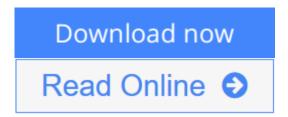


Chicken Soup for the Entrepreneur's Soul: Advice and Inspiration on Fulfilling Dreams (Chicken Soup for the Soul)

By Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Dahlynn McKowen, Tom Hill, John Gardner, Elizabeth Gardner, Kyle Wilson

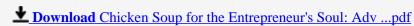


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Fulfill your dreams...

Chicken Soup for the Entrepreneur's Soul is a compilation of short stories from entrepreneurs, both large and small, who share their experiences of success, failure and courage, with a little helpful advice mixed in.

Many of these stories, told for the first time here, will enlighten you to new methods of entrepreneurship or simply help you believe in the possibilities of getting started. People such as Doris Christopher, a stay-at-home mother, who introduced her love of cooking to others through founding The Pampered Chef; Thom Chappell, who stuck to his instincts when developing Tom's of Maine and kept value at the core of his business; and Carol Gardner who intimately shares a desperate time of debt and divorce, until along came a bulldog named Zelda, followed by a greeting card line - Zelda Wisdom - which became one of Hallmark's number one sellers. These entrepreneurs and many more will inspire you with their amazing life experiences and fascinating beginnings.



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Editorial Review

About the Author

Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen are the #1 New York Times and USA Today best-selling authors of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series. John Gardner has a law practice in South Carolina and a national speaking career. Elizabeth Gardner heads the marketing initiatives for her husbands law firm. They live in Darlington, SC. Tom Hill pursued a career in real estate franchise sales. He now speaks to companies across the U.S. and Canada about business development. He lives in St. Louis, MO. Dahlynn McKowen is one of Chicken Soup's most trusted coauthors, working on many books with Canfield and Hansen. Kyle Wilson is President and Founder of YourSuccessStore.com and president of The Success Trainer Network and Jim Rohn International. Kyle, along with his wife Heidi and two children Rebekah and Daniel, lives in Southlake, Texas.

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To Be There for My Kids

Mother is the heartbeat in the home; and without her, there seems to be no heart throb.

- Leroy Brownlow

My mother and father emigrated from China to America in 1948. My brother and I were born soon after, making us both the first American-born members of our family. Upon coming to America, our parents worked extremely hard to make a living, and, as such, sacrifices were made to ensure a better life for all of us.

Our father worked seven days a week, and our mother would work all day. I remember waving good-bye to my mother every morning as she drove off to work, then I walked to school alone with a house key dangling on a chain around my neck. After school, I would come home to an empty house. When my mother finally came home, she had to clean and prepare dinner and didn't have time to help me with my homework or play with me. Looking back, I realize that this helped mold my independence and resourcefulness, because I had to figure out how to do things on my own. But at the time, I was resentful. In the mid-1950s, everyone else's mother stayed home and went to the PTA meetings and school field trips, and I didn't want to be different. I also remember having only one birthday party as a child; my parents were always too busy working. I vowed that when I became a parent I would do things differently.

Since making a living was always a struggle for my parents, education was very important to them. My father believed that you could use education to make your life better. He would always say, "People can take away your house or your possessions, but they can never take away what you have learned." I had high expectations of myself as well, so I worked all through high school and was able to put myself through college. I did my undergraduate work at University of California, Berkeley, and University of California, Davis, in business management and design, and then later went to Northwestern to get my MBA in marketing and finance.

I was determined to be successful and make my own money so that I could make my own choices. I went on to work as a marketing manager for major corporations, such as Johnson and Johnson, Hunt-Wesson and Revlon Cosmetics, then as a director of marketing for Mattel Toys. These jobs were very demanding, and I

often wouldn't get home until midnight. While I enjoyed the success and challenge, I really wanted a family, and I didn't see how I could have children when I was working so many hours.

In between my hectic schedule, I decided to take a jewelry beading class for fun. I really enjoyed it and made jewelry just for myself. When I wore it, people asked about the jewelry and where I got it. They were surprised and impressed that I had made the pieces of artwork. This interest intrigued me, so one day, I took a shoebox full of jewelry to work and began selling to colleagues during the off-hours. A woman asked if I would bring the jewelry to her home so some of her friends could see it, which I did, with great success! Afterward, I wanted to give her something for inviting me into her home and allowing me to sell to her friends, so I gave her some jewelry as a thank you gift. At the time, I didn't know there was such a thing as direct sales or party-plan businesses. I also didn't realize that I had just given my first "home show."

Once I saw that I could actually make money selling my jewelry, I decided to invest \$300 to buy materials and really make a go of the business. Everyone discouraged me from doing so, including my husband, John, (who is now my biggest supporter)! They thought I was crazy to give up my great corporate job, saying it was a waste of my education to "hawk jewelry." But I had a vision and knew that I could make it work.

I recouped the initial \$300 investment right away and sold over \$8,000 worth of jewelry that first year. By trial and error, I developed a system on how to book shows and sell the jewelry. While still working at Mattel, I sold jewelry on the side for seven years and made over \$86,000 that seventh year! This was the turning point; I had promised myself that if I was able to make half of my Mattel salary selling my jewelry, and was able to pay my mortgage, I would quit my job. I left the corporate world in April 1990.

During that time, John and I were trying to start a family. Five years had gone by, and I thought we might never be able to have kids. The summer after I left my job at Mattel, I learned I was pregnant with our son. In 1992, our daughter was born.

While raising our children, I continued to sell my jewelry and give home shows during the days and evenings, and also on the weekends, but I soon realized that there were only so many hours in the day. I thought, The only way I can continue to grow my business is to teach other women how to sell my jewelry, too. So in 1992, I started taking on other consultants.

My business has since grown into a multimillion-dollar corporation, and this success is a direct result of my vision, the hard work of my amazing corporate staff, as well as the dedication of 70,000 Cookie Lee consultants throughout the United States. And, most important, I stayed true to my original purpose, which was to provide a different life for my children, one that I could be a part of every day. I structured my career around what worked for my family, and as a result, the flexibility and profitability of selling my jewelry have also enabled our company's consultants to have the same opportunities for their families. For this, I am very proud and thankful.

Please excuse me, I must go. It's time to pick my kids up from school.

-Cookie Lee

EPILOGUE: According to jewelry magnate Cookie Lee—president and founder of Cookie Lee, Inc.—she made a conscious choice not to sacrifice spending time with her two children "for all the success and money in the world." Cookie Lee picks up her teenaged children every day from school and attends all of their events. And her business is also a family affair, as husband, John Lin, serves as the company's vice president.

Cookie Lee, Inc., founded in 1992, has become one of the nation's largest jewelry direct sales companies by offering affordable, high-quality fashion jewelry sold by in-home jewelry consultants. Based in Tustin,

California, Cookie Lee has annual sales of over \$120 million and growing.

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