



# motivation, inspiration and a tool box of strategies

**If you were given a direct formula for success, the tools to achieve it and the motivation to keep going, would you take action? Well... here's your opportunity to find out.**

Sixteen years ago, Kurek Ashley, a former Hollywood actor and stunt man who's worked with such names as John Travolta, Sylvester Stallone and Chuck Norris, was stuck in a paralysing world of abuse and ever-present suicidal thoughts. Now he has a multi-million dollar business and travels the world doing what he loves. No doubt you've heard stories like this one. So what enabled Ashley, CEO and founder of Kurek Ashley Success International, to turn his life around?

"I made a decision," he says. "And I made a decision to hold true to that decision... On the whole, human beings are terrible and weak decision-makers. All real, lasting change comes when people make the decision to change and they become committed to that decision. The fortune is in the follow through."

So, making a decision begins the process of change. But once that decision is made, whatever that decision is – to acquire riches, run a successful business, be in a positive and rewarding relationship – where does one start and how? That's where Ashley can help. But I get ahead of the story.

## Insight

Ashley's experience at his high school reunion gives an insight into the man who has gone on to have an impressive and varied list of clients, such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, Apple Computers, McDonalds, the American Chamber of Commerce, the Australian Radio Network, Merrill Lynch International Bank, the Brisbane Broncos and gold medal Olympians Natalie Cook and Kerri Pottharst. In fact, if you're in the sports field, it's a great idea to work with Ashley. He says, "Every sports team I've worked with has won" – Cook and Pottharst being the perfect example.

At his high school reunion, Ashley discovered from his former classmates that he was, "always giving little pep talks in the corridors", and motivating his fellow classmates to achieve their goals. It's of no surprise to learn then, that his greatest motivation is seeing other people achieve.

"My personal inspiration is that I love people. I love seeing the light go on in people's eyes and showing them that they can have everything they want. That life can be as magical as they dream it to be."

Despite this natural tendency towards inspiring others, it wasn't until two-and-a-half years after an accident that very nearly claimed his life, and the downward spiral that followed, that he made "the decision" that turned his life around.

The year was 1989. The film was the Chuck Norris flick Delta Force 2. The accident was a helicopter crash that resulted in his best friend dying in his arms.

"For two-and-a-half years my life went down the toilet," says Ashley. "Every day I had a gun in my mouth and drugs up my nose. Then I had a pivotal moment."

Ashley drew a line in the sand with a stick. He then made a decision that once he stepped over that line he would stop abusing his body with drugs, cigarettes and alcohol, and he would change his life. Needless to say, he stepped over the line. He then went in search of "anybody and everybody" he could find to help him. He rediscovered books that as a younger man had had a profound influence on his life, and found new ones. To this day he cites three books as the most influential on his life – *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill, *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse, and *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah* by Richard Bach.

However, just because Ashley made a decision didn't mean his life was suddenly smooth sailing. Eight years ago he was \$20 short of being homeless. Abuse and suicidal thoughts were out of his life, but the success he dreamed of was yet to come. Ashley says however, with the tools and knowledge to succeed and the

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willingness to continually apply them, he knew success would eventuate. It's this knowledge, gained from a lifetime of experience, together with the practical application of what he calls his 'tool box' of strategies, which Ashley teaches through Success International in programs such as the three hour 'The Edge of Excellence' seminar, or the 'Power Up to Peak Performance' a two day event.

"I'm not a guru," he says. "I don't want followers. I want to teach people to be independent. What I do is teach people to have the skills and the leverage to achieve what they want... New things need to become habitual, which requires retraining. With the tool box, you always have these tools with you so you can pull them out and use them again."

## Combination

So what is in the tool box? Well, like a builder's tool box, the tools are varied and there is more than one of them – after all, there's no point having a box full of hammers when what you need is a screwdriver. Similarly, there's no point having either of these to get the job done without their collaborators, in this case, a nail or a screw. Ashley says the combination of these tools, the application and the habituation of them, and the commitment to them, can change your life.

Here's an example. Ashley believes many people become paralysed with what he calls "drama glue". It's here that "people get stuck in the negativity of the drama in their life and can't move on because the glue paralyses them". Ashley explains, "This drama is disempowering... the way to overcome this, to become empowered, is to let go."

So, his advice to become free from the 'drama glue' is: "Take responsibility for your life, as responsibility means that you have the ability to choose your response to any situation." And to compliment this advice he adds, "Stop being reactive and start being proactive so you can become the co-creative of

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your life." Becoming proactive is part of the tool box of strategies.

Ashley also speaks about becoming "holistically successful", that is, successful in every part of life. Many people are wealthy, but they don't have their health, or they are successful in business but not in relationships. "It's about creating balance in all parts of your life."

In 1998, Ashley broke the World Record for the longest 'Fire-walk' – walking 81 metres over 600°C coals. He's also a fire-walk instructor and has taken thousands of people across the coals safely. "We all have unlimited potential and can do whatever we want when we have focus and take action," he says.

"Knowledge by itself is not power. Action is power," says Ashley. "Make a commitment to take action." ■



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