

Foreword By Les Brown
International Motivational
Speaker & Author

Just Get **SERIOUS**[®]

ABOUT SUCCESS

VOLUMES 1 - 4

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and Media Personality



Donna Satchell Kimble

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Third Printing

Foreword One - Les Brown

Donna Satchell Kimble, author, dynamic speaker, seminar presenter and coach, has written a book for people who are seriously serious about living their dreams. For many years, you've heard me tell you to, "Get out of your head and into your greatness." But what does this mean, and how do you achieve greatness? Dreaming a dream is a wonderful thing. However, without action, that dream will be nothing more than ashes in the furnace of your mind.

Let's be clear. Your dream is not really your dream. It is the calling on your life. For this reason, it is your responsibility to make it come true. Many of us put our dreams on hold because we are so busy making a living. We tell ourselves that we'll live our dreams when we have enough education, money or support from others, when the kids are grown, or when whatever circumstances we are struggling with are resolved. These are all excuses for inaction. They give us a reason to hide behind our fear and uncertainty. I sincerely believe that by living your making, your making will make your living.

You cannot wait until the time is right to live your dream because the time will never be right. You will never have all of your ducks in a row. That's just life. You've got to go right now! Time is slipping away each day! If you don't live your dream, we will all suffer, because no one can execute your dream like you can. No one can bring to the world what you can bring in the way that you can bring it.

So the question becomes, how do you go about living your dream? You may feel stuck, not knowing where or how to begin. In *Just Get Serious About Success*, Donna Satchell Kimble reveals to you a complete plan for believing in, and executing your dream, whatever it is.

In this step-by-step guide, you will understand the nature and level of belief that you have in your dream, and you'll discover the secrets to maintaining and strengthening your belief system, thereby accelerating your growth potential and catapulting yourself into action. *Just Get Serious About Success* will also help you get seriously serious about achieving your dream.

In order for you to be successful, you must internalize the notion that your dream is not optional. It is mandatory. Donna will help you understand that nothing is as powerful as a made up mind. Once you decide that something must be done, you can and will move mountains to make it happen. With this mindset, seemingly insurmountable obstacles become opportunities for your success.

Let Donna show you how to make serious progress toward your dream. Use *Just Get Serious About Success* to help you learn how to build a network for positive support, deal with passive and pessimistic people, and get over the past so that you can drop the drama and be a positive person. Once you achieve these things, you can truly create a solid foundation for your success.

Les Brown, Master Motivator
International Motivational Speaker & Author



Chapter 18

Just Get Serious

There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results.

Ken Blanchard – Author

*Are you taking it seriously,
or just trying it out?*

Donna Satchell Kimble

In the quote above, “it” represents our dreams, goals, aspirations, and the things we say we want to achieve. “Trying it out” is what we do when we are not ready to get serious about a job, a personal or business venture, organization, friendship, relationship, or other endeavors.

“Trying it out” is not necessarily a bad thing, particularly when it is a new undertaking. In the beginning, it can be hard to be serious when we are not sure of what is involved and whether or not we enjoy, or are truly interested in something. However, we do not want to confuse “trying it out” with “being serious.” The former has several drawbacks:

- Limited support from others. People are usually not willing to commit time, energy, or money to help someone who is “trying out” an endeavor, be it a business, professional, or personal undertaking.
- Limited success and rewards because we are not fully committed and are doing less than our best.
- Limited and slow results can easily discourage us to the point where we stop doing what is necessary.

For these reasons, the sooner we can move from trying it out to being serious, the better.

Like belief, there are levels of seriousness. This became clear to me several years ago. I was having dinner with a gentleman I had been dating for a couple of months. During the evening, he grabbed my hand, looked in my eyes and said, “Donna, I am serious about you.” At that moment, my heart started beating a little faster, my hands started to shake ever so slightly, and I was momentarily speechless. (Yes, me, a speaker was speechless!)

After a few seconds, I regained my composure and then started in with rapid-fire questions. “What are we doing for Thanksgiving?” “What are we doing for Christmas?” “What plans do you want to make for New Years?” “When can I meet your parents?” “When do you want to meet my family?” The questions just kept pouring out of me because he said he was “serious.” Suddenly, I realized he was not answering any of them.

I looked in his eyes and his face. His expression was saying to me, “Donna, I am serious ... but I am not *that serious!*”

As I thought about our conversation the following day, I realized there are levels of seriousness. There has to be because he said he was serious ... and I was serious. But what we were talking about was completely different. Over the next several months, I tried to characterize the levels of serious. Initially, I came up with three. I shared my thoughts about them in my speeches and they were very well received.

