

## *Chapter 4*

# **Dream** *with your eyes wide open*

“All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds, wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act on their dreams with open eyes, to make them possible.”

*T E Lawrence*

“So many of our dreams at first seem impossible, then they seem improbable, and then, when we summon the will, they soon become inevitable.”

*Christopher Reeve*

I remember a dream I had when I was 11 years old. I was living in the Caribbean at the time, and I must admit, I loved my own company.

Our house in the country backed onto the woods which afforded a curious little boy the space to explore and create a fantasy world which he visited very often.

I was the head of a vast corporate concern and we presided our world from the boardroom.

If I close my eyes now I can still see the spot where the 'board table' was and where the 'board members' - at the time very compliant trees, 'sat'!

Where did it come from?

**Where did it come from?  
I really can't recall!**

I really can't recall!

However, one thing was certain, when I woke up the dream was firmly planted in my consciousness and would remain there for years to come.

## *The Dream*

*'What's the plot?'*

What do you dream about?

In the script of your dream what is the plot?

Who are the main characters?

How does the dream start? What are the main themes? How does it end?

Do you imagine that you are a famous actor or singer? Do you see yourself as a teacher who inspires children to be the great leaders of tomorrow? As a doctor who finally finds a cure for cancer? Do you imagine yourself to be one of the great business leaders? Are you wealthy beyond measure? A leader who finally eradicates poverty?

Whatever it is, you have two choices.

### *Whatever it is, you have two choices.*

The first choice is to change your dream. That effectively means walking away from it in search of another one. Or none at all.

However, without a dream you may find that you have a sense of emptiness; a vacuum within.

The second option is to change the dreamer; to work on you!

## *The Dreamer*

*'What's the build up?'*

Walt Disney was a dreamer.

He spent his whole life living in a fantasy world.

## *He spent his whole life living in a fantasy world.*

However, he was the type of fantasist that T E Lawrence referred to when he talked about 'dreamers of the day.'

Walt tended to agree when he said; *'If you can dream it, you can do it.'*

When Walt was ten years old, his parents moved to Kansas City and he met Walter Pfeiffer, whose parents exposed him to the world of vaudeville and motion pictures. It was during this time he came across an amusement park which sowed the seeds for Walt Disney World.

Walt Disney decided to work on himself; he enrolled in the Chicago Art Institute to learn more about his craft.

Fuelled by his dream and despite his first studio going bust, Walt moved to California and started again with his brother.

By 1935 he had received an Academy award for his creation, Mickey Mouse.

## ***The Dream Fulfilled***

*'How does the story end?'*

Walt Disney's story could have ended with his Academy Award but he decided that his dreams were still to be fulfilled.

In the 1940's Walt got inspired on a trip to Chicago. He decided to build a park for his employees so that they and their families would have a place to play.

That initial thought grew into a vision that would revolutionize the way theme parks were run. His aim was to suspend reality as soon as you entered Disneyland.

Today, Walt's dream has developed into a multi billion dollar television, motion picture, vacation destination and media corporation that carry his name.

At the end of 2010, Walt's vision recorded sales of close to \$40 billion.

Walt's dream had been fulfilled.

## **Walt's dream had been fulfilled.**

And continues to evolve.

*The eg...*  
***Dr Martin Luther King Jnr***

– Dreamt with his eyes open!

**I** *have a dream that one day...'*

When Dr Martin Luther King Jnr stood at the foot of the Lincoln memorial and uttered that immortal phrase, I am not sure he grasped the impact that one line would command in history.

It's almost as if the line, uttered during a seventeen minute speech, shot from his mouth and ricocheted into our consciousness and continues to do so for each new generation.

So, where did his dream spring from?

## ***So, where did his dream spring from?***

Early on in his life there was one incident that really defined him.

As a six year old, he had a white playmate whose father owned the store across the street from the King family home. He recalled how his friend informed him one day that his father had *'demanded that he would not play with me no more.'*

From that day he became acutely aware that segregation was a part of the American South's way of life.

In *'The autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jnr'* he recalls;

*'I always had resentment towards the system of segregation and felt that it was a grave injustice.'*

Heavily influenced by Howard Thurman, American theologian, author and civil rights leader, who himself was influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, King started and fostered a dream.

*'I have a dream'* he said.

## **'I have a dream!'**

*'I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of it's creed: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal."*

*'I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.'*

*'I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character'*

Unlike Walt Disney, Dr Martin Luther King didn't live to see his dream fulfilled, but fortunately, to a large extent, we have.

He was acutely aware of the challenges, but he still dreamed with his eyes wide open.

Do you, like King and Disney, have a dream?

If so, what is that dream?

**Do you have a dream?  
If so, what is that dream?**

*'What are you looking at?  
What are you looking for?'*

### Questions to ponder

1. What's your dream?
  - *What do you dream about?*
  - *What do you see in your dream?*
  - *Who are the beneficiaries of your dream?*
  
2. Why that dream?
  - *Why do you dream that dream?*
  - *Who influenced your dream?*
  - *What's the impact of your dream?*
  
3. How's your dream?
  - *How close are you to your dream fulfilled?*
  - *Will it happen in your life time?*
  - *How will it pan out?*