

geoff thompson

shape shifter

transform your life in 1 day

powerful advice on
personal development

SHAPE SHIFTER

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Summersdale Publishers Ltd

46 West Street

Chichester

West Sussex

PO19 1RP

UK

www.summersdale.com

Printed and bound in Great Britain

ISBN 1 84024 444 5

The extracts from *The Luck Factor* by Richard Wiseman, published by Century, are reprinted by permission of The Random House Group Ltd.

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*To Holly Barnes, my number one fan
and to my beautiful wife Sharon*

Also by the Author

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Prologue

What if you could become anything you wanted? Do anything you wanted? Live your dreams? What if there was a method, a secret, that allowed ordinary men and women with average ability to transform themselves into beings of extraordinary talent?

Could, then, a toilet cleaner become a self-taught, world-renowned sculptor? Steve Goddard did.

Would, then, a once violent criminal be able to metamorphose into a writer of prize-winning poetry? Benjamin Zephaniah would likely agree that even the implausible is entirely possible.

And what about a humble Manchester rent collector: could he transform himself into one of the finest painters of a generation? A lot of people said categorically no. But Lowry proved them all wrong.

Then there was Gandhi; an unknown who became a history-making leader with twenty million followers.

Sir Richard Branson was a penniless aspirant who cultivated a billion pound industry from the

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entrepreneurial seeding ground of a public telephone box (his office).

One of the most respected singer-songwriters of our day, Sir Paul McCartney wrote some of his greatest hits on a serviette in a Liverpool café. He couldn't even read or write sheet music.

If it wasn't for the fact that many of these examples are immediately recognisable, you might be forgiven for thinking this is the stuff of fiction. But these are real people and, whilst their backgrounds may be diverse, they have one thing in common with each other. They are all shape shifters. You also have one thing in common with them. You are a shape shifter.



Introduction

Us and Them

Change your life in one day! A bold claim and perhaps it's one that seems impossible to back up. But this book can change your life in one day; actually it can change your life in one hour; it could even change your life in one minute.

Alexander the Great believed that if you could control your fear you could control the whole world because fear is all that stands between us and our dreams. Fear is little more than a lack of the right information or too much of the wrong information. The right words, the right information, the right knowledge can dispel fear in a miraculous instant.

Change your life in one day?

For those who are ready for change even one line of text can open a portal to a brave new world and let you see what your fear has been hiding from you.

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When I was a boy I innately knew that anything was possible. I felt it in my very bones. There were no limitations to my reverie; I could be anything, do anything, go anywhere. I could be a professional footballer (I was a fanatical player), a screenwriter (I wrote and made my first film at the tender age of twelve), a spaceman (I've been accused of being a 'spaceman' many times since). Anything that my virginal mind could conceive I could achieve. I knew that if I could see something – anything – clearly in my mind, I could make it real. I believed it. All I had to do was board my dream ship and set sail into the great blue beyond.

If life is a great ocean faring adventure then, at an early age, my ideals were shipwrecked and left broken on the rocks.

As I started to mature, the social ethos of personal limitation became palpable. As the time for me to earn a living beckoned, I felt a definite shift in my level of thinking. It was almost as if my friends, family and peers had just been waiting for me to outgrow my school shorts before passing on the bad news, my true legacy; *how it really is*.

This new paradigm rocked my world. I was sixteen years old and about to leave full-time education to seek rags-to-riches employment – something in keeping with my daydreamy idyll – when I got a smack in the mouth from my new best friend Reality; a not-to-be-messed-with, hostile sentry that stood ominously between me and my dreams.

I say reality – I mean perceived reality. One that – as far as I could ascertain – the majority blindly adhered

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to and only the very brave challenged with any degree of success.

In my case, reality came in the guise of a six-foot-two school careers adviser (the PE teacher in a shirt and tie), who literally laughed me out of the room when I suggested writing as a possible career choice. He instead proffered a list of factories looking for lathe turners and bog cleaners. If I really applied myself, he seemed to be suggesting, I might one day make factory foreman. He was the first of many over the next fifteen years to try and school me in the ways of society; invisible ceilings, codes of conduct, unwritten rules. The intimation was that if I ignored any or all of the above, I risked being thought pretentious for trying to seek more; suffering ridicule and humiliation if I tried and failed; and social ousting if I dared to succeed. Why? Because people like *us* should know our place. People like *us* do not write books.

That's for people like *them*.