To improve my thinking about the levels, I listened intently as people explained why they were not making progress on their goals, observed people's actions and inactions, and considered ideas I read about in personal development books. I then realized three was not enough to cover what happens with people and their goals. So, I added two more levels and ended up with five:

1. Not Serious
2. Slightly Serious
3. Sometimes Serious
4. Solidly Serious
5. Seriously Serious

Let's take a look at each one.

LEVEL #1 – NOT SERIOUS

Two quotes describe people at this level: "All thought and no action" and "All talk and no action." You know you are at this level when you look around and realize you have not done anything at all towards your goals and dreams. There is no Evidence of Effort (EoE).

You say you want to lose weight. However, you have not changed your eating habits at all, are not exercising, and are not even forgoing the use of your car and walking a block to the supermarket. Or you say you want to have your own business, but you do not know what is required to start a business in your

state, do not have a marketing plan, and do not understand how much your endeavor will cost. Or you want a new job in an exciting new field; however, you have not taken the first step in a job search or updated your five-year-old resume. Or you say you want to be in a monogamous committed relationship, but you are still dating several people. Why? Because you are Not Serious!

At age 27, I wanted to go to college, but I was Not Serious. At 29, I was still thinking about it and at 31, guess what? I still had not taken any action. There was no EoE (Evidence of Effort). I had not visited any colleges. I had not investigated which colleges would be best for me. I had not made any appointments to meet with college advisors. I had not looked into the tuition reimbursement plans offered at my job. I had done nothing.

At age 32, I finally got serious. In January of that year, I said to myself “I will be in someone’s college” by the fall. Then I started doing the things people do when they are serious about continuing their education. I met with college advisers. I found out the details of my employer’s tuition refund program. I saved money for books. I purchased a car so I would be able to get home from the evening classes. And in September, I took my first class. If you read the earlier chapters, you know that six years later, I graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in business administration.

Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans.

Peter F. Drucker
Management Consultant

In some ways Not Serious is the easiest level to move from. It requires doing something on a consistent basis. It does not necessarily have to be a huge undertaking. If necessary, take “baby steps” (small, achievable actions). So, if you are at this level, decide what steps, even small ones, you can take in order to move forward to the next level – Slightly Serious.

If you want to write a book, for example, write something every day, even if it is only for a few minutes.

If you want to lose weight, exercise daily for just 10 to 15 minutes. If you want to save money, put your loose change in a jar every day. If you want a new job, update your resume, start networking and research opportunities online. If you want to be in a committed monogamous relationship, decide who will be the “person of significance” in your life and stop contacting people in your little black book.

Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Civil Rights Leader

To move to the next level and stop being Not Serious:

- Write your goals and a plan to achieve them (see the exercise at the end of Chapter 6). If necessary, get help from an experienced person in your field of endeavor.
- Create EoE by moving forward, even if it is in small steps.
- If necessary, re-read the following chapters: Believe In Yourself (3); Create Visual Goals (7); Be Positive (9) and any other chapters you feel would be helpful.

LEVEL #2 – SLIGHTLY SERIOUS (AKA “TRYING IT OUT”)

An appropriate quote describing people at this level is: “After all was said and done – more was said than done.” Here, individuals are taking action but need to amplify their intensity if they want to “stay in the game.” Depending on their intended endeavors, they may want to make more sales calls, attend more meetings, become more focused, get more help, or in some way increase their efforts. They may consider watching less TV, spending less time with passive or negative people, going to the mall and the movies less often, or making other changes so they have more time, money, and energy for their goals.

For several years, I was talking about writing a book. After a year of thinking about it, I still had no book, no outline, and no plan to make it happen, not even a specific date to begin writing. I realized I was Not Serious. To move forward, I purchased and read books about writing, took several classes on the topic and even began to write and distribute a free motivational newsletter. Now I had some EoE (books on the topic, certificates and handouts from classes, a monthly newsletter). That was a good start, but after a while, I realized I still did not have a book.

What we think, or what we know, or what we believe is, in the end, of little consequence. The only consequence is what we do.

John Ruskin
Author & Social Commentator

During the last month of 2008, I was mentally chastising myself for my limited efforts. I decided to re-read *So You Want to Write* again for some tips on how to get started. As I turned to the first page, a coupon fell out. It was for a free coaching session with the author, valued at \$125.00. I remember purchasing the book from her and promising I would call to set up an appointment. The coupon's expiration date was September 18, 2007 and it had been good for one year. To my dismay, I realized I had wanted to write a book for over two years!

Think about your goals and dreams. How long have you had some of them? Has time slipped away from you, like it did for me? That can happen so easily. The shock of how much time had passed stunned me into taking more action. I suggest you do the same thing.

