she smiled broadly.

“Wow Jack! That’s incredible! And you were working on this at the same time as the other app? No wonder you were so tired and hardly had time for anything. But now it’s different right? You can spend more time at home and we can travel more and spend more time with family.”
5. JACK’S LEAVING

Jack’s employers were not happy with him. It was not just that they were losing a brilliant programmer but that they knew about the app he had created and they knew he was up to something else as well.

Hence the timing. He must have finished whatever he had created and was waiting to launch it until he was no longer legally bound by the non-compete agreement he had signed with the company.

Harold Buchanan happened to walk into Jack’s office as he was packing up his desk, and watched him from the door until Jack turned around and faced the portly Vice President of the company.

“What can I do for you Mr. Buchanan?” Jack was civil but not friendly.

He had created several applications for this company that they were contract bound to profit share with him and never had. He had consulted the company’s attorneys and they had also said there was nothing they could do, he should read his non-compete agreement.

He had, several times, but nowhere in the agreement did it say it negated his profit sharing clause in his initial contract with the company. They had screwed him out of thousands if not tens of thousands of dollars. “Okay, fine, I’ll let you have that, he thought to himself, “but you’re not getting everything in my head.”

“Jack, you know we only want what’s best for you…” he began… Jack laughed.
THE DIALOGUE

“You only want what’s best for you. That is the one of the many reasons why I no longer feel that our working relationship should continue. I will leave today if you like.” Jack met the VP’s gaze with a blank face, a poker face, just waiting for the sweaty manager to say something smart.

And he did.

Margo, the company’s friendly receptionist was just returning from lunch and saw Jack unloading his things into their old Buick. Because of their financial situation he and Jenny shared the car. After maneuvering some of Meg’s toys and Jenny’s fitness gear he set the heavy box down and let out a deep breath.

“So today is the day.” A voice said from behind him.

The wind blew Margo’s hair from her face, her cheeks rosy and glowing. She extended her arms and pulled him in for a hug.

He would miss Margo the most.

She was an older woman, looked at as the mother of the office. Even amongst sloppy, scratching, belching and sometimes vulgar men she kept her cool.

Margo had a way with words. She was a comforter and had spent many hours nursing the damaged egos and hurts feelings of the employees there. Jack was no different.

She wiped her tears and patted him on the shoulder and returned to her post at the large oak desk in the lobby.
It was mid afternoon; Jack unloaded his box of corporate belongings and carried them up the stairs to their quaint 2 bedroom apartment. He fiddled with the key in the lock that always gave him trouble. He was surprised, the place was empty. No sign of Jenny or Meg. Only a short note that read:

Went to see Gam Gam, Xoxo, Jen.

Jack smiled at the thought of Gam Gam. Gam Gam was Jack's grandmother.

He simply adored her and she adored Jenny and Meg.

It made her day was when she got a surprise visit from them. “Soon, I'll be able to visit with her all the time.” he thought to himself.

Falling asleep on the couch he dreamt of the times that he had spent with her as a child.

The doorknob jiggled as Jenny walked in carrying a sleeping Meg over her shoulders. Jack jumped up to grab her.

“Somebody’s played hard today.” he said, while kissing his wife cheeks.

She was wearing a different fragrance. He noticed and complimented her on it.

“Oh you have no idea, never a dull moment at Gam Gams! Your
mother dropped us off.” Jack ran to the window to see if his grandmother was still in the parking lot.

“She had to leave Jack; she needed to stop by the pharmacy before it closed.”

Disappointed he flopped down on the couch and turned the television back on. “We helped her clean out the attic space.” Jen told him as she put the groceries away in the kitchen. “Oh and she told me to give you this.” Jen pulled out a medium sized bag and handed it to him. She gave him a kiss on each cheek.

“Oh, what’s that for?” he asked.

“Oh, those are kisses from your mother and Gam Gam.” She smiled playfully and headed back into the kitchen.

Time passed and Jack continued working on his business. He worked day and night, making sure to keep Jenny in the loop about the process…
Jenny was happy for her hubby, Jack. Knowing that he was doing what he wanted and what made him happy was all that was important. Whatever made him happy made her happy as well.

Jack was getting a lot of money which accrued steadily from his hologram app.

While he was earning a lot from the hologram app, he was also working on another app. He had this idea of an app that could be an online financial platform.

It would allow people to make purchases online without having to disclose their credit card information.

Jack spent extra hours up at night working on this new app. Most nights, he would come to bed after Jenny and Meg were already fast asleep.

He always took his time to go to his daughter’s room to kiss her forehead and say goodnight before joining his wife in their double bed.

However late he came to bed, Jenny would snuggle up against him and he would cuddle her. He knew what a lucky man he was to have such an understanding wife.

She almost never nagged about anything and at times when she had to communicate how she felt about things to him, it was always in such a way that he could hardly refuse her request.