Popular belief – certainly in my neck of the woods, the Midlands – was that the world consisted of two types of people; there were *them* and then there were *us*. And unless blessed with membership to the former, you were destined for a life of mediocrity. If that were not injury enough, the world, I quickly realised, was also a wholly disproportionate place; there was an inordinate number of *us* and only a very small quantity of *them*. We saw *them* so rarely – usually only on the telly, at the pictures or in the newspapers – that they were almost viewed as

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a different species. This nominal contact greatly perpetuated the feeling that those at the top were different and their grandiose lifestyle unavailable to the masses. They were the gifted few; silver-spooned emissaries born with a genetic start-up bursary, a baton passed down from one generation to the next. This belief, this lie, killed and continues to kill the potential of ordinary people like an injection of cyanide. It certainly slaughtered my great ambitions.

For a while.

I spent the next umpteen years doing exactly what was expected of me. I worked as a floor sweeper, chemical operator, pizza maker, road digger, hod-carrier, bricklayer, delivery driver and nightclub bouncer before – in my mid to late twenties – something fantastic, even miraculous, happened. Something that enabled me to exhume the buried treasure of my youth: the knowledge that you really can be and do anything. I sold my first book. I became a published author. Me, the working class kid from the local comprehensive, the one who left school with no qualifications and no hope. The lad destined for a life of shop-floor drudgery. The popular media believed that the chances of ever becoming a published writer were next to none. Apparently the probability was so low that it did not even attract official odds. And yet I had achieved it. I wrote my first book, *Watch My Back*, on the toilet in a factory that employed me to sweep floors, and a small, burgeoning publisher bought the rights and published it. That is when I realised the truth (and here comes the good news): there is no *us*, there is no *them*. It's all a lie, perpetrated and perpetuated by the ignorant and the fearful. We are all

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potential creators and to believe differently is to sell ourselves short and imprison our potential in a self-imposed gaol.

We have all been a party to the lie. We are all guilty of using the *us-and-them* rationalisation as an excuse to fail or, even worse, as a reason not to try at all. We have lied to ourselves and to each other. And we have employed these fibs because sometimes it is easier to hide than it is to face our fears and take our place at the top table.

Three things I know to be true:

1. **There is no us and them.**
2. **We are all ordinary.**
3. **(A paradox) We are all extraordinary.**

Each of us is an incredibly complex organism that has the ability, if used properly, to build worlds for ourselves and for others. That is what makes us ordinary. We all have the same equipment. Not just a few, not the minority, but everyone on the planet. And what makes us extraordinary is the fact that the brain, that five pounds of grey matter swimming in your skull, contains billions of cells, each one of them capable of growing to demand. There is not a computer on the planet that can even nearly match it.

We are therefore very valuable. In monetary terms, priceless. To recreate just your left eye would cost an estimated fifty million dollars (and science is not yet able to do this). How much it would cost to recreate the human brain is beyond imagining. We are so valuable it does not bear thinking about. Not *us*, or *them*; everyone! We are all born with this gift and each of us

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has the ability to not only utilise this gargantuan computer, but also to grow it. It has no limitations. You have no limitations.

Given this fact let me ask you a question, you billion dollar man or woman: what are you using your brain for? Are you growing it by feeding it with first rate information, or are you sitting at home watching the soaps, bemoaning your existence and pretending that you are destined for no more? What is out there for one is out there for all. If the people you look up to, your idols, your heroes, are living their dreams, then why not you? Because they are different? Because they have the gift?

Let me share with you something very interesting. When I was at the 2004 BAFTA awards, I was surrounded by A-list celebrities. If you closed your eyes and threw a dart in any direction you would have hit a globally recognised celebrity. People who, only the week before, I had paid money to see at the cinema were now sitting next to me at the Odeon, Leicester Square, waiting nervously to see if their latest film or their recent role had won them the prestigious British Academy of Film and Television Arts award. What was glaringly obvious to me was the fact that, like the rest of us, they were all very ordinary. Some were aesthetically beautiful and most were undoubtedly talented, but all of them without exception were ordinary people, the same as you and me. They were doing, had done and were about to do nothing that could not be done by you or me, providing we are prepared to dedicate our lives to it. I was hugely encouraged by their achievements, but more than anything else I was inspired by their ordinariness.

There is a feeling in society that to become highly successful is somehow a birthright and not an attainable goal for mere mortals, as though winners are whisked to superstardom straight from another planet.

I had the pleasure of spending some time with Anthony Minghella after the award ceremony. His latest film, *Cold Mountain*, an epic American Civil War movie starring such luminaries as Nicole Kidman, Jude Law, Renée Zellweger and Ray Winstone and costing tens of millions to make, had picked up a glut of awards. What I didn't know was that Anthony started out his career working on a small but popular British TV show for children called *Grange Hill*. Somehow you imagine that Anthony had been magically transported straight to Hollywood, spirited there by the talent angels. What inspired me was the fact that he, like the rest of us, was once an unknown and aspiring writer-director looking for his first big break. He told me that after *Grange Hill* he went on to work on another popular British TV drama called *Inspector Morse*. The TV bosses were so pleased with his work on the show that they offered him the chance to do anything (within reason) that he wanted to do. A beautiful and very successful TV film called *Truly Madly Deeply* followed. Suddenly he had the Hollywood big-wigs chasing after him and some of the

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biggest stars in the world begging for the chance to work on one of his films.

