



Jungle Life
a journey toward
your true peak

by Lance Ekum

Who Is This Guy?

Lance Ekum is a storyteller, life guide, and all around fun guy. Some days he seems lost in his own little world (little...who says it's little!), and other days he's lost in this great big world! In search of meaning, he created the [Jungle of Life](#). You can find him there, exploring life's great mysteries (and sometimes being just a little weird).

Life is an adventure, and you are invited along as Lance seeks to explore that adventure...starting from within and moving out into the world.

Carpe diem! ...and all things happy...



The Legal Stuff

...so I don't end up in jail, in some foreign country far, far away (although that would certainly be an adventure!).

Disclaimer

The author of this *Jungle of Life e-book* and the *Jungle of Life* cannot be held responsible for any losses incurred from following the advice contained herein.

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Steps into the Jungle of YOUR Life

The journey we take in this life, it is a unique experience for each of us.

Today, we journey together. As you read this, our paths are intersecting...as we share together through the collective experience of our lives.

May this journey you are on be one that fulfills you, brings moments of joy, and creates meaning in your life.

Journey on,
Lance



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A Journey into You



Who are you?



You.

Who are you?

More than teacher, mother, writer, engineer, accountant, etc, etc, etc.

Who are you?

Do you know? Do you *really* know?



Who are you?



The Journey

...and our journey together begins...

A journey toward your *true peak*.

Your *true peak*, that place within you, the essence of your being.

Your heart and soul, the truth of who you are.



Just think for a moment, of where you are on this path. And know that this journey you are traveling is a journey about you. Perhaps it may not always feel like that. Perhaps you feel pulled in one direction or another.

This is still YOUR LIFE.

Yours. To live...or not.

To shine...or to shrink back.

Today you are here. Here, because some part of you, somewhere within, desires very much to live. And maybe it is even more than that. See, what does *"live"* mean, anyway?

We are all living, after all.

I have a pulse. You have a pulse. In that sense of being a living, breathing human being – we all qualify. There is nothing inherently different from you, from me, from your neighbor across the street in terms of what this *"alive"* means.

How are you living, though? Are you here on this earth, connecting with that which matters most deeply to you? Are you truly alive? Or, perhaps you have held yourself back from your potential, from being what lives in your heart...

This is about really being what you are meant to be. That is your gift to the world, after all. You, living from that place of deep meaning. And in that place, creating from your soul, from your heart, from your being.

It's beautiful, amazing, fantastic!!

Well...



Except.

Except there's this thing called money. And then there's also that thing call "being responsible". Oh, and let's not forget that there's this thing about what everyone has come to expect of you.

...and many, many more "excepts"...

Today, those are **NOT ALLOWED!**

No "excepts".

This is your life. To live. Today. Tomorrow.

...and beyond!

So today, let's set aside anything that comes up with "except" or "but" or "when" or any other word that is self-limiting for you. Today, you have unlimited potential.

Unlimited!



UNLIMITED!!



In fact, the truth is that every day you have unlimited potential. It is within you to shine!

Let's start with today, though, for right now. Today, you have **unlimited potential!**

NO EXCEPTIONS!!



My Journey

The year was 1988. I knew what I wanted to do. I knew what I wanted to do, and I followed a path toward achieving that. College calling my name, off I went to one of the top schools for my chosen profession. Dreams and aspirations of becoming an engineer.

Except... (Wow, I'm using that dreaded word already!!)

Except that I quickly found the concepts not only difficult to grasp, but also personally less exciting than I had dreamt of.

Fast forward to 2011.

It's a cold and blustery winter day. My recollection of differential equations has faded. I'm not quite up to speed on all the characteristics of electrical current. The Periodic Table of Elements no longer slips off my tongue as easily as it used to.

In short, what I began back in 1988 is no longer me.

Well, it is me. Except that I have changed. I have evolved. I continue to evolve.

...as do you...

I am evolving...you are evolving...because that is life. Change is part of this life we are living.

So, we have all evolved.

The question is, though: are you actively choosing this evolution of you?

- Or -

Or, are you letting the world around you choose your evolution?



Likely, it's some of both.

Very surely, you have been influenced by the evolving nature of our world, the advances in technology, the availability of information, and much more. You have evolved because the world around you has evolved. And there is much good in all of that.

