

*Wake Up
and Live*

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and Live

Dorothea Brande



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First Published: 2024

Book Name: Wake Up and Live (Illustrated)

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Illustrated by **DD Books**

Price: 250/-

ISBN: 978-93-5957-401-1

Published by **DD BOOKS**

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Introduction

Two years ago, I stumbled upon a success formula that revolutionized my life. It was so simple and apparent that, once understood, I could hardly believe its role in the magical results that followed its implementation.

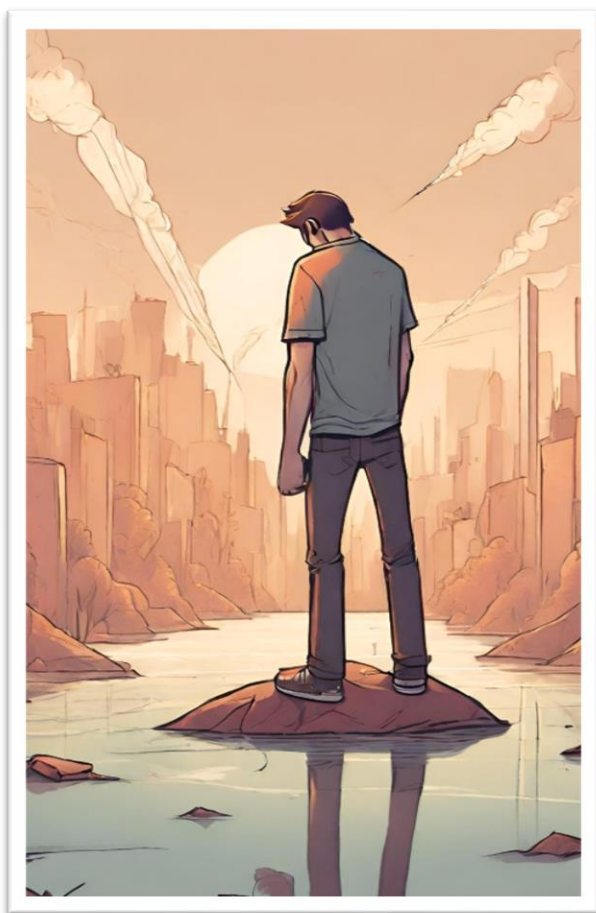
Firstly, I must confess that two years ago, I considered myself a failure. While others were oblivious to it, those who knew me well could see that I was only accomplishing a fraction of my potential. Despite holding an intriguing position and leading a moderately interesting life, deep down, I acknowledged my failure. What I engaged in was a mere substitute for what I had initially planned. No matter how cleverly I justified my lack of success with ingenious theories, I knew I should be doing more meaningful and genuine work.

Naturally, I was always seeking an escape from my predicament. However, when I fortuitously discovered the solution, I initially couldn't believe my luck. I refrained from dissecting or explaining it immediately. The formula's effects were so extraordinary that I almost started to attribute them to superstition; it felt like magic, and questioning the reasons behind a spell or incantation seemed unwise. Moreover, there was still a lingering wariness in my attitude at that time. I had attempted to overcome my challenges multiple times before, seemingly on the brink of success, only to find myself trapped again.

The primary reason for my reluctance to analyze or explain the formula's effects in detail was my busy schedule and the sheer enjoyment I derived from it. I reveled in the newfound ease with

which I tackled tasks previously deemed impossible, witnessed barriers I thought were impenetrable dissolve, and felt the years-long inertia and timidity falling away like unlocked fetters.

I had been stuck in a deadlock for years, despite choosing my life's work, writing, early on and commencing with high hopes. Most of my completed work received a positive reception. However, when attempting to progress to a more mature phase, it felt as if I had been turned to stone, paralyzed and unable to move forward.



Certainly, it's undeniable that I was unhappy. Not miserably or agonizingly unhappy, but constantly bothered and

disheartened by my own lack of effectiveness. Faced with a perceived failure in the more creative realms of literature, I immersed myself in editing. Relentlessly, I sought guidance from teachers, analysts, psychologists, and physicians, attempting to extricate myself from this pit. I read, inquired, thought, and worried, testing every suggested remedy. However, nothing offered more than temporary relief. While I could engage in feverish activity for a short period, it always ended abruptly, leaving me no closer to my goal and increasingly disheartened.

