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Road Map Of Life

By Kathy Gates

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If you were going to drive to somewhere unfamiliar – whether cross country or just across the city – what would be the first thing you would do? Map it out? And then after you mapped it out, would you never look at the map again? Not likely.

More likely, you would refer to the map often, to make sure that you were on the right track. You would be able to tell quickly if you needed to make adjustments, correct a mistake, or consider a change of plans.

Posting your goals, standards, boundaries, mission statement, etc. is very much like having a map to refer to. A "Life Map".

In today's busy world, it's easy to get off course. Having a Life Map to refer to helps you keep moving quickly and efficiently towards your goals. It helps you to filter out things that don't belong, helps you quickly correct things when you mess up, helps you navigate unexpected problems.

But if you don't have the map where you can see it and refer to it often, all the planning in the world won't matter. You'll end up driving aimlessly around unfamiliar territory, being distracted by many different paths. Knowing where you want to go, but having no tried and true method of getting there.

What else might that driving map tell you?

Perhaps that there is more than one way to get to where you are going, the freeway or the back way, for example. It may show you various ways of getting to the same place, depending on your starting point. It may show you alternate route which could be used to detour around unexpected problems (the inevitable construction crew), or obstacles put in your way. It may show you a phone number to call for assistance if you get lost, or an estimated time of your journey, or even a time that you are expected at your destination.

It might show you milestones, or landmarks, so that you can chart your progress.

All these things are important for your Life Map as well. Where are you starting from? What are your resources? Do you want to take the fast track, or do you prefer a slower approach? What back-up plans do you have for handling the inevitable unexpected problems? Who do you go to for assistance to make sure you stay on the right track?

Without a map to refer to often, it might be easy to get distracted from your destination. Let's say for example that you were headed to a friend's house for a party, and along the way you might notice a restaurant, or a beautiful piece of scenery, or a movie that you wanted to see. Would you stop and go to the restaurant or the movie? Would you put your ultimate objective on hold because something else got your attention for the moment?

Of course not.

But that's exactly what happens when you let distractions – albeit attractive distractions – move you off your Life Map. You "end up" somewhere instead of where you really want to be. Time and space and conscious choice must be attached to any decisions to detour or stop along your way. Is there time? Can I do this at another time? Will it detract from my goal, or enhance it?

Don't let your temporary, current desires take precedence over what you REALLY want.

Because, you see, an important part of succeeding is deciding what is and what isn't a distraction. For example, as you were headed to your party, you saw a vendor with some fresh flowers and you decide to stop and pick up some for your friend. In that case, a stop along the way ADDS to your goal. However, if instead you decide to stop and see a movie and arrive quite late at the party, then you have detracted from your goal.

The Life Map functions the same way. For example, if you are working on a College Degree, and you decide to stop and work at an entry level position in your field to learn the nuts and bolts of the industry, then that will ADD to your end result. However, if instead, you

decide to take time off to back-pack through Europe, that will detract from your goal of finishing your degree.

Each "opportunity" must be evaluated in light of how it will affect your ultimate goal. Will it contribute to it, or will it detract from it?

Therefore, both the driving map and the Life Map serve the same high purpose: To Keep You On Track.

POST your Life Goals so that you can see them every day. Decide that you will put as much thought into your Life Map as you do into planning your Vacation. Grab on to the steering wheel of your life. Check your map often, determine your current location, and move confidently toward where you want to go.

Kathy Gates, Professional Life Coach, helps people set priorities and goals, take actions, make changes, and reshape their lives. She is the author of numerous articles both online and in print, an Ebook and several Email Coaching Programs available at www.reallifecoach.com, call 480.998.5843

Map to a Gold Mine – Could You, Would You?

By Gary Simpson

"Map to a Gold Mine – Could You, Would You?" by Gary Simpson

If a total stranger came up to you and said: "I've got a map", what would you think?

Would you be intrigued or would you think he was nuts? What if he added: "It's a map to a gold mine." Would that get you interested?

What if he said: "I'll sell you the map."

There are many unknown quantities in the above scenario. In other words, there are a number of things that you need to know about the man and his map. Here are some considerations:

who is this man?

does he have credibility?

why is he offering you his map?

does the mine still contain gold?

who else has he offered his map to?

These are just some questions you might ask about the man, his map and the gold mine.

But let's assume that the man, the map and his gold mine are genuine. What else would you need to know?

where is the mine located?

how difficult will it be to extract the gold?

Let's also assume that the mine is able to be accessed and the extraction process is not cost prohibitive. When you have ascertained that everything is genuine, what would be your next question?

how much does the map cost?

Let's now assume that the map is affordable. Just for instance let us say that the map will cost you \$20,000. If you knew you could mine the gold, recoup your money and start making a profit, would you pay the man his \$20,000 asking price?

In the back of your mind is there a little voice saying "where's the catch?" Of course there is. However, let's also assume that there is no catch. What would be the only thing holding you back from taking advantage of this fantastic offer?

There is only one part of the equation missing. It's you. Can you make the process work? What do you need to do to mine the gold?

What do you need to know about yourself? If you had the map, could you do anything with it? Would you do anything with it? Would you be prepared to pay the man for his map? Would you be prepared to part with the \$20,000 for the map? Is the price too high for you? What if it was \$10,000, or \$5,000 or \$2,500?

On the other hand, would you deny yourself the opportunity because you were concerned that you were giving the man money for just a piece of paper with a few lines and directions on it.

The question I really want you to think about is this – how much are you prepared to pay in time, money

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and effort for information that can enable you to improve your life?

Studying subjects such as motivation, self esteem and personal development could be just the map you need to find your very own gold mine.

About the author: Gary Simpson is the Course Co-ordinator for the "Life, Journey, Destiny – Personal Development Home Study Course" and the author of "How to Stop Wasting Your Life and Start Getting What You Want". His email address is

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