



CHOICE POINT

The Align Your Purpose Program

STEP NINE: DESTINY

EVERY PATTERN HAS ITS DESTINY;
CHOOSE THE ONE YOU WANT



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IN THIS LESSON:

- Destiny = Destination
- How to See the Pattern You're Already In
- Life Story Arch Exercise

“ *It's choice—not chance—that determines your destiny.* ”
Jean Nidetch

Destiny. What a loaded word... It calls forth questions of free will as well as personal worth and our ability to discover and live out our purpose in life. Does each of us even have a purpose and what does purpose look like?

And so we find ourselves at the threshold between understanding your world and using the information you receive to begin fulfilling and living your purpose. In some ways, you can say that your personal purpose and ability to fulfill it will largely be determined by the destiny you choose.

Therefore, here in Lesson 9, we are going to look at how destiny is not something fixed in the stars, but rather a fixed point along the flow of a pattern.

You can choose your destiny by choosing the pattern that gets you there, and aligning your purpose with its larger forces.

The first step is to use the signs you see to determine the current pattern you're in, as well as the destination it has brought you to so far. Then, if that destination is different from the destiny you prefer, you can begin looking for signs of new and different patterns that better fit your desires. This is how you choose a new destiny.

In future lessons we'll focus on the steps to align with a new pattern via your self-defined purpose. But for now, let's break down these steps to destiny in a bit more detail...



DESTINY = DESTINATION

When we see that destiny is simply a destination in the current of a particular pattern, we see how we can both possess free will and, at the same time, be carried along by forces greater than us—just as a boat can navigate a river and still get swept into strong currents or beached upon the shoals.

You can choose to fight against the current of any pattern, which most people unconsciously do... or you can choose to effortlessly flow on the current of a pattern that will bring you to precisely where you aim to go.

We'll deal in the second half of this course with how to choose where you aim to go, so here let's talk about how to know what pattern you're currently in and what destiny it leads to...

PERSONAL PATTERNS VS. LARGER PATTERNS

We all have personal patterns that are worth considering here, such as behavioral patterns, thought patterns, belief patterns and even emotional patterns or habits. I liken these to the crew upon your ship with you as their Captain.

Just like a ship's crew, your personal patterns determine whether the ship itself (your life) is properly run, well kept, able to weather storms and repair afterwards. Every ship needs a solid crew, however when you pit a boat and its crew against a storm or a the strong rapids of a river... there is never any question as to which force is larger and who is in charge.

So yes, your personal patterns are important to identify and change, however changing only your personal patterns without accounting for the larger social or global patterns you're traveling in will only provide limited benefit.

You'll have an exceptional crew and a sturdy boat, but the strong underlying currents of the patterns you're in will still nearly always win out. You might not capsize over a waterfall... but for all your effort you might only manage to hold your position in the flow. As U2 so eloquently put it, you'll be "running to stand still."

So for our purposes here, let's look at how to identify those big patterns – the rivers upon which you ride, rather than the crew upon your ship.





HOW TO SEE THE PATTERN YOU'RE ALREADY IN:

I like to use the analogy of genre novels for figuring out my life's pattern so far, and to then decide what pattern I'd prefer. This method keeps us in a state of amusement (the importance of which we discussed in the previous lesson) and helps us maintain some neutrality when taking such an honest look at where we are in our lives and the currents we rode to arrive here.

For starters it helps us see our life as a story arch. Just as certain events happen to a protagonist along his journey so that he can transform into the hero he must be at the end... so too do we often endure events that sometimes only make sense in light of the transformation they are meant to spark for us.

Likewise, when we look forward into our future and the destiny we desire, we can put the author's thinking cap on to see which pattern of events would most likely deliver us to where we want to go.

Step One. Identify Your Past Primary Area of Focus

So to begin, ask yourself what area of your life has taken the most precedence for you during the past 5 or 10 years. This won't necessarily be the area of life you most enjoy or wish to focus on, but rather the one that perhaps took over whether you wanted it to or not.

For some, that area is family and household. If an illness or health challenge arose... or perhaps you maintained enormous dedication to your health goals, then body and health would have been your Primary Area of Focus.

Go ahead and write down the following on a sheet of paper, or in the notes section of this lesson:

"My primary area of focus over the past 5 years (or 10 years if you prefer) has been..."

And finish the sentence, perhaps with one of these common areas:

- Career and Money (Monetary Success)
- Body and Health
- Family and Household
- Self and Spiritual Development
- Love and Romance
- Purpose and Pioneering (Personal Success)

As an example, if I were to do this exercise right now, I would tell you that over the past 5 years my desired focus was a blend of Spiritual Development and Love and Romance. Yet in reality my Career and Money took over the majority of my time, energy and experience and love and romance were completely absent from my life.

Therefore, my answer to this first question would be: My primary area of focus over the past 5 years has been Career & Money, alongside Spiritual Development in an even 50/50 split.

If you too find that two areas shared your focus, go ahead and give each a percentage. Again, this is not what you wanted to focus on, but rather what you saw actually filled the majority of your time, effort and daily experience. Please don't pick any more than two shared focuses.

Step Two. Define Your Recent Life's Genre

Now that we know what your area of focus was during the past several years, let's relate that to a story genre so that we can benefit from the context and information we are all familiar with.

The idea here is that you want your life to reflect the kind of story you want to experience.