7. JACK’S WALLET LIGHT APP
One particular morning, Jack announced that the app was finally nearing completion. That he would in fact be able to finish it that night. He would however want Jenny and Meg to be there with him while he wrote the last lines of code and upload it to the platform.

She was happy to hear the news. It meant the project was now almost a success and for Jenny, it meant she would have more time with her heartthrob. Even Meg was excited. She knew this meant more bedtime stories from dad.

In the evening, they sat around his computer and watched in excitement as Jack completed the app and launched it.

Jack stood and embraced his wife and daughter and they soon headed to the dining room for dinner. Jenny was proud of her husband as always.

They enjoyed the delicious meal she had prepared and talked about some of the fun things they had done together in the past and also about going on a trip together now that the app was done. Jack was glad to have completed the app and all he wanted was to be with his wife and 3-year old daughter.

They spent quality time together till it was getting late. Jenny took Meg to her room and Jack soon joined Meg. He told her a bedtime story before she went to sleep.

Jack and Jenny went to bed together and on time that night.

Jack woke up to a pleasant surprise the next morning. It had skipped his mind in the excitement and euphoria of the night before that he should check how people were responding to Wallet Light.

He was surprised to see that in less than 12 hours, there had been thousands of installations of the app and in his e-mail messages were invitations to come and provide the information needed for a media review from some of the major broadcasting houses, tech websites and blogs!

He immediately began replying their e-mails and fixing meetings with them as they had requested.

There were also lots of positive reviews from users who had just installed the app and had used it to make a purchase. Jack had expected the app to be successful but he didn’t envisage that the app would gain such
swift acceptance.

At the same time, Jenny was disappointed when she woke up to find Jack wasn’t by her side.

She found him in his study, yet again typing into the computer. Good morning sweetheart, she greeted from behind him and bent over and kissed him.

He threw her a knowing smile. His attention quickly went back to the computer while he told Jenny the news about how the app was getting a lot of downloads and attention. Jenny was happy about the development. She fixed breakfast which they had together before Jack went off to meet with one of the many tech blog editors who had invited him.

The weeks that followed saw Jack raking in a lot of money as sharing agreement deals with a lot of other platforms were done…
A couple of months later, Jack became a millionaire.

He decided to make a number of major changes. He had to stay at the top. He therefore incorporated a company, acquired a suitable office complex and employed an average staff of a suitable strength for a new startup.

Jack was always at work and hardly had time to be at home. He always left earlier in a morning than he usually did, even when he worked a regular job.

Jenny was worried because it seemed to her that this was now worse. It was better when he had to work a regular job because then at least, he had a clocking off time.

Nowadays, what determined when Jack came home was when he met his target for the day and tied up everything that he needed to as the business owner. She even wished he would bring the work home and work late into the night but that was not to be as most of the things he needed to do were not things that he could do at home.

Jack however was now able to afford a lot of things he had always wanted for his family.

He came home one day and showed Jenny a new property he intended to acquire…

“How would you like this for our home?” he asked.
Jenny sure agreed that it would make a dream home but she was worried that it would be very expensive. She knew Jack now had a lot of money but she just didn’t know how much.

Jack simply told her that since she liked it, he would finalize everything the next day and that hopefully they would be moving in that weekend…

In the house was everything a woman would want in a home. Jenny’s new kitchen was equipped with every gadget she needed to make her cooking easy. There was even a big flat screen television for her to watch while she did her cooking!

The furniture in the sitting room was so cozy; it must have cost a fortune. Their new bedroom was way more spacious and the bed was bigger and more exquisite.

There was a laundry room in the basement and Jack let her know that it would not be her job to use that place. He would hire a laundry man full time whose job it will be to do all their laundry!

Jack was happy with the success he had achieved.

He could have anything just at the snap of his fingers. He could choose to eat at any of the most revered restaurants in the city. He now had access to tech functions which he never got the privilege of attending when he worked a regular job.

He was now able to meet with the high and mighty of the technology world at these functions and he was actually considered one of them.

Jack found it easier to fix things that hitherto had been a challenge to him. Unlike before when he had to work alone on a project, he now had a team to whom he could delegate job responsibilities. Most of what he now did was monitor work progress and ensure targets were met.
9. JACK’S SECOND BIG BREAK

Jack’s secretary notified him one morning of an appointment she had fixed with a man he had only met once before, in a business meeting, while he was still working for his former firm.

The next day, she rang him to tell him the man had arrived. He asked that she ask him in.

The man had brought a huge proposal which Jack started to consider deeply after he had left.

It was one of the largest; if not the largest business proposals Jack had received since he had hit the big time broke into limelight.

The deal proposed by the venture capitalist held a lot of promise for Jack if it worked out. He could make upwards of 100 million dollars from this deal if it went through. Jack thought to himself – that’s a lot of money.

Jack must however deliver on his part within 12 months.

After a critical feasibility study, it was clear to Jack that he had a 50/50 chance of success on this.