Then, in a moment between one minute and the next, I stumbled upon the idea that liberated me. Unintentionally, as I delved into research in another field, I encountered a sentence in the book "HUMAN PERSONALITY" by F. W. H. Myers that was so enlightening, I set the book aside to contemplate the myriad ideas inspired by that one profound hypothesis. When I resumed reading, I was a transformed person.

Every aspect, attitude, and relation of my life underwent a profound alteration. Initially, I wasn't aware of it; however, with growing certainty each day, I realized I had discovered a talisman to counteract failure, inertia, and discouragement, and it worked. That knowledge sufficed for me. My hands and days were so occupied that there was no time for introspection. Sometimes, as I drifted off to sleep after accomplishing in a short time what once felt like a colossal task, I'd think, like the old lady in the nursery rhyme, "This is none of I!" Yet, beyond doubt, "I" was reaping the rewards. The books I had longed to write, previously agonizingly elusive, flowed onto paper as swiftly as words could be penned. Far from feeling drained, I consistently discovered new ideas that had been concealed behind the mental barrier created by the backlog of work.

Here's the sum total of my writing output in the twenty years before discovering my formula—a meager amount achieved with

great difficulty and protest. For safety's sake, I've exaggerated the items in each classification, resulting in a generous estimate: seventeen short stories, twenty book reviews, half a dozen newspaper items, and one abandoned attempt at a novel, completed less than a third of the way. An average of less than two finished pieces of work per year!

In the two years following my moment of enlightenment, here is the record: Three books (the first two within just two weeks less than the first year, both successful in their respective fields), twenty-four articles, four short stories, seventy-two lectures, the groundwork for three more books, and numerous letters offering consultation and professional advice sent to various parts of the country.

These results are not the only outcomes of applying my formula. Once I understood how it facilitated my writing energy, I became curious about its potential in other areas where I had struggled. The tentativeness and timidity that had hindered me in nearly every aspect of my life vanished. Interviews, lectures, and commitments that I had forced upon myself, going against the grain every minute, transformed into enjoyable experiences. Conversely, a dozen trivial self-exploitations that I had allowed—almost as a form of penance—during my deadlock came to an abrupt end. I was finally on good terms with myself, no longer punishing, exhorting, ruthlessly driving myself, and consequently, not subjecting myself to unnecessary boredom and fatigue.

Despite the remarkable success of my formula, I shared it with very few friends. In my almost egotistical belief, shared with most of my peers, I thought my situation was unique—no one had ever fallen into such a state of ineffectiveness before, and no one else could apply my formula to their own challenges successfully. Occasionally, as I was no longer living in a constant state of siege that blinded me to the world outside, I did notice signs that others were wasting their lives similarly to how I had wasted mine.

However, I believed, like me, they would emerge in due course. It was only by chance that I considered publicly offering the simple program that had aided me. Otherwise, I might never have realized that, to a greater or lesser extent, most adults are living inadequate lives and suffering as a consequence.

Several months ago, I was invited to lecture to a group of book-sellers, with the tentative subject being “The Difficulties of Becoming a Writer.” In my first book, I had thoroughly explored these difficulties, and I had no interest in simply reciting a chapter from a previously published work. As I began preparing the lecture, I could think of nothing more to add than to candidly state that the most challenging task for a writer is learning to counteract their own inertia and cowardice. Initially fearing that my talk might sound like “testifying to grace” in an old-fashioned prayer meeting, I delved into the subject to prepare my speech.

The conclusions I reached are presented in this book: that we fall prey to a Will to Fail, and unless we recognize it in time and take action against it, we perish without achieving our intentions. There exists a method to counteract this Will, producing results that appear almost magical. I delivered my lecture, and what truly surprised me was the reception. Prior to receiving notes, letters, and phone calls, I had assumed that sharing how one person overcame a dilemma might mildly interest many in the audience and assist a few who found themselves in a similar predicament.

However, it turned out that nearly everyone in my audience was in the state I had described, all seeking help to escape it. I gave the lecture two more times, and the outcomes remained consistent. I was inundated with messages, questions, and interview requests. Most rewarding were three reports I received within two weeks. Three audience members hadn’t waited for a more detailed explanation or assumed the formula wouldn’t work for them; they immediately put it into practice. One person