

## KEEP A VISIBLE RECORD OF YOUR DREAMS

Throughout *Falling Awake*, you'll find exercises and journal entries that ask you to write and to act on what you write.

Together, the journal entries and exercises invite you to experience three steps toward creating whatever you want in life:

- Summarizing your key discoveries (insights)
- Creating specific intentions (goals) based on those discoveries
- Acting on your intentions

Journal entries include discovery and intention statements that guide you through the first two steps. Exercises invite you to experience the third step by taking specific actions.

When writing discovery statements, you can note “where you are” in your life right now—your current strengths and areas for improvement. You can also use these statements to declare what you want for the future, to state your feelings, to transcribe your thoughts, and to chronicle your behavior. In order to get the most value from discovery statements, suspend self-judgment, tell the truth, and record specific details.

You can also do several things to increase the value of intention statements. For one, state your intentions positively—for example, say *I will stay smoke-free* instead of *I will not smoke*. Also be careful of intentions that depend on other people; if you delegate a task to someone else, then your success could hinge on that person's action. Another option is to break large intentions into smaller steps, setting deadlines for those steps when possible. And when you complete a step, reward yourself.

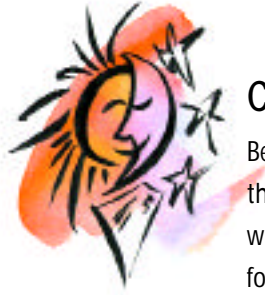
There are many ways to keep a written record of your discoveries, intentions, and actions.

One low-cost, flexible, and practical method is to use lots of 3x5 cards. I like to carry 3x5 cards with me and write on them (one idea per card). That way I can capture ideas quickly when I'm on the run. Later, I can easily sort, eliminate, prioritize, and store those ideas.

You can use 3x5s to remind yourself of strategies that you want to practice. Just write one strategy on a card. Then tape the card to a mirror, put it in your pocket, store it in your purse, or put it somewhere else where it's easily noticed.

You could also write on large Post-it® notes, in a bound journal, or with a computer. Many of the exercises and journal entries in this book suggest that you write on a separate sheet of paper; remember that you can use any medium that works for you. The important thing is to consistently keep a written record of what you want in life, the ways you intend to get it, and your experiences in taking action.





## Create a personal time capsule

Before using this book to help you create the life of your dreams, take a few minutes to mark this moment in time. Write a letter to yourself that sums up who you are right now and who you wish to become. To get your letter started, you can complete any or all of the following sentences:

*The most important thing I want to remember about this period of my life is ...*

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*The most significant struggles I've experienced so far in my life are ...*

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*The most important accomplishments I've experienced so far in my life are ...*

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*I'm becoming a person who ...*

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*The gift I most want to give myself is ...*

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When you've finished this letter, date it and put it in a sealed, self-addressed, stamped envelope. Include some extra postage for good measure. Then give the letter to a trusted friend. Ask her to send it back to you in 15 months. Another option is to hide the letter and make a note in your calendar to retrieve it in 15 months.



## Write your testimonial

This exercise includes an unusual request: Write a testimonial for this book. And do this now—even before you read the rest of the book.

Writing your own testimonial is based on a simple idea: You don't need to wait until you're finished reading this book to find out whether it's going to be valuable. You can choose up front—right now.

While the content of this book is important, what you choose to *do* with the content plays a far larger role in creating the quality of your life. Commitment is more important than content. Nothing that's written on these pages can equal your commitment to create value from the suggestions in this book. Writing a testimonial is one way to further your commitment.

Right now, on a separate sheet of paper write what you want to be able to say about this book once you've finished reading it.

After you have written several testimonials of your own, read the following sample testimonials to stimulate your imagination. (Note: These testimonials are pure fiction, but you, as a reader, can make them come true.)

*The ideas in this book made significant life changes easy and joyful.*

*When reading this book, I discovered that I can be happy no matter what is going on in my life.*

*I saw for the first time that even when I feel sad or sick I can have a wonderful and joyous life.*

*Life is just wonderful! It always has been great, but I didn't realize it until I read this book.*

*Every hour of every day, I can make the choices to have my life continue to be outstanding.*

*Several years ago I read this book and made remarkable changes in my life. I haven't forgotten what I learned, and I continue to use the Success Strategies every day.*

*After reading this book, I transformed the quality of my life—dramatically—in just a few days.*

*I'm a skeptic, but the book showed me how to be happy almost every minute—and the ideas work, even though I still don't agree with all of them.*

*I've read dozens of self-help books, many of which were extremely helpful. This book did more than all of those books combined.*

*Like most people, I was doing pretty well and thought life couldn't get much better. Then I read this book and my life took an unbelievable leap forward. Now I realize that I didn't even need to read the book; I can just choose moment-to-moment happiness.*

*I thought I knew what transformation meant, then I read this book and realized that transformation means more than just improving. My life shifted dramatically for the better.*

*Unbelievable! I've never experienced anything like this book. It is possible to be happy no matter what happens in my life. And happiness is not equal to complacency.*

Now that you've read the preceding examples, you might want to revise your testimonials. Taking a few minutes to do this now can make your experience of this book even more valuable.



## Choose your way to use this book

Be specific about how you will use *Falling Awake* to produce the results you described in your testimonials from the previous exercise.

8. Read through the following list of statements and circle the one that best describes how you will participate with this book:
1. I will begin this book with an open mind. After I have some experience with it, I will choose my level of commitment to the book.
  2. I will skim the book and consider using a suggestion or two.
  3. I will read most of the book and apply some of its suggestions to my life.
  4. I will read most of the book and apply many of its suggestions to my life.
  5. I will read the entire book but I don't plan to do any of the exercises or journal entries.
  6. I will read the entire book and will do some of the exercises and journal entries.
  7. I will read the entire book and do a majority of the exercises and journal entries.
  8. I will read the entire book and do all of the exercises and journal entries.
  9. I will read the entire book, do all of the exercises and journal entries, and constantly search for ways to use its suggestions.
  10. I will read the entire book and do all of the exercises and journal entries more than once, each time searching for new ways to use the ideas.
  11. I will read this book and do all of the exercises and journal entries many times—as if the quality of my life depended on it.
  12. I will read this book and do all of the exercises and journal entries many times—as if the quality of my life depended on it. And when I find an idea or an exercise or journal entry that I don't find valuable, I will rewrite that part of the book so that I can use it to create the life of my dreams.

An alternative is to write a statement that expresses your level of commitment in your own words. If you choose this option, please write your statement now in the space below.

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To get even more from this exercise, share your statement of commitment with at least one person. Making your commitment public allows others to support you and strengthens your intentions to act in ways that create the life of your dreams.