



Live Your Dreams

Transcripts – Module 1 – Get Your Bearings



Welcome to Week 1 of Live Your Dreams. Over the course of the next seven weeks, or the next seven modules, you're going to learn how to live the life you've always wanted to live. Perhaps everything has been going well but there are some changes you want to make. You have some dreams of how you'd like to live or changes you'd like to make, maybe it's something in career or something personal, and you've always used different excuses, like I'm too old, or I'm too young, or I'm too short or tall or whatever it is.

Congratulations for taking this step, because by participating in this course, you have taken that very first step on living your dreams. Throughout the next seven modules, we're going to walk through, in a methodical way, a method that you can use, that you can use for anything in your life. You can apply it no matter if it's big or small, and you can use this to live your dreams. And this is sustainable too. It's something that...really you will have the tools that you need. All you need to do is use them.

Let's get going on Live Your Dreams.

My name is Liz Jansen. I'm a writer, author, speaker, facilitator, I LOVE to travel and that's one of the reasons why I'm so interested in living my dream. It hasn't always been a dream but it is now, and it's a dream that I'm working to fulfill.

I'm the author of Women, Motorcycles and the Road to Empowerment which is about self-discovery and adventure and what we can do when find our strengths, when we push our limits and find out what we're really made of, and then how we can use that in the rest of our life.

My tag line is Where the Road Meets Spirit because, since I spend so much time on the road, and the road can be either literal or metaphoric, that's where I get my creativity and my inspiration, where I have the best experiences, meet people and it's really what inspires me. It enables me to do my work.

I want to be clear on what our roles are: What my role is and what your role is. I'm going to spend a fair amount of time – this first module is really to set the stage and to get you and me prepared to work through the rest of this with you. So it's really important to have a clear guideline, a clear foundation from which to work.

For me, my role is as a facilitator. I'm bringing you expertise, I'm bringing you guidance, I'm going to draw from symbolism, a lot from motorcycles, good chance that you are a motorcycle rider or know of one, you don't need to be

certainly to understand the principles, but we're going to draw from that a lot of times. It's very visual which makes it easier to learn.

I'm also a co-creator, which means that you are also a co-creator. There are two of us here. My role is for you to create the space for you to do the work, so I'm providing the guidance, the space, and helping you focus and gain clarity and create the structure that will help you most. So I'm more like a guide; a tour guide. A tour guide of a different sort. We'll also celebrate your success together as we go through this.

Your role is also as a co-creator and you are going to be providing the dream, this is your dream, your life, you're living your purpose – you're bringing this to this project. So you're going to be drawing from that, you're going to be actively pursuing your own dream. Your role is also to ask for help when you need it. I'm here. I'm available for you and that's what I want to do. I want to see you living your dream. And also we'll celebrate success together.

A dream without action is not going to go anywhere. So it's fine to dream. It's great to dream – that's how it starts. It's not going to come to fruition though by just dreaming it into being. The dream requires action as well.

I'm following a 5-step model that I use for my coaching. Because it's so important to make sure that you get your bearings and get the proper foundation, think about a building that's on a shaky foundation. It's not going to be very stable or secure. We want to make sure that the foundation on which you're building is solid. We're going to be spending more time on that then because Weeks 1-3 is going to be geared all towards getting your bearings on where you are now. Then you can build on top of that. We'll talk about articulating what your dream is, defining where you are right now, and there are lots of exercises. We'll talk about that more in a couple of minutes.

The next step is to commit and prepare. At some point you have to say, "Yes, I'm going to do this." Once you do that, you're going to start preparing for what lies ahead, and we'll show you how to do that.

The next one is to plan your route. You know that if you're going to go somewhere you need some sort of a plan to get you from Point A to Point B and that's what we'll be talking about in that step. So it will be creating Action Plans and some alternative routes, because you know, just like in life, just like on the road, there is construction sometimes and detours, so we have to have some alternates available sometimes.

The last step is to plan for sustainability and growth. It's fine to have all these steps before us but if we don't have a plan to keep that alive and to keep that vibrant, it's going to peter out. You want to live your dream. You want to live life

to the fullest you can and we're going to do everything together to make sure that happens.