He might not be able to deliver the required result but he didn’t want to bail on this chance which could put him in a very good position to be able to get everything he had ever wanted.

He accepted the deal and began working on it intensely right from the offset, being very conscious of the time constraint.
His schedules became so fixed that he hardly had time to rest himself.

One particular weekend, the phone rang and as was usual these days, Jack did not even bother to move, even though the phone was at an arm’s length from him. He was totally wired in.

Jenny walked across the sitting room and picked up the receiver. It was old gam gam. She was very pleased to hear her voice. They exchanged pleasantries and she handed over the phone to Jack when she asked to speak with him.

Apparently, it had been months since they spent time together.

In fact it was grandma that usually initiated their phone conversations of late. Grandma asked Jack if he could take her out for a cup of tea so they could catch-up.

As much as Jack wanted to go, he could not leave work; not even for the 2-3 hours that it would take to meet up with his grand mum. He declined.

He thought to himself that the most important priority for now was the project he was working on. At the end of the twelve months that it would take him to complete it, he would have all the time he needed to spend with his family and friends.

Jenny was worst hit by all of this but she was not one to complain. Deep down, she knew that everything he was doing was for her.

Jack no longer had time for the school run. Jenny never complained about this. She took over doing it alone and always understood.

Even when Meg complained about this, Jenny gently explained why dad could not drop her off or come pick her up from school as he used to.

Sometimes, Jack would fail to join them at the table. It always broke her heart. He usually left the food cold and she had to get it in and of the microwave a couple of times before Jack could spare the time to eat it and get right back to work.

At other times Jack would lock himself inside his study, effectively
barring all communication with his family. Jenny just had to sit in the sitting room all by herself, watch all their favorite programs alone and go to bed alone.

On one particular day during one work week, Jack kept working till long after normal working hours. He was so engrossed that, before he realized it, it was already past midnight and he still had a lot to do.

He was seeing from the way things were progressing out that he was running behind schedule. He called home and the disappointment in Jenny’s voice came through over receiver; he apologized to her and told her not to wait up for him. He told her he would be spending the night in the office.

He didn’t wait long on the line to hear her arguments because he was afraid they may be too good. Jenny didn’t complain when he came home the next evening but she knew that this project was taking a toll on her husband. He had lost weight even though he ate well and she was afraid he was under too much stress.

Jenny spoke to Jack’s dad and asked if that perhaps he could come over to speak with Jack?

He did come and during their discussion, he asked his son what it was that he was going all out for.

“Why are you pushing yourself so hard, despite the fact that you are already a millionaire?” he asked him.

Jack responded that it would be difficult to make him understand. “This is a very rare opportunity Dad. I cannot afford to turn this down - I want this success.”
10. JACK NOW REALIZES IT’S IMPOSSIBLE

Jack pressed on, ignoring everything else, and he was good at this. When he wanted to get something done, he could lose sight of everything else and solely focus on his goal. It was one of his much strength.

It did mean however that he could lose sight of other equally important things. This time, he totally neglected his own health. In his mind’s eye, he could see himself completing this, and on time and then finalizing this deal.

At the end of nine months, Jack realized that it was impossible to get the result needed in twelve months.

He could only try and hope for the best should he go all out for it. He therefore decided it was best he gave it all he could believing it was better than wasting all the effort he had put in already.

This was the final lap and he wanted to use it to turn the seemingly impossible to possible.

His options were clear - If he stopped now, his efforts hitherto on the project would be wasted but he would however be able to fall back to and continue with his private business.

On the other hand, should he decide to go all out and try to get the desired result from the point at which he was then, he would be giving up his personal business for the next three months.

He chose to risk everything. Jack stressed himself so much and would hardly allow himself any rest.
His sleeping and waking up was determined by the alarm clock and he never slept for more than four hours a day.

He was mostly bent over his computer, typing.

In the last two months of the project, he had started experiencing these aches in his spine which were due to his long hours of work. He had changed the grade of lens on his glasses three times in nine months - a sign that his vision was deteriorating.

He was however oblivious of these things and took no notice of the signs.

Progress with completing the project was coupled with all this and not turning out as he had hoped. Under pressure, he became irritable at times.

At other times he regretted having gone in on this deal and ended up transferring his aggression to anyone who interrupted his work. He always brushed off the pangs of regret with the consolation that it was just a couple of months to completion. It would be over soon.

On one fateful night, whilst working, suddenly Jack could no longer see the codes clearly. They just seemed to blur away. His eyes seemed to close and even his body system was just drifting from him and he couldn’t control it. In a state of confusion, he collapsed. Everything went black and he was aware of nothing...
11. JACK WOKE UP

Jack started to open his eyes.

Everything looked blurred but it began to look clearer.

Then, he saw a figure in front of him.

As the figure started to become more visible, he saw he was wearing his favorite blue denim jeans and a pair of his Nike sneakers. Heck, he was wearing his favorite Polo t-shirt too, the one that Jenny bought for him when they were on holiday in Korea!