On that date (December 1), I quickly wrote out an outline for my book (since I had been thinking about it for years, it wasn't too difficult). I then spent the next two hours looking through the many personal development books I had and made two key decisions: (1) I would write a book with approximately 125 pages. From creating my newsletters, I knew if I typed for two hours a day, I could have 95 pages done by the 31st of December. That knowledge motivated me. (2) I would type two hours every day

for 45 days, starting the next day. By the end of that time, I would have more pages than I actually needed for my book.

I suggest you do a similar exercise to get started on your dreams and goals. Figure out the details you need to pursue and accomplish what you desire. If you need assistance in getting the information or making decisions, find knowledgeable, positive, and supportive people to help you. Once you have the specifics, then move forward.

By December 25, I had a draft manuscript of approximately 75 pages. I made good progress in less than a month - 60% of the book was done! I had moved beyond the level of being Slightly Serious.

After making such great progress, I decided to take a break for a few days – after all, it was Christmas. That was a big mistake! A few days off turned into a week of attending all the festive events taking place. Then it seemed to take a lot of energy for me to get started again. Without the consistent effort and excitement, it was easy for doubts to start growing in my mind. I thought, “There are thousands of self-development books already on the shelves. What would make my book so different that people would purchase it?”

*Never grow a
wishbone, daughter,
where your backbone
ought to be.*

Clementine Paddleford
Journalist

No longer focused, I read what I had already typed and started finding fault with it. The more I read, the more doubts I had. My goal of typing every day turned to typing every couple of days and then typing once a week. Then I decided to change direction and I changed the title. But before moving forward again, I decided to take another break and completely clear my mind so I could restart with a clean slate.

Before I knew it, I was taking no further action and had no additional EoE (beyond my initial writings). I had fallen back to being Not Serious. Don't let the same thing happen to you.

You can prevent going back to Level #1 (Not Serious) by:

- Continuing to believe in yourself. Do not let your doubts or negative opinions of others rob you of your initial enthusiasm and focus.
- Avoiding the use of unserious words and phrases like try, might, maybe, depends, and “I’ll see.”
- Sticking to your plan.
- Taking consistent action.
- Getting an advisor or mentor to help you map out a solid plan of action, as necessary.
- Getting a coach to keep you moving forward.

You can move beyond Level #2 by spending more time, energy and money on your endeavors.

LEVEL # 3 – SOMETIMES SERIOUS

The quote characterizing people at this level is, “When they’re hot, they’re hot. And when they’re not, they’re not.” A graph of their activities would show peaks and valleys. Things they don’t know how to do, are afraid to do, find hard to do, or are unwilling to get help to do create fluctuations in their actions.

Inconsistent behaviors result when people do not do what they say they are going to do. For instance, let’s take the goal of healthy eating. They are doing great for months and then come the end-of-year holidays. Suddenly, they start to use Sometimes Serious words like but, just, only, and phrases like “after all, it’s the holidays.”

*It’s not what you do
once in a while, it’s
what you do day in and
day out that makes the
difference.*

Jenny Craig
Founder of Jenny Craig

Several years ago, I was holding a training program for a client. During the lunch break, I noticed Tim, one of the attendees, was still

in the room reading and drinking from a large water bottle. “No lunch today?” I asked. Tim replied, “No, I am fasting.” I inquired, “How long have you been doing that?” Tim answered, “For about seven years, twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays.” My enthusiastic reply was “That’s great. Fasting takes a lot of discipline. Have you ever changed the days or missed one?” “No, never” was his very definite response.

Stay committed to your decisions, but stay flexible in your approach.

Tony Robbins
Author, Motivation Expert

A thought came to my mind and I asked him, “What do you do on Thanksgiving?” Tim explained, “That holiday used to be a challenge, particularly the first year. You see, I decided to start fasting twice a week in about March or April. I thought Monday and Thursday would be the best days. I never thought of Thanksgiving being on Thursday. A week before that big day, my friends were taking bets about whether or not I would break down. You see, I love to eat, particularly back then. So, Thanksgiving was a challenging day. The food was very tempting, but I resisted and did not give in, despite comments from my friends.”

You may be thinking that Tim is a bit fanatical. Still, I commend him for staying on course. I also realize “life happens” and sometimes flexibility is necessary. If Tim’s objective was your goal, you could consider fasting on Friday and still accomplish your target of two days. Decide to stick to your plan and if changes are needed, then stick to making your planned progress.