He started somewhere small, he placed his talent under the supervision of more experienced players, he went through exactly the same periods of massive self-doubt that we all encounter, before ending up on the world stage. I was in the company of what I would once have called *one of them*, but realised very quickly that he was *one of us*. As we were talking, a man that I did not recognise walked past and kissed Anthony on the cheek. 'My brother,' Anthony said. Then his mum and dad walked past and smiled. His whole family was there. It was obvious that, to them, he was just their brother and son and whilst they were clearly proud of him they never, I am sure, thought him an untouchable superstar born to the role. He was where he was because he had shape shifted to his position as a Hollywood director.

Everyone I saw that night – from Jodie Kidd to Patrick Stewart to Harvey Weinstein – all were ordinary. I knew it and they knew it. You should know it too, because what they have, who they are and where they are is wholly available to anyone who has the wherewithal and courage to wake up and take action.

There is no us and them. We are all the same. You know this anyway, you just needed reminding. How many

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times have you looked at those seemingly above you in high positions, whether it be at work, in a magazine or on the telly, and secretly thought *I could do that, and better?* It is in these moments, when the portal to your dreams opens fleetingly, that you see your real potential. The only difference between us and them is that they have firmly seized the opportunity whereas the majority haven't – not yet. But you can and, God willing, you will.

Success is a choice, not a lottery.

But you must not make the mistake that I made early in my life, which was to believe that you can get professional results on recreational time. What you put in is what you get out; it is no use indulging your dream for a few hours a week and then expecting the moguls to beat down your door with offers of a six-figure advance and a first-class lifestyle. You'd have more success playing the bingo.

Amateurs work part-time, professionals make it a vocation, they do not see it as a job at all – it is the very air that they breathe.



Chapter One

What is Shape Shifting?

Shape shifting is a tried and tested method of personal transformation. It encourages and nurtures excellence in any chosen field through consistent practice. It employs under-the-bonnet visualisation (which we will look at in a later chapter) as its core, and peer exposure as its sustenance. It has worked for me and I trust without question that it can work for you and for anyone else.

Most people fail because they simply choose not to succeed. Often that choice is unconscious and the decision fraught with undefined fear.

We all have the ability to change who we are for who we would dearly love to become. This is no idle boast;

WHAT IS SHAPE SHIFTING?

I have used and perfected this methodology over a number of years. It is what has enabled me to enjoy a charmed life. I spend my mornings writing in my pyjamas and slippers with fresh cups of honey-sweetened tea ever on supply. My afternoons are dedicated to café-trekking with my wife.

I love my life.

It wasn't always that way. Like many people, I once hated the hard graft of my days, working in a job I despised, living a life that brought me little pleasure. It was only the concept of shape shifting, and my ability to adopt it, that enabled me to escape the slavish bonds of societal expectation and live a life more befitting of my wants. A life that I chose to live as opposed to a hand-me-down nine-to-five existence that I neither wanted nor took particular delight in. The process of shape shifting belongs to us all. Since man first walked the Earth, he has transformed himself in the forge that necessity and desire cast. This transformation, however, has usually been unconscious. What I intend to do within the pages of this book is draw the unconscious process into consciousness, bring it into the light so that its practice and perfection can be better understood and more readily employed.

Anyone with a sure desire for change and a strong work ethic will have the opportunity to realise the very best of their imaginings.

I ask not that you take my word for it, only that you read the book, assess the data, put it to the test and make up your own mind.

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In other words; be the proof.

Let me, within the pages of this book and via living, breathing examples, help to quieten your doubts. I am, after all, not the only one who has practised, or knows of, this transformational alchemy. Though I suspect you will not need to look outside your own life or intuition for conclusive proof that shape shifting is an attainable reality.

You may view these examples of success as *natural* or *gifted*. It would be tempting to believe that the triumphant are somehow predestined for victory. Yet all of these people were *no one* before they became *someone*. All had their abilities and aspirations trounced and doubted by the fickle and the false before they were finally vindicated. Everyone was once aspiring, insecure, and unknown.

What I have discovered is that anyone with average ability and a strong desire can become a top amateur in any chosen field if they invest 3,000 hours into its study and practice. That amounts to one hour a day, six days a week for ten years. If the same 'average' person wanted to become a world beater they would need to invest 10,000 hours, which is the same weekly commitment extended over thirty years. Of course, if you were to increase your investment your return would be greater and the time to fruition proportionately shorter. An artist who decides to turn professional and dedicate his every waking hour to the easel will create a *quickenning* (more on that later) and can arrive on the world stage in a fraction of the time.