In this module, we're going to be talking about Getting Your Bearings – that's one of the first steps, and spending a lot of time talking about your values, because that's what really comes into play here. Everything is built on the values that you have. It's important then, that you're clear on what those values are. Once you've done that, we're going to assess where you are right now. From where you're standing, what is the situation? What's the reality of the situation? And then we'll also talk about where do you want to go? What is that dream that you have? So we'll have the values, we'll establish the values, and this is going to be some work that you do during the week, and then--establish two points – where you are now and where you want to be. That's the whole gist of this week, this module on getting your bearings.

Let's think about when you go on a motorcycle trip, or any trip for that matter. You do need to know where you are, right? Because how are you going to plan your trip if you don't know where you are, or where you're going. In order for it to be an enjoyable trip, and one that you find really worthwhile, you may want to be stopping at places of interest, you want to take the kind of roads that appeal to you, maybe you want to avoid the Interstates and stay on back roads. Maybe you want to avoid gravel. Maybe you want to choose gravel. Maybe you like the mountains. Maybe you like the plains. Maybe you want to visit historic sites. Whatever it is, know what's important to you, and that helps you plan a trip that you're on.

Likewise it helps you live your dream. You know where you are--you will know where you are, you know where you're going and you can see that. In between though, you've got all kinds of options on how you get there. You don't necessarily want to have every step planned in detail, but you will have a plan, even if it's to have no plan and it's just to wander and follow the sun and let the wind take you where it will. How you get there is up to you. Knowing that you have a starting point and an end point though, gives it that structure you need to be able to define the action steps that you need in between to get to where you're going.

Values

So what is a value? For the purpose of this exercise we're going to define it as the things you believe in. Values are things you believe in that are important to the way you live and work. Values are usually fairly stable over time, they do change though as your life situation changes. When you are young, your values are different than when you are older. When you're starting a family your values are different. They're more family centered. Maybe you have children and it's very important for you to be there for them and to spend time with your family. And maybe you value your career somewhat less at that point. As that situation

changes, your values shift. Once your children no longer need you as much, your values shift and so they change over time.

When your actions, the way you live your life is consistent with what your values are, you feel good. You feel at peace with yourself. It doesn't mean that there aren't challenges, but it feels right. You feel good.

When there's a mismatch, you feel uneasy. It's stressful and you feel anxious. You know that you're doing something that is not consistent with your values, and you want to, usually want to make a change as a result of that.

A few years ago, quite a few years ago now, I had a situation where I was working and I was working in the Human Resources department and there was a situation that had come up, and I already knew that I was probably facing some changes. I knew that it was time for a change for me, that this role was not right for me any longer. It had served its purpose and it was time for me to think about something else. I wasn't ready to call it quits yet. This situation arose and there was something that happened in one of the offices where I was working, and it resulted in some people being disciplined for actions that they took. I had no problem with that because it was consistent with the company policy. However, it happened again a couple of months later, a very similar situation, only this time it was in a different department and the situation was going to be handled very differently because of the people that were involved. That didn't sit well with me because it wasn't consistent with my values. It wasn't being true to my values. That was a turning point for me. That was something that was very hard for me to deal with, and it wasn't long after that that I left. It was coming as it was, that was just something – that was something where...usually if values in the organization are changing and they're not consistent with yours, that's one of the most common reasons for people leaving their job or for wanting a change.

Knowing what your values are can help you answer questions, when you're making a choice and deciding between a couple of things you want to do, it's really helpful to think about, "What are my values?" "What are my most important values?" When you're thinking about things such as, "What career should I choose?", "Should I start something new?" "Our family has always done this. We've had a family owned business and they expect me to take over the business." "I want to start something new though." Go back to your values and look at what they are.

You can use it for relationships. "Is this relationship right for me?" "Is this person right for me?" "Do we have values that are consistent?" "Is that a common ground for us?" If the values are not consistent, it's like that mismatch I told you about. Whether that's in a relationship or whether that's in a work relationship or a work situation, you're going to feel that discord and you're going to want to make a change. That's why they're really important.

