



LIFE 03

# STEVE

What is success?

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**SITUATION:** Steve's problem was in many ways that he lived the average "American professional middle-aged-with-family" life. He felt life was just moving right along and he was more of an observer than player. Plagued by a low-grade anxiety, he often felt unmotivated, had low energy, and felt something "just wasn't right with his life."

Steve and his wife owned their house. They both worked. Their children were eight and eleven years old. However, other than the advancing age of his children, Steve could not separate one year from another, or weeks from other weeks. Day-to-day life occurred regularly. He watched football on Sunday afternoons and Monday nights in the fall; baseball in the spring and summer.

It disturbed Steve that, if the previous six years were any indication, he could predict what the next six would bring with a high degree of accuracy. When Steve first came to see Jody Michael Associates, he was sleepwalking his way through life.

**RESOLUTION:** In the first three months of weekly sessions with JMA, Steve's coach coaxed him to do things outside his comfort zone. He was guided to do an honest, diligent self-examination. It was something he and his friends had never done. Heck, he had spent more time planning his family vacations than he had ever done planning his life. In the discomfort of figuring out who he was at middle-age, Steve realized that the life he had been living had diverged from the life he once envisioned for himself. The divergence had occurred so long ago that he had given up; he had not dreamed, envisioned, or challenged himself in years.

Implementing small changes to get his inertia moving forward, Steve's coach taught him how minor adjustments in his thought could result in external change in his life. Slowly, as Steve unearthed more features of his authentic self, he began to differentiate those parts of his life that served him, from those that caused friction and anxiety. He realized he wanted to connect with his children more. Prime time television lost much of its appeal. He now had time to learn what sparked the imaginations of his kids. For the eight year old, it was team sports. His eleven-year old son was just getting into building model rockets.

After three months of observing the positive change in her husband, Steve's wife, Jane, asked to be introduced to Jody Michael Associates. She had spent so much time caring for her family that she had lost sight of her own needs. Working separately, both Steve and Jane were engaging in an essential indulgence, rediscovering the practices that fed them as individuals.

**OUTCOME:** Jane and Steve emerged from their coaching experiences invigorated. They were more active, more self-aware and more fulfilled. Each had learned what it feels like to live consciously. Furthermore, they both had tools to preserve and advance the deliberately effective lives they had created. Jane determined that she needed a 'self' separate from her family. With Steve's support, she found this extra space and time to care for and renew herself. Steve received a promotion and a \$20,000 increase in salary, while he got involved in the lives and interests of his children.

Following their work individually, Steve and Jane attended four coaching sessions together. In these meetings, JMA helped them incorporate the new identities they had created into their relationship together, found ways for each to support the other's individual growth, and gave them specific ideas that their children could model. The whole family benefited.