Jack was surprised when he realized that the other guy was Jack.

The first thing that came to his mind was – “Am I dead?”

He asked Jack, “Are you God?”

Jack just smiled at Jack. Jack followed up with another question, “Or are you an Angel… or something?”

“Or did I just die?” So many questions were in his mind then.

“No Jack. I’m not God or an Angel. Come on, stand up and walk with me. We have lots to talk about.” Jack replied.

Jack was very confused now but somehow, his heart told him to just follow Jack’s suggestion.
As they were walking along, all of a sudden… Jack stopped and asked Jack this question…

“You know what’s weird – I know everyone dies, but I CANNOT die, yet. I mean, not today. There’s something missing, something incomplete in my life but I can’t figure it out, although I have achieved success.”

“Well Jack, are you sure you’ve achieved success? If you have, then you must have lived your life wonderfully, am I right?”

Alright, let’s make a left turn here, down this street. Maybe you’ll find the answer here….”
12. MEMORY LANE

They walked to the street and as they were walking together, Jack saw himself sitting in a café; the same café where he took Jenny out on his 3rd date, 3 years ago.

Jack smiled when he saw himself sitting with Jenny at that time – they were both laughing. Needless to say, it was a pleasant sight. At that moment, it seemed like time has frozen and they were on top of the world together…

They were so happy.

“Look at you, Jack. You couldn’t believe you’d managed to win her heart, could you?” Jack whispered to Jack with a smile.

“And I bet you weren’t as financially wealthy as today when you were sitting there, enjoying your cup of coffee in Jenny’s company. Look at both of you love birds again. Also, I think when you both got married, you were just renting out an apartment and your career was just doing okay.”

Jack wanted to wave at Jenny but Jack immediately asked him not to. He told Jack not to interrupt that wonderful moment and just continue to walk with him.

They reach his apartment, yes, the first one that they moved into after married.

It was an okay apartment. Nothing fancy, but cozy.
As they got into the living room, Jack took out a photo album and passed to Jack.

One of the pictures was when Jack was a kid. It was of him putting on a Spiderman mask, pretending to be a superhero. Silly Jack.

There was one picture when grandma was at Jack’s 21st birthday. Jack saw that picture and his heart melted. For the past several months, he had almost forgotten about grandma. How much he missed granny. How much he wished he could just hug granny and take her out for a walk TODAY.

Then there was a picture of Mum and Dad celebrating with him during his graduation. Jack looked so happy that he has succeeded. He felt he could overcome anything on that day.

Then of course, there were so many pictures of him and Jenny together, his loving wife.

One particular picture made Jack look at it for a very long time – it was Meg. She was just looking straight at the camera smiling. Jack remembered how happy she was when he took her to the park, that’s where the picture was taken.

As he flipped through the photo album, it was if he was walking down memory lane… so many wonderful experiences and happy moments he had gone through.

He started to realize why he CANNOT die…
13. THE MISSING PIECE TO SUCCESS

“You know what is missing now, don’t you Jack?” Jack asked.

“Yeah…” Jack replied with a downcast tone.

“I wasn’t happy. But I’m getting more confused – I was happy for many of the past months, enjoying the success that I have. I didn’t even realized what I’ve missed. Tell me… why do I have mixed feelings when we passed by the café and when I saw my photo album?”

"It’s quite simple, really. Of course you were happy with your recent success. I mean, look at you – you can afford better things in your life and buy awesome stuff. Who wouldn’t be happy? I mean, I would too.

But happiness comes in many forms and shapes. And sometimes, our mind doesn’t quite get what happiness is.

I know this is going to sound unbelievable – but sometimes, you may feel you’re happy because of how the media has been telling you of what happiness is. Or how to define happiness based on how others “look” at you.

Let me try to explain in another way – you were happy because you could afford better things.

For instance, if you have a problem and you still need to travel from here to your office, you’ll be happier driving in a Ferrari than using the subway to reach your destination.

But that’s not happiness in essence.
THE DIALOGUE

Don’t get me wrong – I’m not saying that money doesn’t lead to happiness, it does to a certain degree but money can never make someone happy entirely.

Just look at the evidence around the world – there are always poor people who are happy and sad. If money is truly the source of happiness, then ALL poor people in this world will be sad. But you and I know that is untrue; there are poor people who are very happy living their lives.

And at the same time, there are lots of rich people who are unhappy too – so money doesn’t really guarantee happiness.

And interestingly…

**You don’t need to be rich to spend time with Jenny.** Being with Jenny makes you happy.

Definitely, it has nothing to do with whether you’re rich or poor when Meg smiled at you. The smile of your daughter brings you joy and happiness.

Taking granny out for a walk makes you happy, doesn’t it? That doesn’t require a Ferrari to do the job.

And so on.” Jack explained.