There's more, though.

Let's get to the **heart** of this. Deep down, are you listening to the evolution within?

Are you listening to the evolution of you? The real you...

THE

REAL

YOU.



There is no way you can fully predict how this life journey of yours will unfold.

Wait.

So, you can't predict how this journey of yours will unfold. Is it really worth investing your time and energy into a deeper understanding of who you are then?

I mean – really? If you just wander through life, are you no better or worse off than the person who digs deeper, plans their life journey, and then by some fate, has those plans completely altered?

It seems counterproductive. Here you put all this effort into knowing “*you*”, only to have your hopes and dreams perhaps dashed because of something you never could have guessed would happen.

...is it really worth it?

Yes.



It is so worth it.



So completely worth it.



A Journey Toward Your True Peak

Your *true peak*.

What is that?

No, really – what is that for you?

Let's re-phrase that question, first. What does "*true peak*" mean?

Time melting away. Complete focus. Care for what you are doing. Think of those things you do – those in which you feel this way. Completely.

So that's it then?

Well...not quite. That's a really great starting place, though.

This is a journey, after all.

A **journey** toward your *true peak*.

You are an evolving, growing, changing being.

So this place – **true peak** – is one you never fully reach.

And that's a very beautiful thing...that this journey is one that is never complete. Just think, if you somehow reached your peak of peaks. What then? Where would you go from there? It's a pretty picture until you get to the peak. After that, not so much...

With an ever-evolving *true peak*, with an ever-evolving truth within – you have within your reach, the opportunity to connect more deeply to what that fully means.



As you continue to move through the moments of your life, you are somewhere on that spectrum of connection. Wherever that is, it is good and right.

From this moment forth, though, you can choose. You can choose to listen to that which speaks the yearnings of your being. Maybe you hear that voice clearly, or perhaps it's a whisper from your soul. Whatever that voice inside is, know that you have a choice. You have a choice in what you listen to.

Choose to listen to your heart, your soul, your essence.

Your *true peak* is there, within that which speaks from your heart...



Back to **your true peak**...these things that make time melt away.

Working on your car. Knitting a sweater. Writing a poem. Playing basketball. Fishing. Dancing. Whatever.

(Notice that this list may be completely free of meetings, sales reports, status updates, etc)

Things that make time melt away:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

DO THIS NOW: Write down 1-3 things which, when you do them, absorb you completely (in a deep and good way).

These things have deep meaning for you.

That's great!

It really is. There's more to this, though. What is it about these things that really make them come alive for you? What is it that makes these meaningful?

“I don't believe people are looking for the meaning of life as much as they are looking for the experience of being alive.” ~ Joseph Campbell

Because maybe there are things buried within you...

Things that make you come alive. Things that make you come alive, if only they make an appearance from the deeper recesses of who YOU are.

There's this one thing, though.



...

...

...

...

fear

...

...

...



What is it that you fear?



Vulnerability.

Exposing yourself (not that way!).

Being hurt (in all the forms that hurt can take place).

Ridicule.

Looking like a failure.

Making a mistake.

Wild success.

Fear. Something we have all experienced, to some degree.

Something **you** have experienced.

Some fears are very real, and they are there to protect us. (ex: think fear of getting burned, which keeps us from touching a hot stove)

Some fears, though, hold us back from what IS possible within us.

Some fears keep us from living from that place that speaks from our heart.

Fears are something that kept me from fully being myself when I began the *Jungle of Life* website.



The Jungle Story

This is the story of the evolution of the *Jungle of Life*.

Let's go back to the beginning. In the spring of 2008, the *Jungle of Life* began. It began, although there was this deep fear within me.

Would I look like a fool? Would this seem so different from my "normal"? Would anyone care at all?

Those early days were about seeing the fear, and then stepping into it anyway.

Small steps...testing the waters.

And so it all began. Except that it was very different from today. See, because of these fears – I limited myself. I wrote what felt "*safe*". I wrote what was in my head (and not what was in my heart). And I wrote very anonymously.

It's not that my head was filled with bad things. It wasn't. My heart, though, it was filled with things that brought more meaning to me.

