

whitehot truth

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the authentic dreaming worksheet

authentic dreaming

We get so many messages about what the right dream is that it gets hard to decipher what our own dream is. I think that the pandemic that we have of overconsumption is directly related to the concept of dreaming big, bigger, biggy, biggest-possible...BIG!

Big can be so beautiful. But what if your dream is to live simply? To have enough, not more than enough—just enough. You can't society supersize your dreams unless it's true for you. Over time, I've had to calibrate my ambitions to my essential self, and I realized that I didn't want to have it all, I didn't need it all—in fact, "all" was too loud, and much too much.

The key to authentic dreaming is a small but potent question. First, you let yourself dream, get clear on what you think you want. And then ask yourself: **"Why do I want what I want?"** Are your aspirations a soul calling or a competitive sport? Are you trying to impress your dead ancestors or leave an impression on the world? How do you actually feel about what you want?

What could be unleashed if you felt like a superhero when you were mapping out your New Year, or writing your livelihood plan? How would your outlook change if you believed – if just temporarily – that anything was possible?

The thing is, "anything" is not always possible. Reality checks are critically important for realizing hopeful plans. But before you get grounded, you need to stretch. You've got to get off your chain, out of your box, and off your rocker to shake out the possibilities. Cross the old boundary lines and come back with some new information. Ideas. Inspiration. Visions. Truth.

So for the purposes of authenticating your true dream, we're going to suspend all pragmatism and practicality. Cynicism be damned. Dreamers unite.

A prelude to getting to your true dream:

Cop to any dream fatigue you may be experiencing

Sometimes you just get worn out from thinking big—'specially us go-get-'em entrepreneurs. Years of hard work, mid-course corrections, failures that lead to success, success that leads to failures. I've had a few times in my career where, after I left a venture, I could hardly bear to think about profit margins and wheeling deals. I just wanted to write sutras and make soup. The fog of dream fatigue starts to lift when you embrace it. Take stock, integrate your lessons—your new facts—and then move on, wiser for the wear. You cannot stop dreaming. You must, you must, you simply must dream a new dream. Now let's move on to the fun part...

The antidote to exhaustion isn't rest. It's wholeheartedness.
David Whyte

4 Steps to Authentic Dreaming.

1. Dream extreme

(also known as the psychedelics of strategic planning):

So, like what if you, like, dropped some acid or drank some magic mushroom tea, and then tripped on your livelihood, creativity and career? It doesn't actually require any illegal substances. It just requires that you get out of your mind and shake up the potentiality in your DNA.

You could turn the lights off and lie on the floor. You should probably close your eyes. Go ahead, I'll wait for you.

Dream zone: The phone rings. It's Oprah. Her staff has been reading your blog and they want to fly you to Chicago next week. Buddy in the café overhears you talking about your business plan, and wouldn't you know it, he's a Venture Capitalist looking to unload some coin before the tax season ends. Your product is flying off the shelves. Bestseller. Soulmate. Awards. Radiance. Empire. The cover of Fast Company magazine. TED Talks. Adulation. Overnight success. Euphoria.

What's your far-out dream? What's so big that you feel just a bit shy to even consider it? Where's the thrill?

Go to the edge, beyond reason. Feel the high of the extreme dream. Loosen up. Unleash. Go wild. BE IMPRACTICAL. Get out of your box and stomp on it. Try egomania on for size. Dare. (If any critics knock on your door, don't answer. They'll go away.)

While you're still tripping on the Milky Way of Potential...

2. Imagine hanging out with the Superheroes of your industry—the leaders, your idols. Who are they?

Now assume that you are their contemporary and you've earned your place beside them. Ask for their grittiest stories and advice, like you would a new best friend. Jam with them. Observe. Tell them your ideas, give them your pitch, sing them your song. Pay close attention to how they respond.

What do they tell you?

Bill Moyers to Joseph Campbell: Do you ever have this sense when you are following your bliss, as I have at moments, of being helped by hidden hands?

Joseph Campbell: All the time. It's miraculous. I even have a superstition that has grown on me as the result of invisible hands coming all the time—namely, that if you do follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. When you can see that, you begin to meet people who are in the field of your bliss, and they open the doors to you. I say, follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be.

3. Come back to earth...for a dream analysis

Now, wind it down. Ease your feet back to the ground. You may have found some courage or sagacity on the other side of the extreme dream. You may have imagined new possibilities. You may be thinking waaay bigger, or maybe much smaller, or more precise. Any insight is a good insight.

Left side: Let your dreams flow.

Right side: Answer why you want that dream to happen. Dig deeply. Are your dreams rooted in your soul? Have they been with you since the beginning? Were they planted by your own hand, or the status quo, or what your parents want for you?

My dreams:	Because why:
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Which of these dreams are close to your heart?
Which dreams make you flush with excitement, or still with peace?
What dream will you choose to realize?

4. Vision prompts

My dream is to:

5 reasons why my dream is unreasonable or the odds are stacked against me:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

5 ultra-optimistic and positively affirmative thoughts that instantly dissolve the bad vibes associated with the so-called “unreasonable” nature of my dream:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

5 persuasive, potentially outrageous actions that will create forward traction:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Who already knows about your dream?

Who will you share your dream with?

Whose dreams do you want to know more about?

WHITE HOT READING (click to read dream-related articles)

: [wonder what their dream is](#)

: [how to make the most of being toast: embracing burnout](#)

: [what's the 'big real' of what you're doing?](#)

: [the suck factor of life balance + passion as a cure to stress](#)

: [say yes to your dream: how frank gehry made the leap](#)



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