Another way we can become Sometimes Serious is by having too many goals. As an example, an author once told me that one January he decided to write a book on communication skills by the end of that year, and he accomplished his goal. The following year, he decided to write three books. The result? By that December, he had not completed one of them. Why? He felt he had attempted to write too many books within a given period. When we have too many

goals, we can have lots of highs and lows in activities, and usually nothing gets finished at all. If you start to see that happening, reduce your number of goals. Sometimes it is better to have a narrow focus instead of one that is too broad to handle. So control the number of items you put on your plate.

We can also end up being Sometimes Serious by allowing too many disruptions to interfere with our plans. These disruptions include invitations, requests, drama-driven friends with their need for immediate help, and other non-urgent and unimportant situations that impede our progress. The solution? Take time to consider fully the activities you get involved with before saying “yes.” Whenever possible, limit your disruptions.

If you think the progress on your goals resembles a roller-coaster ride, then you are in the Sometimes Serious zone. Re-read the scenarios I described above and take the appropriate action.

- If you have too many disruptions, apply the D&D strategies (delay and details). Learn to say, “No” (with limited info), “next time,” “maybe later,” and “let’s make a deal” described in the Disruptions section of Chapter 8.
- If you have too many goals, determine which ones are most important for you to pursue right now and focus your time and energy on them.
- If you must change your plans, focus on making progress as you decide on the adjustments needed.

If none of the above is the cause, then take time to reflect on what is creating your ebb and flow. Consider:

- Is it your belief in yourself? Read Fluctuating Beliefs in Chapter 4.
- Is it drama-driven friends and their non-urgent emergencies? Read about dropping the main ingredient of drama in Chapter 9.
- Is it past mistakes and failures? Read the section on Inhibitors to Moving Forward in Chapter 16.

Use the previous chapters as a guide to the actions you can take to be more consistent.

Level # 4 – Solidly Serious

At this stage, people exemplify my quote, “Success is an inside job with outside results.” They know that “The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary” (Vince Lombardi). They are willing to put in the time, energy, and money needed to achieve their goals. Solidly Serious people have moved past Evidence of Effort (EoE) to Evidence of Results (EoR) or Evidence of Progress (EoP). The book you are reading is the result of my being Solidly Serious.

Earlier in this chapter, I wrote about my “journey” from the level of Not Serious to getting started, making progress and then sadly returning to level #1. My effort was inconsistent, pierced with doubts, and deferred by a lengthy break. Six months passed before I decided to pursue writing again. This time I was more committed to finishing. Early on, I got an editor, Steve Cohn, to do the proofreading and editing work required. I had two accountability partners who held me to making weekly progress. I met with colleagues to share ideas and brainstorm. My commitment to finishing this book meant accepting fewer personal invitations to social engagements and forgoing many fun activities so I could stay focused. It was not easy. But this time, I was serious about completing this project.

Being committed, overcoming the difficulties, making a personal investment of time and money, maintaining a strong belief in yourself and your ideas are characteristics of Solidly Serious people.

Thankfully, there are many level-headed, determined people to show us what it takes to be successful. They include people like Brad Crose, one of the Daring Dozen I profile at the end of the book. At age 32, Brad decided to go to law school. Having a wife and small child could have easily been an excuse for him to forgo pursuing his goal. Instead, he moved his family to Virginia to attend Regent

University School of Law. This was not an easy time for him, especially after his wife gave birth to their second child and later, their third child. Supporting a growing family and not having been in college for ten years meant achieving his goal required serious commitment, dedication, and focus. When Crose encountered major obstacles, he faced them and continued moving forward. Today he is a patent and trademark attorney. Read more of his inspiring story in Chapter 20 – Be Inspired.

Sometimes we need to get serious about overcoming challenges we have created. So it was with Jennifer Capriati. Playing professional tennis at 14 years old, she was an exciting and powerful player whose performances caught everyone’s attention. Between 1990 and 1993, she won six singles titles, including the gold medal at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, defeating Steffi Graf.

After an early loss at the 1993 U.S. Open, Capriati decided to take a break. (Remember what I said earlier about “breaks” – be cautious of them.) During her time off, she became involved with questionable people, was arrested for possession of marijuana, and then shoplifting. She eventually entered into a drug rehabilitation program. She tried to return to tennis a year later but her loss to Anke Huber at the Philadelphia Tournament ended her plan. Capriati did not play on the tennis tour for 14 months.

Commitment is the enemy of resistance, for it is the serious promise to press on, to get up, no matter how many times you are knocked down.

David McNally – Author

In 1996, Capriati was determined to get serious about the game again. It was a long, hard journey that ended in a match many people feel is the best comeback in the history of tennis. Playing Martina Hingis in the blazing summer heat at the 2002 Australian Open, Capriati was losing 6-4, 4-0. No one felt she had a chance of winning. But she fought back, turning the match around to win 4-6, 6-4 and 6-2. The victory – achieved through her serious commitment – propelled Capriati to being #1 in the world of tennis.