Why did I avoid that place? Why did I hold back from exploring the depths of my heart and soul? Why did I "*play it safe*" (even when "*safe*" felt like a step outside of my normal boundary)?

Fear.

Fear of looking "different". Fear of failing. Fear of success, and what that might mean. Fear of stepping outside that comfort zone I had created.

And then, something happened.



Someone cared. Several someones cared. Even though my writing was far from great (**most** definitely far from great!), people cared.

Small steps...

Slowly, with added confidence, I listened to that whispering in my heart. I began writing from that place, and found deep personal meaning from it.

And -

And it was all okay. Sure, some people viewed me in a new light. Sure, there was still uneasiness in taking those steps. Sure, there were moments where I questioned what I was doing.

It was **so** much more, though.

It was joy! It was peace. It was connection to my heart. It was connection to others.

It all came with that deeper personal meaning for me. And it all added to my very personal experience of feeling more fully alive, more fully connected to what mattered.

Today, this journey continues for me. And as I continue down these paths of my life, I continue to evolve and connect more deeply to the speakings of my heart.

When I do that, when I really and honestly do that – listen to the whispers of my heart – I shine.

I shine!

I SHINE!



You

Remember: You shine!

You shine when you are most fully connected to that which brings meaning and joy to you. And it matters not what others think, say, do.

...as much as it might feel like it matters...

"Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering." ~ don Miguel Ruiz

Because *they* are not living your reality. You are living it.

THIS IS YOUR LIFE.

You Shine!



YOU SHINE!!



Your Story

What if.

What if...you listened to the voice within...and then went out into this world, living from that place.

What is the worst thing that could happen? (think big)

Do this now: really think about what the worst thing is that could happen

Okay, and then...stop.

Think about that “worst thing” that could happen. Is it really that bad? If that “worst thing” isn’t death, and if you can come away from this experience a better person – isn’t it still so worth it? And do you fully know how what might feel like a setback today could be a stepping stone to success tomorrow. Indeed, it is. It is if you are fully open to a deep belief in yourself, and in all that **IS** possible when you are connecting to what has meaning for you.

There is so much possibility in your **brilliant YOU!!** What is the best thing that could happen? (think even bigger)

Do this now: really think about what the **BEST THING** is that could happen



Remember from earlier: everything **IS** possible today. **Think BIG**. Think about possibilities. Think about how your unique skills, talents, and gifts are amazing (they are!).

This exercise is not just for you to come up with what could happen, because very likely it won't be just as you have envisioned it. That's part of the beauty of this journey, also: as much as you envision how everything might unfold, reality is that life has a way of unfolding in its own terms. You can direct this though, with your thoughts and actions (that's what you are starting to do here today).

YOU

ARE

AMAZING!!



Your True Peak

You have amazing gifts to share with this world! You have amazing gifts that make you feel so completely alive!

Just think for a moment as if each day you lived from this place.

What does that look like?

What does that *really* look like?

Just let that question float around in your heart a bit, while you read on.

Let's say that you love running. This is something that brings much personal joy to you.

Okay. So that thing which you love (in this example) is running. There's more here, though.

Your *true peak*...comes from looking at this more deeply.

Perhaps it's in the running itself.

Perhaps, though, it is something more than that. Maybe it is in the freedom you feel out on a path in the woods (or along the city streets). Or maybe it is the strength you feel from being out, creating your own power to move your body. Or maybe the experience of seeing and feeling the world around you. Or being out in nature. Or whatever else that might be for you.

Great!

So, let's say that you love running because you love to be outside and there is a deep joy in experiencing the movement of your body.



What does this tell us?

What is your *true peak*?

And why does this matter?

Let's take a deeper look at these questions.

Using what we had above, let's say you love to run because of the strength you feel from the movement of your body.

Your *true peak*, then – is that place within you which comes alive. From the strength you feel when you run, you feel that extra burst of alive-ness.

See – you come alive when you move toward that place of "*true peak*".

And this matters because when you more fully know what that is for you, when your conscious awareness is increased, you begin to seek that place more in your life.

And it doesn't just have to be you, running through the streets of your neighborhood. If your "*true peak*" is in the strength you feel from running – then maybe this means that you can also create a similar experience in in your life from hiking as well. Or in some team sport. Or in personally pushing yourself to new limits.

