



# DISCOVERING YOUR STORY

EDWARD PAZ

**introduction**

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# introduction

Do you know the calling for which you were created?

Are you aware of the assignment that you are to accomplish?

Can you articulate the story that your life was intended to tell?

If you do not have the answer to these questions, **you are not alone.**

Confusion about “calling” is common.

Naiveté towards a person’s assignment is the norm.

Wandering through one’s story is widespread.

## **But this is not OK.**

Too many people are living unfulfilled lives.

Too many people are questioning their existence.

Too many people are pursuing success in the wrong assignment.

**As a result, purposelessness may be the most unaddressed epidemic in our world today.**

And if you are not telling *your* story, *you* are in danger of becoming infected!

I must do something about this. **You must do something about this.**

For me, creating this resource was that something.

For you, taking action on this resource is that something.

Now, with the preliminaries out of the way, let’s discover *your* story!

**There is no greater agony than  
bearing an untold story inside you.**

Maya Angelou



stage 1:

**DETERMINE**

# stage 1: Determine Your Burden

**Your story begins with a burden.**

Every world changer from antiquity was guided by one.

Moses was burdened by the slavery of the Israelites.

Nehemiah was burdened by the broken down walls of Jericho.

Jesus of Nazareth was burdened by the sin of humanity.

Every dreamer from history was inspired by one.

Walt Disney was burdened by unclean theme parks.

Mother Teresa was burdened by the poor, sick and orphaned.

Martin Luther King Jr. was burdened by a lack of civil rights.

Every movement leader from the modern-day is driven by one.

Robert Kiyosaki is burdened by financial illiteracy.

Christine Caine is burdened by human trafficking.

Eugene Cho is burdened by extreme global poverty.

**Burdens are the beginning.**

The beginning of unique callings being completed.

The beginning of specific assignments being achieved.

The beginning of compelling stories being told.

So how, exactly, do you go about determining your burden?

**Burdens are light when  
they are cheerfully borne.**

Ovid

# stage 1: Determine Your Burden

Your burden can be determined by making yourself aware of issues, problems or situations in your community or in the world at large that:

## 1. Bother you.

What issues **frustrate, disturb, or sadden** you the most?

## 2. Undermine your values.

What issues concern you that you feel are **morally wrong**?

## 3. Require your response.

What issues do you feel **you must** do something about?

## 4. Deploy your creativity.

What issues have you began to think of **creative solutions** for?

## 5. Enlarge your compassion.

What issues have **grown your love** for a specific group of people?

## 6. Never go away.

What issues can you **not seem to get out of your head** even when you try?

Your frustration  
may be your allocation.

TD Jakes

# stage 1: Determine Your Burden

If you find that a specific community or world issue is your answer to **each of the six questions**, it is very likely that you have just determined the burden for which you were born!

This burden will serve as the reason for your actions.  
This burden will serve as the inspiration for your ideas.  
This burden will serve as the motivation for your efforts.

And whether you view it this way yet or not,

**Your burden is a blessing.**

Embrace it.

Your story cannot get started if you leave your burden behind.

A question worth considering:

***What is your burden?***

**God places the heaviest  
burden on those who  
can carry its' weight.**

Reggie White

# a few more words about your burden...

"It's about doing a job not because you want to do it but because **it must be done** and you know deep down in your soul, **you're the one that is supposed to do it.**"

"How do you know you're supposed to do it?" I asked.

"Because **it disturbs you** that no one else is doing it. You may say to yourself, 'Why isn't someone doing something about this?'"

"Could it anger you?" I asked.

"Oh yes," said Rich Dad softly. "It can also **sadden you** or even **break your heart**. It may seem like an **injustice** or a **crime** to you. It probably **disturbs your sense of decency**. It seems unfair - an injustice." ...

"Don't most people have these feelings about something in their life?" I asked.

**"Yes, but most people don't do anything about it..."**

Robert Kiyosaki

*Before You Quit Your Job (2005)*





stage 2:

# RECOGNIZE

# stage 2: Recognize Your Gift

## You have a gift.

A unique skill, talent, or ability that you were created to use at a very high level.

Leadership : Writing : Administration : Building : Compassion :  
Engineering : Mercy : Running : Hospitality : Listening : Patience :  
Speaking : Management : Cooking : Intuition : Networking :  
Faith : Giving : Design : Dancing : Repairing : Photographing : etc.

Your gift may not be listed above. Your gift may not be fully developed.

Your gift may not have had enough opportunities to be used.

But the fact still remains: You have a gift.

And if you have any desire to:

Fulfill your dream. Accomplish your purpose. Complete your assignment.

**You must recognize your gift.** *Why?*

**Your gift is the primary tool that you will use  
to tell your story and fulfill your purpose.**

Walt Disney had the gift of imagination.

Mother Teresa had the gift of compassion.

Martin Luther King Jr. had the gift of communication.

And they each used their gifts to bring their dreams to fruition. And so will you.

**We are all gifted.  
That is our inheritance.**

Ethel Waters

# stage 2: Recognize Your Gift

*And so how exactly can you recognize your gift?*

Allow the following questions to be your guide:

## 1. What skill, talent or ability are you **Good** at?

- \* You do it well.
- \* You do it easily.
- \* You do it better than most.