Being Solidly Serious means standing the test of time. In the early 1980s, Lonnie Johnson had a successful career as an aerospace engineer working for the government. One day he was fiddling around in the sink working on one of his experiments when he accidentally caused a high-powered stream of water that shot across the room. The burst of water was so powerful it caused the curtains in the bathroom to start swinging. During a *20/20* TV interview, Johnson said, “At that moment I decided to design a high-performance water gun.” The idea of the Super Soaker was born.

*If you run into a wall,
don't give up. Figure
out how to climb it,
go through it, or work
around it.*

Michael Jordan
Basketball Super Star

However, the journey to success for Johnson would be a long and difficult one. He and his wife were raising three kids at the time; his marriage was in trouble, and he eventually ended up being \$600,000 in debt. He recalls, “Along the way, there were lots of reasons to give up, but I always knew it was a great idea.” After seven years of rejections, disappointments, and setbacks, he presented his product to the Larami Corporation, and they accepted it. Johnson’s water gun was an instant success. Within two years, sales of the Super Soaker were over \$200 million and it was the number one selling toy in America. Over the years, retail sales of the Super Soaker have been close to \$1 billion. His serious determination paid off. The royalties Johnson receives from his idea have made him an incredibly wealthy man.

You can become Solidly Serious and create EoR (Evidence of Results) or EoP (Evidence of Progress) by:

- Becoming focused and disciplined.
- Realizing success takes effort and lots of it. Be willing to do what is necessary to achieve your goals and dreams.
- Regularly using Solidly Serious words and phrases such as will, absolutely, definitely, “I’ll be there,” and “Whatever it takes.”

- Being open-minded and seeking the advice and direction of others.
- Moving beyond your previous mistakes and failures. Remember the past is the past.
- Staying on track with accountability partners and mentors.
- Asking for help from knowledgeable advisors, colleagues, and interested friends.
- Getting a coach to help you excel in your efforts,
- Understanding your dreams and goals will take time. So don't get discouraged. Instead celebrate your successes, both large and small. See progress as the path to your prize.
- Re-reading the chapters that will keep you on the path of progress.

LEVEL # 5 – SERIOUSLY SERIOUS

It has been said, “Nothing can beat the power of a made-up mind.” This statement applies to level #5 people. “Must” is the word they use in their conversations as well as in their thinking and actions they undertake. Their dreams and plans are not optional, they are mandatory.

The difference between being Seriously Serious and Solidly Serious is the intensity of power and passion you need to reach your goal. Being Solidly Serious, you encounter and overcome *challenges*. Being Seriously Serious, you encounter and overcome *devastating events*.

I always say, “Many of us reach a point where we want to believe we are Seriously Serious, but in reality, we never really want to find out.” Why? In being Seriously Serious, what individuals come face-to-face with is like “hitting a brick wall.” It is so catastrophic everyone would understand if they decided to stop or forgo their endeavor. No one would think less of them because of the mental or physical pain they are enduring. Yet, they continue.

Grammy award-winning singer and songwriter, Gloria Estefan is such a person. She started singing professionally in the early 1980s as part of the band Miami Sound Machine. In 1988, Estefan decided to pursue a solo career. The following year, she released a top-selling album, *Cuts Both Ways*. The title track and “Don’t Wanna Lose You” became a #1 hit. Her career was soaring. Then, in March 1990, she hit that brick wall. She was critically injured when a speeding truck hit her tour bus. Her spine was fractured. Two titanium rods were implanted into her back to stabilize her spinal column. Doctors feared she would never walk again.

*Sometimes life is going
to hit you in the head
with a brick. Don't lose
faith.*

Steve Jobs
CEO, Apple Inc.

Estefan was determined to return to the stage and to the career she was passionate about. She endured months of agonizing physical therapy so she could get her strength back to sing and entertain again.

Ten months after the accident, Estefan gave a stunning performance at the 1991 American Music Awards. Her singing *Coming Out of the Dark* brought me and many thousands to tears. Why was she able to return? Gloria Estefan was Seriously Serious about her dream of being an exciting and inspiring performer. Today, she is still performing at sold-out concerts throughout the world.

Other people have been Seriously Serious about their endeavors:

- Lance Armstrong, an award winning cyclist, overcame testicular, brain, and lung cancer to return to the world of cycling and win the prestigious Tour de France seven consecutive times.
- Marie Curie, devastated by the death of her husband, found the strength to continue the scientific research they had done together. She received a Nobel Prize in chemistry for her extraordinary work in radioactivity.