And how about if we go deeper? Do you feel most alive when you are doing this solo? Or do you feel a stronger connection when you are with others? (and there are no right or wrong answers...as long as they speak from within you)

By more fully understanding "*you*", you create the space to more fully live from this place...daily.



This is YOUR LIFE.



Your life.

Are you living it?



The Jungle of Life

Your life. You are living it.

The question: are you really and fully living it?

This journey you are on, it's one that is uniquely yours. There are millions of paths that are out there as you travel through this life. Sometimes it's a challenge to see where these paths lead.

{ *"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." ~* }
Ralph Waldo Emerson

With all the "stuff" in the jungle of your life, perhaps you feel overwhelmed. So many paths available, so much undergrowth to get through, creatures along the way that you're not sure are friend or foe.

It's a jungle out there!

It's your jungle...it's your life.

You are the author, you are the adventurer, you are the explorer in this thing called your life.

Even when:

Even when it might feel like you have no choice...

You do.

Perhaps you feel handcuffed into this life you are living (or perhaps existing in). Maybe you're in a job that doesn't fulfill you. Perhaps you feel caught in a relationship that's challenging, or even abusive. Maybe you are doing what you do just



to give your kids a better start in life (let alone the life YOU are having). Perhaps you've experienced heartache, sickness, or other things that have been out of your control. LIFE.

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom." ~ Viktor E. Frankl

What is your response?

What is your response to this life you are living?

Moment by moment, step by step...you have the choice in how you respond.

What are you choosing?

See – this choice is always yours. ALWAYS. Your response to the moments of your life...

Choose from your heart...



As you continue on this path of your life journey, know that YOUR *true peak* is within you, and is a wonderful place to "be". Choose to live from that place.

Choose to dream big dreams.

Choose to follow the rainbow.



Choose to believe.

...believe in you...

And let your *true peak* reveal itself again and again, as you are continually re-made from that voice within your heart.

Who are you?



The Journey Continues

This journey you are on, it is uniquely yours.

As you continue down these paths, and the more deeply you connect with your own *true peak*, the more meaning your life will have.

"Joi de vivre" ~ the joy of life.

The joy of life is in the experience of being alive.

Create that life by connecting more deeply to your own *true peak*.

Jungle of Life: a journey toward your true peak

Congratulations! You are thinking about the amazing beauty you bring to this world.

I've given you a start on the path toward your *true peak*. Keep these thoughts of belief and possibility alive in you, and start taking steps toward more fully living in this place. Your thoughts, coupled with action toward reaching these new heights, will lead you to a place that has much meaning as your life experiences touch more deeply upon what matters.

Not sure what's next for you? I'm here to guide you on this journey.

- **Website:** [Jungle of Life](#) - a place dedicated to helping *you* shine! Ready to take the next step in that evolution of YOU? Check out my [Services](#) page!
- **Twitter:** Follow me [@lance02](#). It's all about connecting, sharing information, and helping you out!
- **Facebook:** Become a fan of the [Jungle of Life](#) – where you'll get Jungle updates, and see special offers.
- **Email:** Send me an email at Lance@jungleoflife.com or use my [Contact](#) page. I'm here to help you move more fully toward your *true peak*.
- **Skype:** Reach out to lance.ekum on Skype. Let's reach to new heights!
- **Phone:** Call me at 262.563.9293 if you're ready to take yourself to amazing new heights, and want assistance in getting there!

What's Next?

Continue to watch the [Jungle of Life](#) website, and look for updates in your email on the *Jungle Guides*, coming soon. These guides will be short, focused material – helping you to move forward in specific areas of your life.



Thank YOU

You have reached the end of this book. This journey you are on, though, the journey of your life – it is always beginning anew. Your *true peak* is calling out from within.

It is an honor to have you here, reading these thoughts. And it is because of you that I am here, and writing these words. You are an inspiration to me, and you are filled with so much possibility!

If you have any feedback on this e-book, please reach me at Lance@jungleoflife.com.

Share the Love

Jungle of Life: A Journey Toward Your True Peak is given out freely, and I encourage you to continue that. Please share this with anyone you know who might find value in it.

Journey on!

Lance

