

PART ONE:

TO THE HUNT

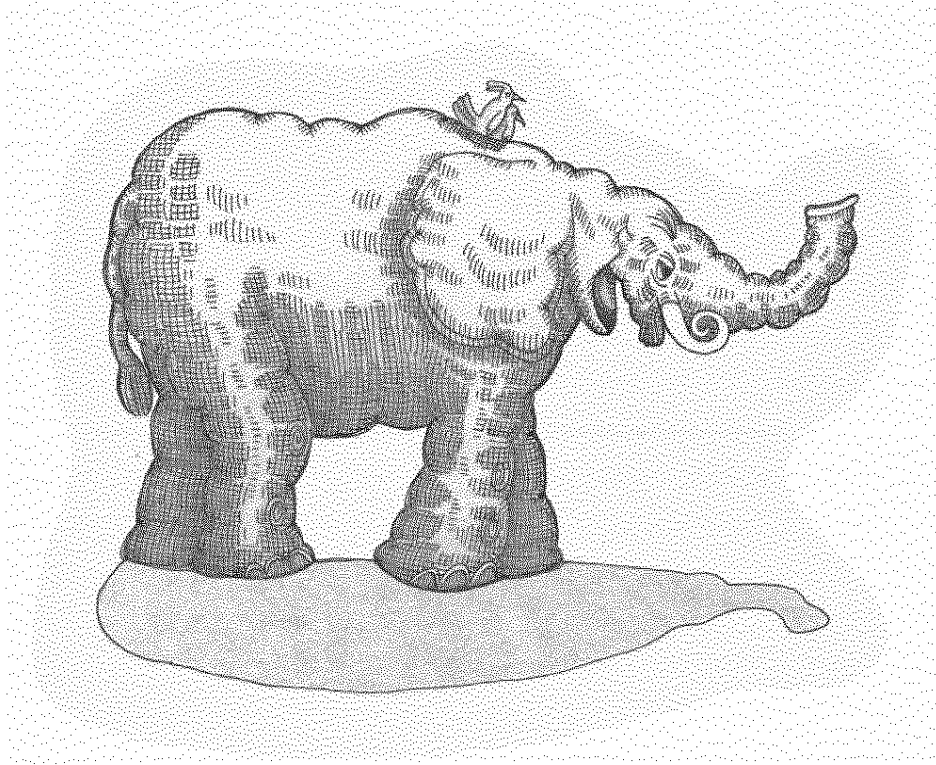


Elephant Hunting



CHAPTER 1

THE KEY TO HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS



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I am about to share a secret with you, and you'll be surprised at how simple it sounds. But no matter how simple the secret seems, it is far from easy. In all my years of teaching these concepts in seminars and workshops, I have never had a single person who successfully applied this truth, come back and prove me wrong.

Knowing and understanding what is most important to you is the key to happiness and success.

It has been my experience that the great majority of people I meet have never explored this simple truth at any length. It involves the difficult—and revealing—process of looking in the mirror at your own life. I believe that there are many other factors that play a role in one's happiness and success. However, in my opinion, knowing and understanding what is most important to you is the most critical factor.

Have you ever read the story or seen the movie “Alice in Wonderland?” Early in the story, Alice comes to a fork in the road and doesn't know which path to take. She meets the Cheshire cat there, and asks him which path she should take. The Cheshire cat responds with a simple but important question, “Where are you going?” When Alice answers “I don't know where I am going,” the cat says, “Then it doesn't matter which road you take to get there.”

It's a funny line, and it's easy to miss the brilliance behind the statement. If you don't truly know and understand what is most important to you, then it really doesn't matter what you do with your time. Happiness and success come from spending your time on those things that are most important to you. If you don't know what is most important to you, you will experience a disconnect, and *that* is most likely the source of most of the stress in your life.

One of my goals in writing this book is to offer you a formula to discover what is most important to you—your purpose and

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passion in life—your Elephant. There are many formulas out there. This is the one that works for me.

So What's All This About Elephants?

Unless you work in a circus or a zoo, chances are you don't actually own any elephants. But as a metaphor, elephants are all around you! In this book, the elephant is a multi-layered analogy that helps us understand some key truths and realities about our lives that are often hidden from us, or that we are ignoring. As you will see, in the first layer of the analogy the elephant represents your passions—the things that are most important to you in your life whether you realize it or not. And for so many, the things we are passionate about are sadly not the things we do each day in order to make a living and support our families.

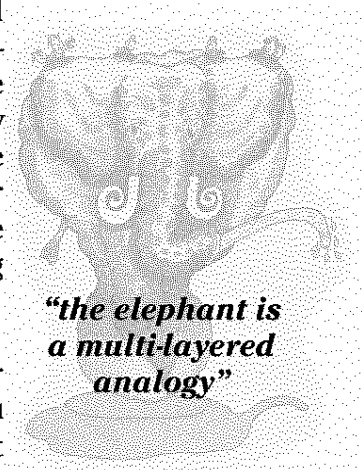
In this book I will help you discover those elephants, your passions. Once I do, what are you going to do with them? You can't just leave those elephants in the back yard and go about your daily life as if there weren't anything to be passionate about. You've all heard the expression "Everyone was ignoring the 300 pound gorilla in the room." Well, I'm here to tell you that an elephant weighs from 10,000 to 14,000 pounds, and that's hard to ignore!

Well, the answer in the next layer of our analogy is simple. What do you do with your elephants? *You eat them!* It isn't enough to just identify your passions.

You have to make them a part of you, incorporate them into your very being. Instead of letting your elephants mope around the back yard, let them nourish you! Swallow, devour, and gobble up the things that you are passionate about. Let your passions be the main course rather than the left-over scraps of your life!

Which brings us the third layer of the analogy: Just exactly how do you eat an elephant? In this layer, the elephant stands

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for the intimidating task of incorporating your passions into your daily life. Say you've always loved music, and always day-dreamed about making music for a living. But you've got a good job, you've got bills to pay, people depend on you, you have debt. How in the world would it be possible to make your living playing music? It's an elephantine problem; one that's bigger than life!

Well, the answer is simple.
**How do you eat an elephant?
One bite at a time!**

A Note About Faith

I am a man of faith. I am a Roman Catholic Christian actively involved in my church, and I rely on my faith in so many ways I can't count them. Although the principles and tools I offer in this book do not require a specific belief or religious practice, I strongly feel that faith is the fuel that provides the energy you need to hunt and capture your elephants!

Throughout this book you will find evidence of my own faith. I didn't particularly set out to write a book about faith, but it kept creeping in. Like everything else in this book, it is simply a reflection of who I am. But my intention was never to recommend or discourage any specific religious belief or practice, or to imply that these principles won't work unless you share my religious beliefs.

I do however believe that the motivation and energy faith brings can be a critical part of your success. I encourage you to bring your own faith to these principles, whatever it may be. If you practice a specific religious belief, then draw on that for strength and purpose. If you don't regularly practice religion, then think about your faith in your fellow man, or your faith in the power of love—whatever gives you support and comfort in the long, dark nights of the soul. And besides all else, have faith in yourself!



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