- Within 1½ years, Fran Drescher, Emmy-nominated actress, was hit with losses and brick walls. The TV show she created, *The Nanny*, was cancelled. She got divorced after 22 years of marriage. Her beloved dog died, and she was diagnosed with uterine cancer. Since her recovery, she launched Cancer Schmancer, an organization working to ensure women's cancers are diagnosed early.
- Tony Dungy's 18-year-old son committed suicide in December 2005. That is the hardest experience a parent can endure. Everyone would have understood if Dungy walked away from football, at least for a while. Everyone, but him. He continued as head coach of Indianapolis Colts and 13 months later, they won the Super Bowl.

And, let's not overlook non-celebrities who have shown Seriously Serious commitment. Recognize and draw strength from the people you know personally who hit a brick wall and climbed over it, crawled under it, or broke through it.

For me, such a person is Francine Ward. Like Gloria Estefan, one of her brick walls was a car accident. Doctors said she would never walk again. That is where the similarities end.

By the time Ward was 14 years old, she was an alcoholic and addicted to heroin. By age 18, she had dropped out of high school and was living on the streets of New York City, shattered and homeless. She was a continuing victim of the seedy side of life because of her poor choices and low self-esteem. Ward eventually moved to Las Vegas where she could work more easily as a prostitute to support her drug and alcohol habits. Run-ins with the law and arrests were commonplace in Ward's life. She attempted suicide several times to escape her misery.

As if Ward's life wasn't bad enough, one night she was struck by a car as she was walking the streets. She does not know who hit her, whether it was an accident or intentional. Whatever the

cause, she ended up in the hospital in full traction and was told she would never walk again. However, Ward did walk again. She walked out of the hospital with the accident being a catalyst for her thinking about changing her life.

Weeks later, Ward realized that she desperately wanted to live more than she wanted to die. She took the first steps in that direction by getting help to end her dependency on alcohol and drug. It was not easy, but it was crucial.

Then at 28, she made the difficult decision to go back to school. Doing so meant facing the fear that she was too old, not smart, and unable to do the required work. And she faced her biggest fear of all – failing. She faced those fears, attended and graduated from high school, went to college,

and found an interest in law. Then she faced the fear of not being able to become an attorney because she had a criminal record.

Anyone can give up, it's the easiest thing in the world to do. But to hold it together when everyone else would understand if you fell apart, that's true strength.

Anonymous

She also faced the ridicule of mean-spirited people who constantly brought up her past. They mocked her plans, saying women like her did not become lawyers but eventually returned to a life of having to pay lawyers to get them out of jail. Despite their doubts and cruel comments, Ward moved forward with her aspirations.

Today, Ward is a well-respected copyright and trademark attorney, sought-after motivational speaker, and author. Additionally, this woman who was told she would never walk again has run two marathons (at age 42 and 43) and has plans to run again in two years.

Ward beat the odds because she was Seriously Serious about changing her life. Her accomplishments and many accolades are a testament to what can happen when we decide to take control of our lives, get started, get help, make difficult decisions, stay focused, and be committed using the various strategies I've covered in the previous chapters.

You can read about Ward's remarkable story of transformation in her book, *Esteemable Acts: 10 Actions for Building Real Self-Esteem*. To find out more about Ward, visit her website at www.Dare2beExtraordinary.com.

If you find yourself facing devastating events, know you have the power to prevail by:

- Believing in yourself and your abilities to overcome any challenge.
- Seeking spiritual guidance.
- Getting the physical, emotional, and financial help you will need.
- Engaging relentlessly in your faith practices.
- Fortifying your mind with the knowledge of real people who have triumphed over unbelievable losses.
- Understanding you can and will win.

* * * * *

I have some questions for you. How serious are you about your goals and dreams? How serious are you about pursuing your passion? How serious are you about starting a business? How serious are you about writing a book? How serious are you about getting a promotion at work? How serious are you about losing weight, going to college, getting a new job, obtaining an advanced degree, being in a solid, committed relationship, or whatever else you say you want to do? Just how serious are you? I would like you to seriously consider that question and then complete the final exercise on the following page.



Just Get Serious® About Success

Chapter 18 Exercise

How Serious Are You?

The form below is the same one you used in Chapters 3 and 4 (Levels of Belief). That's because the similar thinking is needed. You can also download this form from www.JGSBook.com.

Column #1 Your Dreams, Goals & Plans (Short & Long-Term)	Column #2 Your Current Level of Seriousness	Column #3 Actions You Will Take To Increase or Maintain Your Level of Seriousness

In column #1, write your goals, dreams, and the things you want to have and do in life. (Use one line for each one.)

