In order to be receptive to inspiration, we need to eliminate the ego-clutter that accumulates all too easily for most of us—after all, if we’re preoccupied with events and activities that have nothing to do with inspiration, we’re unlikely to notice its summons. So, here now is the late Wayne Dyer’s “12-STEP PROGRAM TO SIMPLICITY” (12 very specific tools for simplifying your life): “Unclutter your life. You’ll feel a real rush of inspiration when you clear out stuff that’s no longer useful in your life: If you haven’t worn it in the past year or two, recycle it for others to use. Get rid of old files that take up space and are seldom, if ever, needed. Donate unused toys, tools, books, bicycles, and dishes to a charitable organization. Get rid of anything that keeps you mired in acquisitions that contribute to a cluttered life. In the words of Socrates, “He is nearest to God who needs the fewest things.” So the less you need to insure, protect, dust, reorganize, and move, the closer you’ll be to hearing inspiration’s call. Clear your calendar of unwanted and unnecessary activities and obligations. If you’re unavailable for Spirit, you’re unlikely to know the glow of inspiration. God will indeed work with you and send you the guidance—and the people—you need, but if you’re grossly overscheduled, you’re going to miss these life-altering gifts. So practice saying no to excessive demands and don’t feel guilty about injecting a dose of leisure time into your daily routine. Be sure to keep your free time free. Be on the lookout for invitations to functions that may keep you on top of society’s pyramid, but which inhibit your access to joyful inspiration. If cocktail parties, social get-togethers, fund-raising events, or even drinking-and-gossiping gatherings with friends aren’t really how you want to spend your free time, then don’t. Begin declining invitations that don’t activate feelings of inspiration. I find that an evening spent reading or writing letters, watching a movie with a loved one, having dinner with my children, or even exercising alone is far more inspiring than getting dressed to attend a function often filled with small talk. I’ve learned to be unavailable for such events without apologizing, and consequently have more inspired moments freed up. Take time for meditation and yoga. Give yourself at least 20 minutes a day to sit quietly and make conscious contact with God. I’ve written an entire book on this subject called Getting in the Gap, so I won’t belabor it here. I will say that I’ve received thousands of messages from people all over the world, who have expressed their appreciation for learning how to simplify their life by taking the time to meditate. I also encourage you to find a yoga center near you and begin a regular practice. The rewards are so powerful: You’ll feel healthier, less stressed, and inspired by what you’ll be able to do with and for your body in a very short time. Return to the simplicity of nature. There’s nothing more awe inspiring than nature itself. The fantasy to return to a less tumultuous life almost always involves living in the splendor of the mountains, the forests, or the tundra; on an island; near the ocean; or beside a lake. These are universal urges, since nature is created by the same Source as we are, and we’re made up of the same chemicals as all of nature (we’re stardust, remember?). Your urge to simplify and feel inspired is fueled by the desire to be your natural self—that is, your nature self. So give yourself permission to get away to trek or camp in the woods; swim in a river, lake, or ocean; sit by an open fire; ride horseback through trails; or ski down a mountain slope. This doesn’t have to mean long, planned vacations that are months away—no matter where you live, you’re only a few hours or even moments away from a park, campground, or trail that will allow you to enjoy a feeling of being connected to the entire Universe. Put distance between you and your critics. Choose to align yourself with people who are like-minded in their search for simplified inspiration. Give those who find fault or who are confrontational a silent blessing and remove yourself from their energy as quickly as possible. Your life is simplified enormously when you don’t have to defend yourself to anyone, and when you receive support rather than criticism. You don’t have to endure the criticism with anything other than a polite thank-you and a promise to consider what’s been said—anything else is a state of conflict that erases the possibility of your feeling inspired. You never need to defend yourself or your desires to anyone, as those inner feelings are Spirit speaking to you. Those thoughts are sacred, so don’t ever let anyone trample on them. Take some time for your health. Consider that the number one health problem in America seems to be obesity. How can you feel inspired and live in simplicity if you’re gorging on excessive amounts of food and eliminating the exercise that the body craves? Recall that your body is a sacred temple where you reside for this lifetime, so make some time every single day for exercising it. Even if you can only manage a walk around the block, just do it. Similarly, keep the words portion control uppermost in your consciousness—your stomach is the size of your fist, not a wheelbarrow! Respect your sacred temple and simplify your life by being an exerciser and a sensible eater. I promise that you’ll feel inspired if you act on this today! Play, play, play! You’ll simplify your life and feel inspired if you learn to play rather than work your way through life. I love to be around kids because they inspire me with their laughter and frivolity… Slow down. One of Gandhi’s most illuminating observations reminds us that “there is more to life than increasing its speed.” This is great advice for simplifying your life—in fact, slow everything way down for a few moments right here and now. Slowly read these words. Slow your breathing down so that you’re aware of each inhalation and exhalation...When you’re in your car, downshift and relax. Slow down your speech, your inner thoughts, and the frantic pace of everything you do. Take more time to hear others. Notice your inclination to interrupt and get the conversation over with, and then choose to listen instead. Stop to enjoy the stars on a clear night and the cloud formations on a crisp day. Sit down in a mall and just observe how everyone seems in a hurry to get nowhere. By slowing down, you’ll simplify and rejoin the perfect pace at which creation works. Imagine trying to hurry nature up by tugging at an emerging tomato plant—you’re as natural as that plant, so let yourself be at peace with the perfection of nature’s plan. Do everything you can to eschew debt. Remember that you’re attempting to simplify your life here, so you don’t need to purchase more of what will complicate and clutter your life. If you can’t afford it, let it go until you can. By going into debt, you’ll just add layers of anxiety onto your life. That anxiety will then take you away from your peace, which is where you are when you’re in-Spirit. When you have to work extra hard to pay off debts, the present moments of your life are less enjoyable; consequently, you’re further away from the joy and peace that are the trademarks of inspiration. You’re far better off to have less and enjoy the days of your life than to take on debt and invite stress and anxiety where peace and tranquility could have reigned. And remember that the money you have in your possession is nothing but energy—so refuse to plug in to an energy system that’s not even there. Forget about the cash value. I try not to think about money too frequently because it’s been my observation that people who do so tend to think about almost nothing else. So do what your heart tells you will bring you joy, rather than determining whether it will be cost-effective. If you’d really enjoy that whale-watching trip, for instance, make the decision to do so—don’t deny yourself the pleasures of life because of some monetary detail. Don’t base your purchases on getting a discount, and don’t rob yourself of a simple joy because you didn’t get a break on the price. You can afford a happy, fulfilling life, and if you’re busy right now thinking that I have some nerve telling you this because of your bleak financial picture, then you have your own barrier of resistance. Make an attempt to free yourself from placing a price tag on everything you have and do—after all, in the world of Spirit, there are no price tags. Don’t make money the guiding principle for what you have or do; rather, simplify your life and return to Spirit by finding the inherent value in everything. A dollar does not determine worth, even though you live in a world that attempts to convince you otherwise. Remember your spirit. When life tends to get overly complex, too fast, too cluttered, too deadline oriented, or too type A for you, stop and remember your own spirit. You’re headed for inspiration, a simple, peaceful place where you’re in harmony with the perfect timing of all creation. Go there in your mind, and stop frequently to remember what you really want.”

It is not our destiny to be less than our potential.