

## ❖ Introduction

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*Most people will survive but only the wise can thrive.*

Most people know how to survive. They know how to get through the day. They know how to get up and go to work, and they know how to pay bills, put food on the table, drive to soccer games, entertain, fit in a vacation when they find time, and somehow get to bed at night in spite of life going in a thousand different directions. But when they put their heads down on the pillow, most people know that something is missing. They long for joy, personal fulfillment, freedom, and internal peace.

At work, they unconsciously slip into patterns of discontent, complaining about the company, customers, management, coworkers, and direct reports. They find themselves overwhelmed with commitments they can't keep, stressed and anxious about deadlines, and uneasy about the future. They fear making a mistake, looking foolish, losing control, and failing. Unable to convince others to do what they want, they let their emotions get the best of them, and frequently they feel as if they're swimming upstream, exerting a lot of energy, and not getting anywhere. They long for a sense of control, clarity, security, and direction.

These are not stupid people. They are smart, intellectually bright, and capable people. But they are missing one ingredient. They are not accessing their inner wisdom.

Wise people don't just survive. Wise people thrive. They are able to see the big picture. They can step back from all the confusion and make sense of everything before them. Self-sufficient and complete within themselves, they walk with a sense of calm and inner confidence and can be relied upon to act appropriately in any given situation. Firmly grounded in strong ethical standards, they are profoundly aware of the world around them. They generously contribute to others but never at their own personal cost. They feel complete because they have found meaning, purpose, and significance, and they are at peace with who they are. Guided by this solid natural knowing, people who access their inner wisdom make sound decisions and good choices. They are effective in all aspects of business and life because they are in the driver's seat and trust where they're going.

Throughout history wise people known as sages have been sought out for their insightful knowledge and intuitive understanding. In today's world, we frequently think that wisdom belongs to philosophers and great teachers, or to someone of significant achievement or learning, or to a respected person who has reached a venerable age. Wisdom, however, doesn't belong to an occupation, school of thought, age, or gender. Natural knowing, which leads to wisdom, is inborn and can be accessed at any time. Yet, for many of us, this internal knowing lies dormant like a seed until it is brought forth and nurtured. In this book we also seek the Sage, not by looking atop mountains or in faraway deserts but by going within where it waits for us to discover it anew.

The antithesis of the Sage is the self-centric, overly protective ego which is driven by fear and sees the world as a place of scarcity and want. It fights to survive. The sage, on the other hand, has a healthy detachment from self-absorption, possesses a deep understanding of natural laws, and is guided by a set of truths. These truths show us how to thrive, and when we follow them, we walk powerfully in alignment with the universal order.

Even saying the word “wisdom,” creates a shift of possibility and may well be the greatest need we have in our individual, cultural, societal, and business worlds. It calls us to a higher way of being which in turn allows us to be more effective. When we are engaged with wisdom, we communicate more clearly, interact more openly, and release our need to judge. No longer afraid that there’s not enough, we expose scarcity for the lie that it is and instead live with the certainty of life’s abundance for others and for ourselves. Wisdom leads to a win/win way of operating, especially in business, which honors a kind of healthy competition calling forth the best in all of us and countering the fear-driven competition that wants to wipe out and annihilate.

Wisdom works. This book shows you how to find it.

This story is about connecting with your personal power so you can create an exceptionally successful life—personally and professionally. On this journey of discovering how *Your Survival Strategies are Killing You!*, you will rediscover the eight principles you must follow to thrive in business and life. The eight principles are the foundation of attitudes and behaviors that, when adopted and used repeatedly, allow you to thrive. These principles are also an expression of a natural knowing you already possess but may have lost sight of, forgotten, or perhaps never taken the time to fully comprehend.

The eight principles are not the property of any one person, group, religion, or nationality. They contain and reflect the laws of physical nature and universal order, which, when followed, allow everything to relate effectively and work smoothly. When there is alignment and unity, people, relationships, and businesses thrive.

Perhaps you think you already know these principles, and on one level, maybe you do. But you are about to embark on a journey with four other highly intelligent people—Sarah, Dan, Paula, and Alex—a journey which will take you to a deeper, more profound understanding of what the principles really mean, the realization of which can transform your life. The three September days you

spend with these four characters at a remote lodge on the Illinois/Wisconsin border will free your spirit and empower you in ways you have likely not yet fully experienced or understood.

You can expect to emerge from this awakening and challenging adventure with the wisdom and tools that will enable you to be more effective in the areas of your life that are most meaningful to you. You will have ready access to the natural knowing you have within you. This knowing will allow you to attain greater personal and professional power, success, and fulfillment. You will become one of those enlightened people who are alive and thriving!