"The **first rule** of success is happiness. With so much noise going on in our life, we forget what true happiness is…”
14. THE 5 RULES OF HAPPINESS

“So have you found the answer to happiness?” Jack asked, hoping for a reply.

Jack then answered politely, “First of all, you need to understand that we do not ‘achieve’ happiness. We just have to ‘be’ happy.

About your question, unfortunately, I don’t have the answer to being happy but I can certainly share with you the 5 rules that I’ve learned throughout my life about happiness…”
RULE #1: STOP COMPARING

Comparing yourself with others will always make you miserable. However, it’s easier said than done. Let’s not kid ourselves – when you saw your colleague or brother-in-law driving a better car than yours, did you wish to “overtake” him?

Or how much you wish to become more successful than Mr. Buchanan, your ex-company’s VP.

Okay, maybe you didn’t? Who knows?

Let’s try another one – you brought your daughter to her friend’s birthday party. It was held in a mansion with pony rides, balloons, clowns - you name it, they had it. Tell me – assuming that money is not a problem at all; didn’t you wish you were able to throw an awesome party for your daughter to give her the best party ever and make you a proud dad?

Again, maybe you didn’t? I rest my case.

However, if you do compare, just so you know, don’t worry – it’s normal. That’s what humans do. We’re somehow genetically built to be that way, to stay competitive.

So keep in mind that this is something you cannot avoid. It’s futile to try. Again, it’s because you’re merely human. It can certainly be controlled though by recognizing when you start comparing again.

The reason why I said comparing leads to more misery is because there’s always someone better than you. There is always someone richer than you,
smarter than you, luckier than you. Whatever it is, there will be someone better than you - ALWAYS.

You can never “win” this game. You’re destined to a lifetime of misery.

But at the same time, living in a realistic world, you cannot help but compare. Come on – you can’t be a spiritual Guru and meditate at the top of the mountain every day, right?

Not that doing that is wrong; it’s just not how I would want to live my life.

The good news is, you can still compare. But focus on your own self-improvement.

Strive to be better than you currently are. Seeing financial wealth is the simplest measurement of comparison, so let’s use that as an example -

If you’re making $5,000 a month now, set a goal to compare to your earnings within the next 30 or 60 days. Whatever timeframe you want, compare the past you and the future you.
RULE #2: IT’S WITHIN

“You were saying you don’t really feel happy, right?” Jack was trying to make a point.

“Remember when I mentioned the earlier example about traveling in a Ferrari and taking the subway to reach your destination?”

“You see, happiness is always more powerful when it’s from within. The old adage of ‘happiness cannot be bought’ rings very true.”

Why within?

Because that creates fulfilment.

Because it’s a form of emotional accomplishment.

Because you have achieved success.

Happiness is not about possession Jack.

Again, I would like to illustrate my point. If you go to a village that does not have iPhones, you’ll see that they’re still happy with whatever stuff they’re using. And what if you give them an iPhone, then take it away after they have got used to being happy with the iPhone?

Something to ponder on isn’t it? This is not about right or wrong, it just makes you think about how possessions affect our interpretation of happiness.
You need to seek happiness from within.

And that usually leads back to…

*Emotion.*

It’s like the chicken and the egg – emotion makes you happy and at the same time, happiness creates the emotion.

Now that you know it has to do with emotion, is it fair for me to say that you can be happy through your emotions, instead of your possessions?

But of course, if somehow you’ve figured out how possessions can work their way into affecting you internally to be happy but not rate too importantly, well, you will have cracked the code.”
RULE #3: DO NOT JUDGE

We’re surrounded with people.

In fact, our happiness relies entirely upon the communication we have with others! What I am trying to say is this – if you’re the only person living in this world, you’ll be a very unhappy person, won’t you? In fact, I think you would go mad.

“So, we both agree that we need other people around, yes?”

Great.

Then it would make sense for me to say that other people affect your happiness.

When you look at someone… you have 2 options:

1. You can judge him to be a good person
2. You can judge him to be a bad person

If you go for option 2, then, you’re going to less happy.

There are 2 ways to think about this:

You can accept that ‘everyone’ is a good person, until they prove you wrong.

Or you can assume everyone is not that good of a person and that they
need to prove your judgment wrong.

Obviously, the first method will give you less stress, won’t it?

One day, a skeptical person asked a priest a question.…

“If someone who is sinful but still contributes to the community, does he still go to Heaven? I don’t think he should.”

The priest answers, “I don’t have the answer, only God can make that judgment.”

_We’re merely humans – what is our authority to judge someone for being good or bad, simply by the way he looks or how he dresses, smells, behaves, etc.?_

The point is this…

There’s no point judging people. Simply because it serves no purpose.

I believe everyone in this world is equal. I especially believe that people should not be judged based on their careers and jobs.
RULE #4: APPRECIATION

There are many things in our lives that we take for granted.

There are way too many for me to list here. If I did that, there would be thousands of them; I could go on and on.