As I mentioned most people initiate a change in life situation because of a change in values-- a shift in values, which can happen over time. As I mentioned before, values can shift as your life situation shifts. If that's different with two people or two situations, if my situation is changing and my work situation is not, that's where you can see the paths are diverging and it can come to a point where you have to make a decision.

Sometimes it's a matter of gaining clarity on what the values are, and if you really get down to it, it's not a mismatch at all, it's just that we weren't clear on what those things were. So some of life's decisions are really about gaining clarity and determining what you value the most. Where there's a lot of options that seem reasonable and optionable, then it's reassuring to know you can rely on your values and they're a strong guiding force to point you in the right direction.

One of the exercises that you've got for this week is on identifying your values. You're going to spend a fair amount of time on that. Before you start that, you want to be in a place where you're quiet, centered and free of distractions. I've included a visualization exercise, which you can use --you can use that at any time and it's really helpful to gain that grounding and to prepare yourself for some inner work and thinking and getting clarity.

Find yourself a quiet spot and then you're going to start identifying your values. You want to think about some situations and that's why you want to be in a place you're quiet and free of all distractions; as free from mental clutter as possible. Because I want you to think about a number of different situations. This will help you define your values.

Think about a time you were the happiest. This is all on your handouts so you don't need to write this down. What were you doing? What was the situation? Describe it in a few words. Who were you with? What were they doing? Were you alone? Write those down.

Then identify the times that you were the proudest, or you had made an accomplishment and you were pleased with yourself. You felt really satisfied. What were you doing during that time? What was the situation? Who were you with? Same thing. Describe it the situation.

Describe the times that you felt the most fulfilled; that you felt the most at peace with yourself. Who was there? What was the circumstance? How long ago was it? Were there family around? Where were friends around? Think about those situations.

I also want you to think about some situations where you felt not so good. So go back and think about a situation where you felt uncomfortable or uneasy. You were dissatisfied. weren't feeling well. What was going on there? Had someone else done something that you weren't pleased with? Think about that situation.

The last one is to think about a situation where your values were being compromised. What was that? What was the situation? Describe it a bit more. Describe the people around it. What were the feelings? What were the values you had that you felt were being compromised?

You're going to need some time to do that and some work, but it's important to do. Remember I said this was the baseline upon which we're building and getting started here. Think about these situations and as you do, think about, because you're looking at times that you felt the best, the happiest, the most fulfilled, and what's the common theme in those situations? What are the messages that people keep telling you? This will help you when you think about the dream that you have.

When I had left that job, I didn't really know what I was going to do. I was working with an executive coach at the time and this is exactly the process that I went through. I knew that work was not for me anymore. I didn't know what was for me anymore. I did know that I had values, I hadn't taken much time to think about them. So she had me go through and write down what my values were. So although I didn't know what I was going to be doing next, I knew that it had to have certain characteristics that fit within my values. I had a lot of time to think about it because I was going on a two month trip and that gives you time to process your thoughts. All along the way, when I said [before] that people say things to you, they give you words and if you are open and listening you will hear the words that keep coming back. The words that come back to me on this trip were "brave", and "courageous." People thought I was brave and courageous for what I was doing, and I didn't think anything of that at the time, because I really, it was not really, ok it was out of the ordinary, I guess I had left my job and I had left my marriage about eight months before that, so I was really a free spirit at 48 years old and so I suppose that was brave and courageous in many people's eyes. To me though, if I had not made those steps, it would have been way worse for me. I couldn't imagine staying in that position because I was just living inside of a shadow of myself. It wasn't so much a matter of being brave and courageous as looking for survival and taking the steps that I needed for that.

Along the way, probably about five weeks into this two month trip, I was in San Francisco with some friends, we were sitting at an outdoor patio, we were chatting, it was the last night there, these were very close friends that I had worked with actually, and we struck up a conversation with the people at the next table. And when they heard what I was doing, I got those same words again. "Aren't you brave and courageous!" And I went, "Oh my goodness, if I hear that one more time, I don't know what I'm going to do because this is not anything brave and courageous. It's not doing anything where I feel like I'm pushing my comfort zone. Then the woman said something to me that stayed with me to this day and shaped the next part of my life. She said "If that many people are telling you something, you should be listening."