In column #2, write your current level of seriousness, based on the levels discussed in this chapter: (1) Not Serious, (2) Slightly Serious, (3) Sometimes Serious, (4) Solidly Serious, and (5) Seriously Serious.

In column #3, write what actions you will take to increase or maintain your seriousness. Use the ideas you just read about in this and previous chapters, as well as other ideas you may have.

Now, you have a plan to strengthen or maintain your levels of seriousness. Take action by adding what you listed to your daily routines or writing them on your to-do list. Act on them so your seriousness supports your goals and dreams. Periodically revise and update this form as your level and/or dreams and goals change.



Chapter 19

My Final Thoughts

I would like to leave you with this last story.

Within a few weeks of moving from New York City to Atlanta, I joined BNN (Black Newcomers Network). Six months later, I was on the committee making plans for the organization's fifth year anniversary celebration. At our initial meeting, members talked about finding a location, securing a DJ, holding a talent show, and presenting awards. At some point, I suggested having a motivational keynote speaker. The members said that was unnecessary. They never had such a speaker in the past, and they thought it would cost too much money. I insisted they consider my idea. I explained the speaker would motivate the audience with a powerful message and having one would add excitement to the event so we could possibly get more members to attend than in the past. I mentioned Dr. Dennis Kimbro (author of *What Makes the Great Great*) and several others as possibilities.

After a lengthy debate, the committee captain, James Hester, relented, saying, "If you want a speaker, you find one. Just remember, we don't have a lot of money." I believe he and the rest of the committee members felt I would not pursue it and they would not have to discuss the idea again.

The following day (Thursday), I decided to contact Dr. Kimbro.

Since he lived in Atlanta, I believed talking with him would not be a problem. But, his phone number was unlisted. When I called Random House, the publisher of his book, I was told to send them a letter which they would pass along to him. With our event taking place in two months, I needed to reach him right away. Mailing them a letter to send to him would be wasting valuable time (this was before the Internet and email). I thought of several other ways to get his phone number but none of them worked, (today with Google, Facebook and other websites it certainly would not be a problem).

On Friday, I kept wracking my brain about how to contact him. Suddenly, I remembered he had spoken at my church. When I called there, the office manager was kind enough to give me the contact information for his PR representative, Gloria Gilbert. I phoned her and after a short conversation, she told me his fee was \$3,000. I became disappointed because the group would never spend that much money. I thanked Gilbert for the information and started to hang up when she asked how I got her phone number. I explained Dr. Kimbro had been a speaker at Hillside Chapel & Truth Center and someone there gave it to me. She then said “Oh, that’s one of Dennis’ favorite churches. Since you heard him there, I will give you his special discount rate. It is \$1,500.” I instantly felt encouraged. I knew there was a remote possibility I could get the group to fund that amount. I told Gilbert I would get back to her.

I immediately called Ellen, the organization’s president, to let her know the news and asked what she thought. Ellen was somewhat hesitant but suggested I talk with Hester, since he was heading up the committee. I spent hours trying to convince him. I explained with a speaker of Dr. Kimbro’s caliber, we could have a black tie affair, charge slightly more than the previous year, recoup the entire fee and possibly even make money. He finally agreed with me and planned to call an extra meeting for the members to vote on expending the money.

The following morning, I lay in my bed reflecting on what had transpired over the past three days. I had suggested an idea that sounded absurd to some and impossible to others, and now there was a good chance it would happen. With Hester on my side, I was certain the members would vote yes. I knew Dr. Kimbro would be an outstanding speaker and the event would be an incredible success. Those three things ended up being true.

As I thought about it, I realized, like everyone, I had the ability to conceive an idea, move forward, and make it a reality. This was not a new revelation for me, but because everything had happened so quickly, it really hit home. Continuing to think, I became upset with myself as I remembered the many times I had dreams and plans but did not take any action because of being afraid, not knowing what to do, or letting others dissuade me from moving forward.

Does that sound like you?

I vowed not to let that happen again. Suddenly, a poem I studied in college came to my mind. In fact, when I first read it I found the verses to be so eloquent and so powerful I recited them to myself several times. Since I still find the message compelling I keep it on my bathroom mirror.

I've included it here for you on the following page. I hope it inspires you as it has inspired me.

