



Introduction by Kent Healy

Every winner was once a beginner.

If only I could do what they have done....” Well, I’m here to say, “You can!” And this book is proof of that. In most cases, the only person holding us back is ourselves. Many of us believe that celebrities, super-achievers, and other accomplished individuals are simply smarter, stronger, wiser, and in some way, “better” than we are. But the **real** story is quite different. During the many interviews for this book, I heard one specific line come up again and again: “I’m no different than anyone else. I just wasn’t willing to settle for any less than I could be.”

Consider what John Holt, a respected educator, once said:

Charismatic leaders make us think, “Oh, if only I could do that, be like that.” True leaders make us think, “If they can do that... then I can too.”

The people in this book are “true leaders”—their stories and their examples will show you how you too can achieve something extraordinary. When I asked these remarkable individuals to share their lessons, insight, and journeys with me, they all jumped at the opportunity because they know that anyone can be successful **IF** they have the right tools—and being part of this book has allowed them to share their own valuable “success tools” with you.

There are fundamental principles that anyone can use to achieve

extraordinary results, but instead of listing each ingredient of success I've asked those who have used these principles to put them in their own words. The secrets to achieving extraordinary results in your own life are woven into these incredible true stories.

The stories in this book describe the specific turning points, challenges, and breakthroughs that shaped and motivated these individuals to accomplish incredible things. Some names in this book may sound familiar and others may not, but each person has done something extraordinary.

There's an old adage that reads, "What people **can** do is absolutely amazing, but what people **will** do is often disappointing." We're all capable of doing incredible things, but we first need that inspiration to get started, the drive to work through challenges, and the encouragement to stay dedicated to our passion. Our potential is already there—just waiting to be released—but we first must get inspired enough to take that initial step and leap of faith to follow our heart. It's our hope that these stories will ignite that flame of desire within you to start doing the things you've always dreamed of so you can create the life YOU really want.

As you read these stories I hope you are reminded that all success has a beginning. In other words, Anna Kournikova wasn't born with a tennis racket in hand, Ryan Cabrera didn't exit the womb singing hit songs, and Donald Trump Jr. wasn't born with the skill of managing multi-million dollar projects. The fact is, nobody is **born** successful. Remember this:

Every winner was once a beginner.

Believe it or not, there was a time when David Beckham couldn't even walk, when Oprah Winfrey couldn't sign her own name, when Bill Gates couldn't even type. So what makes the difference between those who "get by" in life and those who use more of their potential to do extraordinary things with their lives? The difference is that exceptional people have simply made a series of choices that have

gradually shaped their character, their level of skill, and ultimately, their life.

Even though we're all unique, we all want the same things from life: Happiness, fulfillment, acceptance, respect, and pride in who we are. Isn't that true for you? The question is, how do we do this? Well, who better to learn from than people who have already discovered answers to these questions?

Even though each person in this book has focused his or her attention on goals and dreams that may be different from yours, I've noticed that all extraordinary individuals have one thing in common: They have demanded more from themselves than anybody else would expect. They always make an effort to give their best and over-deliver. That's how excellence is achieved. If you choose to give your best consistently in life you will probably amaze yourself—much like many of the people in this book have done.

The great thing about “true leaders” is that they are willing to share what they did to reach their goals. All you have to do is ask—and that is exactly what I've done. I went straight to the source to get this insight and, not surprisingly, they were very supportive. Consider what the great American writer, Mark Twain, once said:

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

It's important to remember this because we often hear so much negativity in the media, at school, in magazines, and from our peers. There will always be people who say you can't do, be, or have what you really want, but the truth is the same people who tell you that you won't be successful are the same people who have never been successful and probably never will be.

Now it's time to get the real facts and see the other side of the story—the stories that prove **anyone** can be extraordinary. The stories that show you no matter what your challenges are, no matter

what you're currently going through, no matter what other people say, you too, can do incredible things.

Those in this book—and the many successful people who have set foot on this earth—will agree on one thing:

The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is just a little bit extra.

No one can ever make someone else excellent. Excellence cannot be inherited or forced upon us. Those who are the best at what they do have developed a passion for excellence—and that is not something you're born with. It's a decision. It's a choice. The only person who can make **you** an outstanding individual is **you**. If you choose to be an excellent person with excellent self-standards then you will most likely become someone other people consider “extraordinary.”

I know you will find these stories as valuable and inspirational as I did. I hope to one day hear about your extraordinary success.