Yet most of us find through this exercise that though we always wanted to live a Western Romance story (living our purpose in a pioneering way, while also experience romance and passion)... we ended up, for example, living a Financial Thriller story (we are in a constant state of tension and stress where our focus on money and career—and all that can or has gone wrong—wreaks havoc on the other areas of our life).

Don't worry if you find that you're living a story arch you don't prefer or enjoy, as we will tackle that in the next portion of this exercise.

The key now is to be honest with ourselves about the kind of life story we've been living so far (i.e. the larger patterns we've been aligning with) so that we can leap into a new pattern and life story we'll enjoy—that will deliver us to our happy ending.

So go ahead and write down the story genre your past life has represented so far... has it been a Tragic Romance... or a Political Action Adventure? A Romantic Comedy or a Noir Drama?

If you find it difficult to define your recent life's genre, consider that of course most of our lives are not nearly as dramatic as a novel or movie. Instead of focusing on what tends to happen to a character in a story genre, explore instead how the character feels within such a genre story.

What is her lived experience? Is she constantly stressed and tense and is that focus on her love life, her family, her reputation due to cultural or family politics... or due to financial issues? Is her mood often dark or does she find the silver lining or the humor in her situation? What is the overall tone of the story?

These musings should help you decide the genre story your life has reflected these past several years.

Step Three. Identify Your Desired Destiny For Your Next Story

Now that you know the story you've been living so far, the next step is to author your future story with intention and conscious awareness. To do this, you want to first determine what closing scene you want your new story to deliver you to: the Happy Ending you want to experience.

That Happy Ending is your Destiny when you choose to align yourself with the new story pattern.

For example, to continue from Step One I shared that my desired focus in life had been Love and Romance, but that Career and Money had trumped that desire in reality. I had been living a wonderful and transformative Literary Fiction Parable, similar to Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* or Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*, in terms of my spiritual experience and its alignment with my career experience and financial success.

I had achieved and discovered so much: about the world and about myself. Yet there was no love. No romance.

What I appreciate so much about this exercise is that I can see how fantastic my past life's story arch had been, while also accepting that it had not delivered me to the Destiny I'd desired.

Seeing the larger story arch is to see life through the larger pattern. There need not be judgment or blame here, because we are simply heroes of a different tale that perhaps got stuck in the wrong story.

Now we can step over into a new story arch and finally seize the destiny we've desired and can now consciously choose.

So what is your desired destiny now? What will your Happy Ending be in the next 12 months or few years? Write it down and be as brief or as detailed as you like. You could even write the entire final chapter, scene for scene, and visualize all the sights, sounds, experiences and textures of your new destiny and the life it will deliver you to!

Oh and don't forget to describe how this Happy Ending and new destiny feel to you. Describe the emotions you want to feel on a consistent basis. Remember in Step 6 when we discussed the 7 Human Needs? What top two needs are being fulfilled for you by this new destiny?

When you're done, also identify the story genre you want to align with that will get you to that destiny. Do you want to live a Romantic Comedy or a Fantasy Epic? Again, consider how heroes in such stories feel... the transformations they will endure... the lessons they learn and the lived experience they enjoy.

For example, you don't normally choose a Financial Thriller story if you want to experience love in a householder's comforts with a white picket fence and 2.5 children.

Step Four. Re-Align Your Priorities

The key to this exercise, beyond the many epiphanies and insights it has hopefully given you so far, is to use this new information to begin re-aligning yourself so that you begin shifting into new patterns.

We'll continue this powerful shifting process through the rest of this course. However, right now, the first powerful step you can take in shifting is to re-align your priorities now that you know the destiny you'd like to achieve, and the story arch that will get you there.

For example, look at the priorities that took over your life during the past several years. In my case, my stated priorities were always to balance work with having a social life and fun... yet looking back I see that consistently work maintained total priority. If I'm honest with myself, I also see that my spiritual development balanced so well only because it was integral to my success in my career!

Therefore, looking ahead toward a Happy Ending that includes love and romance, I see that my new priorities must include self-love and a focus on continuing to expand my heart space and my heart's intelligence. I also choose to prioritize my social life by scheduling it the same way I schedule my meetings. I'm attending local meetups and planning little get togethers with friends. And it all gets put into my calendar so nothing else can take their place.

Finally, I've also chosen to make health and loving my body top priorities as well. In the past I attempted this out of a sort of self-loathing. I imagined that I'd only find love if I fit the perfect picture of a young, skinny woman. Well, I can tell you: that didn't work at all. I'd last a week or two tops and then quit my health regimen. Because it didn't feel good. I was punishing myself rather than celebrating myself.

Yet through this exercise I had to get really honest with myself about why I kept putting work before a social life. I realized it was because I didn't want to be seen out in public if I didn't match the perfect picture of myself I had in my head.



And I know every woman can relate to this!

So for me, my health and body have to be priorities in my new life story, alongside social play and romance. Yet this time, I'm doing it from a heart-centered self-love rather than a punishing self-blame.

And here's the amazing thing, and my primary reason for sharing this with you:

I realize I only made that difficult and complex transition from self-loathing to self-love... due to the enormous spiritual transformation journey I took the past 5 years.

It seems that in fact it had been my True Destiny to first live that spiritual wealth parable story. It molded me into the Hero I needed to be to successfully engage the new Adventure Romance story I desire to live now.

You too may find a similar perfection to the stories you've lived so far, that have prepared you for the stories you'll choose to live moving forward.



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