That's really when the penny dropped and I said "Right! It's not—they think it's brave and courageous. What they're really doing is looking through their own eyes at what I'm doing and wishing that they could do something, maybe they don't want to go on a motorcycle ride around the country, but maybe they want to do something else. And they're voicing that as they say, "You're brave and courageous." They would really like to have the courage and strength to do those things.

That's when I knew that the next role I would do would be something around motorcycles, and it really started out with women and motorcycles and motorcycle tours, and all designed to facilitate that experience. Not so much the travel experience but the inner experience and the pushing your comfort zone. And that's really how I started the next phase of my life.

Look at the ways that you're spending your time, your spare time. What do you enjoy doing – and look for the common ground in all of this.

When you go through these exercises and write things down, you may not see it at first. I'm happy to look at those and work with you on those things and find the common ground; to see what you may not be seeing. That's something I'm really good at, so I'm happy to help you with that.

So look for the common ground, look for the messages people keep telling you, look around you and see what's gathered around. What's important to you in your office? In your home? What are the things you see when you look around? And then, write these things down. You're looking for the similarities, the underlying themes, the common words that people are using. That's all in Step 1. So Step 1's pretty meaty. There's a lot of work to do there.

The next thing you're going to do is identify and prioritize your top ten values. "Where do I start?" you ask me. You start with the list I've provided you. There are a lot of values on that list. Go through them without thinking and just use your first impression and mark off all the values that are important to you. Try and narrow it down to ten. You'll see that some of them have common themes and you may be able to group a number of them together under one theme. There may be some that aren't there that you feel are important to you that you would like to add to the list. Go ahead and do that.

You want to come up with a list of ten values. Approximately ten values. There might be one or two more or less, but you want to come up with this list and that's what you're going to be working with. Now once you have this list, the next step is to rank them. This is important because you will be faced with situations that have equally, not necessarily equally appealing, but you're going to be faced with choices, where you could do either one of them. The way you're going to tell which one is the best for you, is to look at your values and which situation

satisfies the highest value that you have and that's the one that's going to be most satisfying to you.

As you go through these ten, you're going to rank them. Start with two. Just pick two and which is more important, number one or number two, and then put them in order. Then add another one in, and rank them accordingly. That's the easiest way to do it.

Once you've done that, you're going to have a list and look at it and ask, "Does this feel right to me if I look at this priority of values?" If it doesn't, you can make some shifts around and just look at it, juggle it around until you get it right. It's not going to be exact and don't agonize over it, but get it in the approximate order that seems important to you.

Then you're going to reaffirm these values. As I'm talking, that's what I'm explaining to you. You're going to make sure that these are the most important, that you haven't left something obvious out, because these are going to be what you're working with.

This is what you're going to base really the rest of this course on. We'll keep coming back to these values and when you think about what your dream is, and working at putting that dream into action, you're going to keep coming back to these values and say, "Is what I'm doing consistent with the values that I have?" and that's going to be your yardstick and guide you along the way.

So that's Part One- the Values. That's a lot of work, and that's what you're going to be spending a lot of time on during the week.

Part III

The next part is to identify what your dream is. You may already know what it is. You may not know what it is. When I was leaving on that trip, I did not know what I was going to be doing. I knew what some of my values were. Interestingly enough, I had written down one of the things, it's not really a value, but I wrote down that I wanted to be able to, I thought it would be really cool to work outside at something. I couldn't think of anything that at 48, I would be qualified for. 49 I guess I was at the time. I thought, I can't be a camp counselor, I'm not going to work in the forestry service or an outdoor guide, those things don't appeal to me. I have no idea what it was, and I sort of brushed it off. Last summer I was riding across the plains and all of a sudden, ten years later, it dawned on me that I was living that dream, because I was outside. I live outside so much, because I'm on my motorcycle. And I write, I do other things online, and part of that is so I can be mobile. So I do. I am outside a lot and it didn't occur to me until last year that I was actually living that dream. I had put the intention out, I had put steps into action, and here it was come to fruition.