The most interesting thing is, many of them are vital and yet, they are overlooked because we were bestowed with them.

For example, have you ever really sat down and appreciated your toes? How about those things that are less visible, like your tiny eardrum or something along that line?

I’m not saying you don’t, but most people do not remember to appreciate them – until they have lost them. The reason is, the toe and eardrum came with them, together, for free.

Let’s take a step further. Do we take the time to appreciate the trees?

How about the flowers?

The fresh air we’re breathing?

Now, I’m not suggesting you should go crazy and start making a list of things you need to appreciate. Or that you become a super pumped up positive thinker, not at all.

But what if… for the next 21 days, every day, you’ll take the time to appreciate 3 things in your life?
Just humor me…

If you do, I can bet you’ll become a happier person.

Why is this so? That’s easy, it’s because so many people are not happy due to the fact that they think they have problems or the world has been unfair to them.

They have “victimized” themselves.

But if they “wake up” and smell the roses, they’ll soon start to see how lucky they actually are.

“Did you ‘smell the rose’ for the past 6 months, Jack?”

Next in importance to the appreciation of things people take for granted is being grateful.

Although they’re almost the same, I would like you to look at being grateful in the context of the human relationships you have.

Be grateful to others, whether they’ve helped you, given you their love, listened to you, been your friend, etc.

This often goes overlooked as well. Do you remember the gardener who came to your house to trim your garden?

If you were grateful to him, wonderful, if not, I think you should have been because imagine if this guy wasn’t there last week. Can you imagine what your garden would look like this week?

Of course, some people may think that they shouldn’t need be grateful to the gardener because he’s being paid. It’s a form of exchange.

But let me ask you this question –

Do you lose anything for being grateful? Do you?

On top of that, not only do you not lose anything, you gain something spectacular – you became grateful. Like it or not, that’s Rule #4 to happiness.
THE DIALOGUE

In summary, if you want to be happy, be grateful and appreciative.

In contrast with Rule #1, just compare yourself with those who are in worse shape than you. Now you know how fortunate you are…
RULE #5: BEING FREE

“This is probably the biggest reason why you’re not happy, Jack. You don’t have freedom. You feel like your life is trapped. You are helpless. You’re just following the flow without really knowing where it’ll lead,” Jack explained to Jack.

“Yeah, I know. But you don’t understand. It’s not like I have a choice, man,” Jack replied with a little bit of anger in his voice.

“There’s always a choice. It’s about understanding what is important in your life. Now, obviously, you don’t have a choice with the way your business works. I’m not a business guru. I don’t have the answer for you. You have to find it out yourself.

In fact, ironically, I have just given you the solution. You have a choice – to face your problem and get a business guru to help you fix it. Read some books. Attend seminars. Go through business courses, etc.

Or continue to say, ‘I don’t have a choice.’ Be a victim of circumstances.

Remember, everything starts with a small step. But if that small step is not being taken, the problem will just continue.” Jack explained to Jack in an attempt to put some sense in him.

Jack realized that he doesn’t have real freedom. He’s chained to his business.

At the same time, he lost his freedom when he lost control to other people.
If you need to get permission frequently to make decisions or take action for the things you would like to do, that’s a symptom of unhappiness.

But to truly embrace freedom, there are two other things that need to go with it. Otherwise, it can lead to a downward spiral.

Discipline. You must have the discipline to enjoy your freedom. If you go too far off on tangents and don’t have the discipline to pull yourself back, you’re going to be in trouble. With regard to a career, you may lose your job or your business.

Control. Being in control is great but at the same time, having other controls in place is required to maintain balance. The simple logic is this: you can’t always be right. So, if you’re always in control, you have no second opinion.

Jack then remembered how Jenny is one of the controls that he has. For example, Jenny will occasionally control Jack from eating high-sugar food. Of course, Jack doesn’t like that because he enjoys his food. This is why a control is needed. We cannot always make the decisions that are good for us despite our confidence in ourselves.

We’re really not the masters of our mind although we may think we are.

Lastly, freedom for happiness comes in many forms, but the most powerful freedom is the freedom to decide.

If that is taken away, you’ll be living like a robot. Can a robot experience happiness?
15. THE SECOND SUCCESS SECRET

“So what is success?” Jack started to question within himself.

“Well, for a start, we know success has to do a lot with being happy, which, unfortunately, many people miss despite that being the key to why we’re even here in the first place.

“If I may, let me share with you what I think the second secret of success is…” Jack continued.

“You see, other than money, there’s another commodity that men and women have and it’s probably much more valuable than money. In fact, the reason why people work so hard for money is so that they can exchange it, so to speak, for this commodity.

The most interesting part is this - everyone is born with the same amount regardless of whether you’re a king or a pauper.

Yes, this commodity is none other than TIME...

A successful person is a person who has TIME TO SPEND.” Jack finished his sentence.