Commitment

W. H. MURRAY

*Until one is committed there is hesitancy,
the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness.*

*Concerning all acts of initiative and creation,
there is one elementary truth,
the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and
splendid plans:
the moment one definitely commits oneself,
then providence moves too.*

*All sorts of things occur to help one that would never
otherwise have occurred.*

*A whole stream of events issues from the decision,
raising to one's favor all manner of unforeseen
incidents and meetings and material assistance
which no man could have dreamt would come his way.*

(I end with my own words)

Whatever your dreams, goals, and passions are,
Believe they can come true

Then just get started – Just Get Serious,
and watch success unfold for you.

Wishing You Success
In All Your Endeavors!

Donna

About Donna Satchell Kimble

Donna Satchell Kimble is an Achievement and Business Speaker, Success Skills Trainer, Life Coach, and Author. Just Get Serious® is her trademark and business philosophy. She is serious about developing, designing, and delivering presentations and coaching to organizations and individuals who are serious about getting results.

Donna has presented programs at AT&T, The Coca-Cola Company, The Home Depot, City of Atlanta, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Clemson University's Conference for Women, Hewlett Packard (HP), chapters of International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) and American Business Women's Association (ABWA), as well as other organizations, companies, colleges, and conferences.

Passionate about helping others achieve more, Donna and business colleague, Lynda Shorter, co-founded Women Aspiring Together To Succeed™ (WATTS) in 2000. Since that time, they have organized and facilitated more than 100 meetings and special events for the members and guests. Under their leadership, WATTS empowers women to live their best lives through book discussions, programs by guest speakers, and various activities. Everything is done on a voluntary basis by those involved. Donna and Lynda have a passion for what they do, therefore there are no membership dues or operating budget.

Forty to fifty women attend regular meetings of WATTS. The annual themed gatherings have drawn over 90 members and guests. In 2012, The Georgia Summit of African American Business Organizations presented Donna and Lynda with their Pact Award, recognizing their vision and commitment to positively impact the lives of women for over 12 years.

Also passionate about people furthering their education,

Donna is on the Advisory Committee for Georgia Piedmont Technical College and participates in their planning sessions. A life-long learner, Donna frequently attends seminars, takes online classes, and reads books in her various fields of interest and expertise.

A past recipient of “The Best Motivational Speaker in Five Minutes or Less”, Donna also won “The Two Minute Adversity Challenge Speech”, both sponsored by The Twinkie Awards, which honors small business creativity and excellence.

To develop her skill set and business knowledge, Donna has been an active member of both the American Society for Training & Development, and the National Speakers Association (NSA). She is the past recipient of the NSA Georgia Chapter’s Spirit Award for her outstanding commitment and contribution. She was also a member of Speakers Roundtable, an advanced chapter of Toastmasters International, and competed in several of the organization’s speech contests.

Donna received her training certificate from the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and has taken classes on advanced training and presentation skills through Langevin Learning Services and other companies.

With over 25 years of corporate, marketing, and category management experience, Donna was the first administrative assistant promoted into a management-level marketing position at Clairol, Inc. There she received numerous individual and team awards and was recognized as one of the company’s experts in field-based promotional analysis and category management.

Donna earned a bachelors degree in business administration from Mercy College in New York where she graduated summa cum laude. Her collegiate memberships included the Alpha Chi Honor Society and the Delta Mu Delta Honor Society.

Although Donna considers herself to be “serious”, she enjoys having fun and doing new things that take her beyond her comfort zone. As a member of a humor workshop, she appeared on the stage of The Punchline Comedy Club in Atlanta and did a stand-up routine in front of a packed house. She was also a featured guest on the TV show, *Makeover Manor*, and received a “head to toe” new look. Donna is always looking for exciting activities to be involved in during her free time.

Some of Donna’s free time is devoted to writing. She is the author of *Just Get Serious® About Success* and the companion volumes (#1 - *Know Yourself & Believe in Yourself*; #2 - *Discover & Pursue Your Passion*; #3 - *Set Goals and Really Move Forward**; #4 - *Make Serious Progress and Create Serious Results**). She is also one of the co-authors of several other books, including *The Power of Motivation*, *303 Solutions to Accomplishing More in Less Time*, *303 Solutions for Communicating Effectively*, and *303 Solutions to Developing the Leader in You*.

*To be published.

If you would like information about Donna’s services as a keynote speaker, success skills trainer, or life coach, you can contact her office at:

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Jewel Diamond Taylor, Speaker & Author, Founder - Women on the Grow

Donna Satchell Kimble is an Achievement Speaker, Success Skills Trainer, Passion & Purpose Coach™ and Author. Her programs on goal achievement, teamwork, and communications empower individuals and organizations with the skills necessary to reach remarkable success.

For information about Donna's speeches, seminars, webinars, coaching services, and other products, visit www.JustGetSerious.com

For more details about this book and others by Donna, visit www.JGSBooks.com