As I mentioned before, you're planning a journey. You need to know where you're going. You want to know where the road is going to go, at least the ultimate destination. We're starting with a blank map. You can go anywhere from where you are. Where you're standing you're looking ahead. You're looking at your future. Lots has happened in your past. Some of it good, some of it not so good. Some of it may have left its marks on you. We're interested in the past only from the perspective that we want to look at thoughts and behaviors that may have held us back, repeating patterns that we use, we want to be able to identify those so we can correct them looking forward, we also want to be able to use the lessons from the past, which happened for a reason, which may or may not be clear, we want to be able to use those to build our future. We're not going to agonize over our past or rehash it. We're going to take those lessons from the past and use them as fertilizer, kind of like mulch to grow our future into the dream we want it to be.

When you're thinking about your dream and what you're feeling, what it is that you want, be as specific as possible. Instead of having vague comments, vague stirrings, restlessness, yearning – like "I want to go away for two weeks." Or "I really want a change." That's not really specific and that's not going to get you where you want to go. So be specific. As crystal clear as you can be. Instead of saying, "I want to go away for two weeks." Say, "I want to go away for two weeks in July, camping, solo, be in a different place every night, visit National Parks, whatever it is that appeals to you, as specifically as you can be. That's how you're going to have the most success in getting to your dream.

Or, you can say, "I want to start my own business as a marketing consultant." Or as a business consultant. Whatever it is. But be as specific as possible with this. Talk about who's going to be involved, what the specifics are, when do you want to do it. Before I left that job, my coach and I worked together, and I was hesitating because this was a big step. Even though I knew it was right, it was still a big step for me and I needed a date to work with. She made me write it down. I had to write down a date. And I still remember that date – August 1, 2003 and that was the day I walked out the door. I like to think of it as the date I walked out the door and into a brand new life, full of open possibilities; it was like being on a blank slate.

Looking at this map, you see all the push pins that are in there, if that's the map of your dream, of where you want to be, you can see that this is going to be pretty hard to navigate and it's really not going to be very clear. If you're going to get to your destination following this, that's going to be pretty lucky. So you want to be as crystal clear as possible. Like I said, in between there is going to be all kinds of options for you, but to start, you want to know where you are, and what your dream is. Right now we're working on what your dream is and why you want to do it. What is it about it that you want? Maybe you don't know. You just know that it's something you've always wanted to do and your intuition is guiding you. Your intuition is always right. We don't always listen to our intuition or we say,

"you're kidding me. You can't be serious." It's always right and it always guides you in the direction that's best for you.

If it's still vague, here are some things you can do to clarify your vision. If you could do anything, anything, what would it be? Because you CAN do anything. Those voices in your head that tell you that you can't are those voices from the past. We've left them in the past. Right now from where you are, you can do whatever you want to do. What keeps coming back to you? What are the repeating patterns? Maybe it's something that you gave up to start a career or you put something else aside. Maybe you always wanted to be an artist and it's still something you really want to do and you were busy with your career in another area and this has come back to you. Maybe you want to be a writer. Maybe you want to start out on something completely new. What are your interests? What do you like to do? Again, write all these things down and take the time. Use the Visualization Exercise, and I'll give you some more tips in a couple of minutes.

Make sure you're moving towards something too. When I was changing my career path, I walked towards something, I walked towards something. It wasn't that I wasn't leaving something. I wasn't running away from something. I wasn't changing because it wasn't right for me, I was changing because I wanted to go to something different. That's an important delineation. If you're running away from somewhere, it's like if you're running away from a relationship because it's not right and rather than addressing it you just leave, that doesn't work out well because you haven't learned the lessons from it and you don't know why you're leaving, or maybe you do but it's more important to be able to be looking towards something, and that's going to strengthen the structure you're working in.

I talked about some resources already and some things that you can do, when you're thinking about, "What can I do?" Meditate. You want to tap into your inner wisdom. It's there. All your strengths are there, whether you know it or not. You have to get out from behind that. That's the big thing. The walls that you've built around it, the stories that you've told yourself about who you are and what you're capable of doing, so you need to spend time with that and these are a number of ways that you can do it.