But Jack wasn’t completely convinced although, deep inside, he knows that is the truth.

“If what you said is true, then a beggar is very successful because he has TIME. In fact, since he’s not working at all, he has plenty of it.”
Jack just smiled and said, “I wouldn’t disagree with you about a beggar having lots of Time as a commodity. But to say he is successful, now that would be radical thinking.

Let me ask you - can you follow all of the philosophies taught by Socrates or Buddha precisely, even though some of them are the greatest philosophies to living a meaningful life?

In all honesty, I don’t think you can, but knowing these philosophies is a great guideline. We can try to adopt them – as close as we possibly can, can’t we?

Everything in life requires a balance. A beggar could be rich with Time, but if he doesn’t have money, then he may not experience these three things…
16. RELATIONSHIP, HEALTH AND WISDOM

“Have you watched the movie Cast Away starring Tom Hanks from the year 2000?” Jack continued.

“It’s about a FedEx executive, played by Tom Hanks, who must transform himself physically and emotionally to survive a crash landing on a deserted island. He is all alone and he really loses his insanity.

We all need to have relationships with other humans.” explained Jack, who added, “And the only way to have meaningful relationships is to spend TIME building them. Yes, you can use money to help but not as the only commodity to build it.

Agreeing with your earlier point, let me say that a relationship that is built from just time would always beat a relationship that is built from just money.

“But like I’ve said – if you use money as a supportive product to the relationship-building process, I wouldn’t be surprised if it helped a lot.” added Jack.

“Health. Obviously, if you’re not healthy, you cannot enjoy your life. I don’t think I need to explain on this part further. Comparatively speaking, do you think a beggar with no money has peak health?” asked Jack.

“Lastly, wisdom. Yes, you can use time to learn, but if you have money to help you, you’ll be able to learn faster.” explained Jack.
“So tell me: how does a beggar achieve success if all he has is time?” asked Jack. “Now, you understand the importance of money in the equation. But my point is, if you just have money without time, your life wouldn’t be meaningful. You couldn’t be considered as ’successful’.

For lack of a better word, you’re like a slave,” declared Jack.
17. THE FRUSTRATION

“I’m a bit frustrated now. Why am I so? Because we’ve come back to square one. At first, you taught me how unimportant money can be in terms of measuring success. Next, you stressed it further by pointing out that the second secret to success is mastering time. Yet, you’re now saying how important money is again.” explained Jack, who was desperately trying to understand what is really going on.

“I know it can get frustrating at times, Jack. And that’s exactly what you need to understand in life - it’s actually simple because it’s exactly as IT IS, but because it’s not outlined in a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ package, you need to explore it. As you go through life to achieve success, you’ll make mistakes and learn.” reassured Jack.

“The Universe has somehow governed that balance is required in everything related to life.” answered Jack.

“Look at that tree, Jack.” Jack requested as he pointed to a beautiful tree.

“Don’t you think it looks so well because it has balance of water, sunlight, and everything else needed to look that way and grow? Or that car? It has 4 wheels, doesn’t it? Look, Jack. We live in a modern realist world. There’s no one secret that fits all. You need to understand the concept and meaning behind it, then apply it to your own situation.

I know everyone wishes there was an answer that fits all when it comes to cracking the code to success. But unfortunately, that doesn’t truly exist.

Now – going back to the importance of TIME as a measurement your
success. I’d like to check with you again, did you GET IT Jack? That with TIME, we get to enjoy our relationship, health, and wisdom?” Jack asked.

Jack nodded in agreement.
18. GROWTH

“And finally, you can only be considered successful if you’re growing.” Jack revealed as the last piece of the true measure of success.

“I guess I have achieved that,” responded Jack, who explained, “nine months ago, I was just living in an apartment with only a car for Jenny and me to use together, and my bank account barely had $5,000 left in it.” Jack looked relieved knowing that he is no longer broke.

“Yes, your bank account did grow. And I would congratulate you for that. Honestly, very well done to you. You deserve it,” Jack praised.

“The only problem is, money is just one of the components of growth. We’ve forgotten that despite money being a very important commodity, it’s only a means to an end.

In other words, the reason why we wanted to have money is so that we can have everything else. So theoretically, assuming you have everything else and no money, that’s still fine. You’ll still have a successful life.

But what about your growth in…Happiness? Are you becoming a happier person in overall?” queried Jack.

“Your relationship? Are your relationships with Jenny and Meg and even your parents growing positively?

Your health? Is your health deteriorating because you’ve neglected it in pursuing ‘successes?’
Your wisdom? Are you becoming a wiser person? Note that wisdom does not mean being intelligent or smarter. Being wise is a holistic transformation from your attitude to your mindset.

And many other important matters than contribute to your success?” Jack asked.

Jack continued…“One more thing about growing: are you contributing to others in any ways? In fact, being a contributor is probably the greatest growth one can experience. It goes ‘outside’ of us – it’s no longer about our ego, it’s about improving other peoples’ lives.