## 2. What skill, talent or ability are you **Involved** with?

- \* You join groups, clubs or associations about it.
- \* You read books, magazines or websites about it.
- \* You go to conferences, workshops or classes about it.

## 3. What skill, talent or ability are you **Favoring** most?

- \* You absolutely love to do it.
- \* You would rather do it than anything else.
- \* When you do it you get a sense of, "I was born to do this."

## 4. What skill, talent or ability are you **Told** you're good at?

- \* Your family has told you that you're good at it.
- \* Your friends have told you that you're good at it.
- \* Complete strangers have told you that you're good at it.

**The person born with a talent they are meant to use will find their greatest happiness using it.**

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

# stage 2: Recognize Your Gift

Whatever skill, talent or ability is the answer to **each of the four questions** is very likely to be the unique, God-given gift that you have been blessed with!

It's your secret weapon.

It's your strongest asset.

It's your specific contribution.

It's your gift.

**Own it. Develop it. Give it.**

Your story cannot be written without it.

A question worth considering:

***What is your gift?***

No man has come to true greatness  
who has not felt to some degree  
that his life belongs to his race,  
and what God gives him  
He gives him for mankind.

Phillips Brooks

# a few more words about your gift...

Passion is a desire, insistence, and willingness to give a gift. The artist is relentless. She says, **"I will not feel complete until I give a gift."** This is more than refusing to do lousy work. It's an insistence on doing important work.

The relentless passion leads to persistence and resilience in the face of people not accepting your gift.

**The artists in your life are gift-focused**, and their tenacity has nothing at all to do with income or job security. Instead, **it's about finding a way to change you in a positive way, and to do it with a gift.** There's a strong streak of intellectual integrity involved in being a passionate artist. You don't sell out, because selling out involves destroying the best of what you are...

Seth Godin  
*Linchpin* (2005)



stage 3:

# ENVISION

# stage 3: Envision Your Dream

**A vision is a must.**

What can you see?

Can you imagine how your burden will be resolved?

Can you imagine how your unique, God-given gift will be used?

Can you imagine how the world will look when your work is through?

They could...

Walt Disney saw the world's greatest amusement parks.

Mother Teresa saw a world without hurt and pain.

Martin Luther King Jr. saw blacks and whites living together in harmony.

## Do you have a vision?

Can you see the unseen?

Can you see what is yet to be?

Can you see what is *supposed* to be?

If so, great.

You are on your way. If not...

Now is the time to visualize.

Now is the time to conceptualize.

Now is the time to dream.

**The most pathetic person  
in the world is someone  
who has sight, but not vision.**

Helen Keller

# stage 3: Envision Your Dream

The following questions will guide you in helping you to see what is yet to be:

## 1. Who?

- \* Who do you want to work with?
- \* Who do you want your work to benefit?
- \* Who do you want to hold you accountable to the work getting done?

## 2. What?

- \* What capacity will you be working in initially?
- \* What capacity will you be working in eventually?
- \* What capacity will you be working in ultimately?

## 3. Where?

- \* Where does your work take place initially?
- \* Where does your work take place eventually?
- \* Where does your work take place ultimately?

## 4. When?

- \* When will your work get started?
- \* When will you feel as if your work is making progress?
- \* When will your work be finished?

## 5. Why?

- \* Why will you pursue this work?
- \* Why will you protect this work?
- \* Why will you persevere in this work?

**The future belongs to  
people who see possibilities  
before they become obvious.**

Theodore Levitt



# stage 3: Envision Your Dream

Now you have a goal.

Now you have an ideal to strive for.

Now you have a mental picture of what you believe is going to happen.

Embrace your vision.

Crystallize your vision.

Communicate your vision.

## Write down your vision.

Your story will have a better chance of happening in *person* if it first take place on *paper*.

A question worth considering:

***What is your vision?***

Always remember, there are only two kinds of people in the world - the realists and the dreamers.

The realists know where they're going. The dreamers have already been there.

Robert Orben

# a few more words about your vision...

The legendary Walt Disney died before Disney World in Florida was completed.

On opening day in 1971, almost five years after Disney's death, someone commented to Mike Vance, creative director of Walt Disney Studios, "Isn't it too bad Walt Disney didn't live to see this?"

**"He did see it,"** Vance replied simply. **"That's why it's here."**

Craig Groeschel

*it* (2008)

stage 4:

**ACT**



# stage 4: Act

## Are you ready to take action?

If you have discovered your burden

If you have recognized your gift

If you have envisioned your dream...

## Now it's time to act.

Inaction does not solve problems.

Procrastination does not create opportunities.

Fear does not change the world.

**There has never been a purpose  
that was fulfilled by doing nothing.**

You must act. They did...

Walt Disney acted by moving to Los Angeles.

Mother Teresa acted by leaving her convent to live amongst the poor.

Martin Luther King Jr. acted by leading the Montgomery bus boycott.

## Action is the difference maker.

Action gets things going.