You can meditate in whatever way works best for you, you can journal and write these things down. Over a period of time, see what the themes are that come back to you. There are visioning exercises, which I've given you. Write freeform for 15 minutes. In the Artist's Way, by Julia Cameron, I used this, this is a great book that you might want to get. She advocates taking however much time, I used 15 minutes when I do this, I did it for quite a while on a regular basis, every day, every morning get up and write. Freeform write. Don't stop, don't edit yourself. Keep your pen moving. Don't let it stop and don't let it cross out anything. Just keep going. Usually by the end of 15 minutes, and that for me was three pages of writing, at the end of that time I had a major insight that was going

to help me with that day or help me solve a problem that I was looking at. That's a great way of doing it. I couldn't read the writing afterwards. I had to make sure that I made some legible notes straight away. It's a great way though of getting the thoughts out onto paper. Have dedicated quiet time every day, even if it's only 20 minutes or so.

And then, write down what your dreams are. Write them down. If you have more than one, then that's OK too. Anything works. Don't judge yourself. Think about what works best for you at what you want to do. Remember this is your life, your dream and you're here to fulfill your purpose. No one here is charged with the responsibility that you have or the life road that you have. It's important that you live it then and realize what your dream is.

These are prohibited words, I call them. Could, should, would, if only, I can't, I hope, I'll try. No. I don't want to see those words in anything that you've written. You're going to be putting action into your dreams and we're going to be using action words. This is a really liberating exercise to do because you get those down, and especially once you write them on paper it's reinforcing. It's reinforcing to your subconscious that, "Yes! This is really happening to me. I'm going to live my dreams!" It's a great feeling.

Part III: Confirm your current location

The last part of this, now that we know where we want to go to, or we have an idea anyways, is to confirm where you are now. You want to write down where you are now, as it pertains to your dream. If you have said, "I want to be an artist. I want to paint. I want to paint beautiful pictures." Write down where you are as it pertains to that. Include only the facts, again – no judgment, no opinions, no assumptions. Facts could be something like, "I went to art college" or "I've gone to art college earlier, 20 years ago." "I have continued painting on a part time basis." "I've taken classes in painting." "I've read a lot of (art) books and love to go to art galleries." Those kind of things, but you want to facts, and only the facts. I will help you with this. This is hard to do – it can be. It's hard to get the judgment out of it.

We say things to ourselves like, "I have no money." Well you have NO money? Really? None? Or I have NEVER been interested in something. When you use any of those words like never, or always, or none, question yourself. Really? Is it really that extreme? Keep those words out. That's why it's important to have the facts in here.

Pertinent facts could have to do with education that you've got relative to what your dream is, the experience that you have to date, maybe you have none, you want to start. This is something brand new that you are starting. Finances. Are you going to need to go to school. Where are you from a financial standpoint, do you have some savings you can use, do you have another means of keeping

support, whatever those things are. What about relationships in your life? Is this going to present a conflict or not, and what does that mean? You may have volunteer experience. Think outside of just your work experience because just because you're not getting paid for it, doesn't mean you're not using marketable skills that you have. What are your interests that you have? Look at all of those things. Life is a whole, complete package. We tend to compartmentalize it into these boxes because sometimes it's easier for us to think and feel that way. Look at your life as a holistic thing, look at your experiences—forget about whether you're getting paid or not or who's involved or not, look for the common themes and look for the ways you can take those and build on those to live your dream.

Homework

Now I mentioned that there was homework and there is homework. I want you to articulate your dream and I want you to identify where you are right now. Before you do that, you're going to need to identify and define what your values are, and that's included with the materials from this session.

Go through the values section first, and then you can set it aside, because we're going to refer back to that later. That's the foundation on which everything else is built.

Then articulate your dream as I've described to you.

Then identify where you are as we've just gone through.

Write these down. You don't have to send me the values if you don't want to but I will be asking you about them anyways. You will be the one that decides if what you're deciding to do with your dream is consistent with your values. Get this to me by Monday at 8:00 pm ET and I'll have it back to you before the next class.

Any questions that you have I'd be happy to answer either by email or we can set up a phone conversation. Thank you very much and I look forward to building this dream together with you.