I mean, if you look around, you’ll notice that when a person become very rich, beyond the comprehension of riches, they start to become philanthropists.

I’m not asking you to do that at this stage, but I want you to know that contribution is probably the most emotional reward you could ever experience in terms of personal growth.

You have to start seeing all of these parts in your life because if you’re just focused on one part that you use to represent your overall success, but you’re missing out, big time.” Jack concluded.
19. THE TRUTH

Jack felt very enlightened after spending the last 30 minutes walking and listening to Jack. He even felt gratitude that he ‘met’ Jack – someone who told him nothing but the truth.

“One final question.” Jack asked.

“Yes?” Jack was looking forward to answering Jack’s final question about success and life.

“All of this valuable knowledge you’ve shared with me; are these really the secrets to success in life?”

Jack started to laugh.

“Of course not, Jack. These are YOUR secrets. Not the world’s.

Everyone defines success differently. Whatever I’ve said to you may not be agreed with by others. I mean, there would be people who think that MONEY IS EVERYTHING. And that person’s probably right in his own frame of mind.”

Jack digested what Jack told him. Then he said, “Actually, that’s not the final question. I still don’t know who are you? Are you God?”

Jack looked at Jack with a smile when he replied, “You still don’t get it, do you Jack?”
THE DIALOGUE

Jack was now very anxious to hear what Jack was going to say from there.

“Look at me Jack. Firstly, I look like you. I’m wearing your sneakers. I’m wearing your favorite jeans, which you wish to wear on your next outing with Jenny.

I’m YOU, Jack.

I’ve always been you.

You didn’t die either. You’re very much alive and in fact, you can just walk into Meg’s bedroom this instant to kiss her.” Jack explained.

"I’m your internal dialogue.

I have ALWAYS talked to you, with the only intention of seeing you do better in life. But sometimes, you don’t listen. And lately, you’ve completely shut me off.”

...

Jack “woke” up. What seemed to be 30 minutes of conversion with Jack was actually just about 3 minutes of silence in Jack’s mind.

He had experienced an epiphany.

He now realized what he must do.

The first thing was probably to list out what happiness really meant to him.

Then figure out where most of his time had been spent.

Jack was thankful that finally, he decided to have this dialogue with himself.

But no one knows if he CHOSE to listen to the internal dialogue or if it just happened unconsciously…
Hi, my name is Patric Chan. I hope you’ve enjoyed reading The Dialogue.

My wish is that it has somehow given you the awareness of living life, of what’s important.

Agree or not, I would say that we always have internal dialogue with ourselves. Some call it the inner voice. Some call it the sub-conscious mind. Some may even call it intuition.

As weird as it sounds, we ‘talk’ to ourselves every day. We ask questions to ourselves – with trivia such as “what should I eat for lunch” or as important as, “should I marry him”.

Some believe, through your internal dialogue, it may even get you closer to God. I’m not here to speak of religions, but I want to highlight this - one of the biggest missing parts of many people’s life is spirituality. With so much noise going around, being connected spiritually does help you to stay rooted positively.

If it’s ever possible, spend time to meditating every day. Probably, 15 to 30 minutes.

It doesn’t have to be a spiritual meditation, there are many commercial classes and books that can teach you how to meditate.

And if you still can’t meditate, well, the least you can do is to spend silent time for yourself to have your internal dialogue.
THE DIALOGUE

We have already done a lot of talking in our daily life. It’s now time to listen – to yourself.

About Money –

Do not misunderstand that money is unimportant. It is important and it propels you to do many things you wish, giving you many experiences in life.

In fact, I’ve written many other books related to this. But I decided to write differently this time – I decided to write The Dialogue because I think we need to be reminded that money is ‘secondary’.

In a nutshell, money is a wonderful commodity in our reality. So work for it, if you need to. But do not compromise money for more valuable matters in life – such as happiness.

I wish you a very wonderful and beautiful life…

Your friend,

Patric Chan
Best-Selling Author

P.S: If you like the Dialogue, please let me know by leaving your rating and feedback at Amazon. I would really appreciate that.

www.thedialoguebook.com/amazonfeedback

P.P.S: Do you think you have friends who “need” to read the Dialogue? If yes, send them a copy as a gift, maybe it can transform their life… go to www.thedialoguebook.com/friend
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Patric Chan has written several other books on the topic of success and creating financial wealth. However, it seems like the biggest missing link in life is not truly "living it" - regardless of how much success and money you may have. After seeing many people becoming wealthy but somehow remaining unfulfilled in their life, The Dialogue is his message to the world. Furthermore, our world has become very "noisy"; so it's time to reflect on what's really going on in your life.

His other books include:

1. The WakeUp Millionaire
2. Simple Success Principles Volume 1
3. Simple Success Principles Volume 2
4. Simple Success Principles Volume 3

Available at www.patricchan.name

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