Action attracts a following.

Action changes lives.

**You may never know what  
results come of your actions,  
but if you do nothing,  
there will be no results.**

Mahatma Gandhi

# stage 4: Act

Two questions can help you to determine what actions you must take on the quest for fulfilling the story for which you were created.

## 1. What is the last thing you were prompted to do?

- \* Send the email?
- \* Visit the location?
- \* Set the appointment?
- \* Make the phone call?
- \* Apply for the position?
- \* Have the conversation?
- \* Submit the application?

**Whatever task you were prompted to do...do it.**

## 2. What is the necessary habit you must develop?

- |             |                |                  |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|
| * Trying?   | * Studying?    | * Serving?       |
| * Coding?   | * Listening?   | * Initiating?    |
| * Writing?  | * Practicing?  | * Inquiring?     |
| * Praying?  | * Interacting? | * Mentoring?     |
| * Reading?  | * Developing?  | * Interviewing?  |
| * Creating? | * Researching? | * Communicating? |

**Whatever habit you must develop...develop it.**

**An ounce of action  
is worth a ton of theory.**

Friedrich Engels

# stage 4: **Act**

Only two categories of actions exist when it comes to purpose fulfillment:

## **Tasks and Habits.**

Complete the tasks you know you must complete.  
Develop the habits you know you must develop.

**Until you commit to these actions,  
your story will stagnate.**

Action is the foundational key  
to all success.

Pablo Picasso

A question worth considering:

***What is your next action step?***

# a few more words about your actions...

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy,  
the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness.

Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth,  
the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans:

that **the moment one definitely commits oneself,  
then Providence moves too.**

A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor  
all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance  
which no man could have dreamed would have come his way.

I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets:

**"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it.  
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it." Begin it now.**

William Hutchinson Murray



stage 5:

**MAINTAIN**



# stage 5: **Maintain Faith**

When you have developed the habit of doing the things you know you must do to move you in the direction of fulfilling your purpose -

## **To be faithful is all that remains.**

With your tasks. With your habits. With your work.

### **Maintain faith.**

In spite of fear. In spite of doubt. In spite of loneliness.

### **Maintain faith.**

If there's no money. If there's no resources. If there's no hope.

### **Maintain faith.**

Each day. Each month. Each year.

### **Maintain faith.**

They did...

When Walt Disney ran out of money...he maintained faith.

When Mother Teresa was heavily criticized...she maintained faith.

When Martin Luther King Jr. was put into prison...he maintained faith.

But at this point, you may be wondering, *"What, exactly, should I be maintaining faith in?"*

**Faith is the art of holding onto things your reason once accepted despite your changing moods.**

C.S. Lewis

# stage 5: **Maintain Faith**

Though there are many things in which you can place your faith, I'm convinced that you need to place your absolute trust and confidence in the following three areas for your story to see its' completion:

## **1. Maintain faith in your goal.**

Your goal is noble.  
Your goal is worthy.  
Your goal is necessary.  
Have belief in it.

## **2. Maintain faith in your gift.**

Your gift is perfect for your goal.  
Your gift is perfect for your audience.  
Your gift is perfect for your purpose.  
Put confidence in it.

## **3. Maintain faith in your God.**

God is faithful.  
God is all-knowing.  
God is all-powerful.  
Place your trust in Him.

**When your faith is tested,  
your endurance has a chance  
to grow. So let it grow, for  
when your endurance is  
fully developed, you will be  
perfect and complete,  
needing nothing.**

St. James

# stage 5: **Maintain Faith**

**Faith is so necessary.**

It is necessary because, many times, it will be all that you have.

When no one else is around, faith will be your friend.

When the next step is unknown, faith will show you the way.

When the motivation to continue is absent, faith will encourage you.

In the final analysis...

**Taking action will get you moving...in the beginning.**

**But maintaining faith will keep you going...till the end.**

Maintain faith.

**Feed your faith and your  
fears will starve to death.**

Unknown

A question worth considering:

***In what do you place your faith?***

# a few more words about your faith...

When you walk to the edge of all the light you have and take that first step into the darkness of the unknown, you must believe that one of two things will happen:

**There will be something solid  
for you to stand upon,  
or, you will be taught how to fly.**

Patrick Overton

# conclusion

Whether you like it or not,

Your life *has been* telling a story.

Your life *is* telling a story.

And your life *will* tell a story.

The question you must answer for yourself is,

**Are you satisfied with the story your life is telling?**

If so, I encourage you to continue to tell it loud and tell it proud! But,

If you're disappointed with the story your life has told in the past...

If you're unhappy with the story your life is telling in the present...

If you're resolved and motivated to tell a better story in the future...

**D**iscover. **R**ecognize. **E**nvision. **A**ct. **M**aintain.

I can't assure you of how your story is going to turn out, but I am convinced that committing yourself to these five stages will give you the confidence you need to go to bed each night knowing you did everything in your power to tell the best story you could.

**And maybe just maybe, when all is said and done, discovering your story will be a DREAM come true!**

**We're all stories, in the end.  
Just make it a good one, eh?**

Doctor Who



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