

WE SOCIAL MEN

PART ONE

A GUIDE TO FINDING
THE RIGHT PARTNER
IN THE OFFLINE WORLD
BY LIVING LIFE YOUR WAY

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This book is about the value it has in empowering you to grow. And just like you, we also love growing. To make this book even better, we would appreciate your feedback. If you would like to share your opinion or if you have a question, please contact hello@wesocialmen.com or call +31 (0) 20 261 9614.

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Thanks, granny.

Contents.

Introduction.	9
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Chapter 1: Creating direction in your life.

1.1. One big question.	17
1.2. The first exercise from the comfort of your chair.	26
1.3. Mindsets to lay the foundation.	31
1.4. Let's answer some more questions.	37
1.5. Four things to focus on.	57

Chapter 2: The inner motivation for living life your way.

2.1. The 3% rule.	65
2.2. It all starts with you.	68
2.3. Exploring your reasons.	73
2.4. Your way to Rome.	79
2.5. Wants are worth nothing.	83

Chapter 3: Step out of your comfort zone.

3.1. You are a social man.	89
3.2. Experiment with your thoughts.	92
3.3. Action in the streets.	96
3.4. Was that it?	102

Chapter 4: Finding the right partner offline.

4.1. Fortunately there's no magic pill.	107
4.2. Vulnerability is relieving.	110
4.3. How to start a conversation and more.	116
4.4. Accepting how you feel.	133
4.5. The next step.	138

Chapter 5: Sharing more of yourself.

5.1. Who you are, not what you are.	141
5.2. There is always a next chance.	146
5.3. How to finish a conversation.	154
5.4. The business partner of Warren Buffet once said...	158
5.5. Now it's your turn.	161

Appendix. Structure your bigger picture.	163
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The Cambridge Dictionary has the following to say about the word *social*: “relating to activities in which you meet and spend time with other people.” That’s not what a ‘Social’MAN is.

A SocialMAN is someone who:

- chooses to create his own life on the basis of love, not fear
- shares his life with the right people that match each other
- is okay with being silent and is interested in others
- recognises that other people are themselves, too
- understands matters with compassion
- is proactive in all areas of life
- contributes in value
- loves himself
- has fun

With this vision of a SocialMAN, we create a world in which people grow *together*, instead of *apart*.

Am I there yet? Do I do and have everything on this long list? No.

What I have with this is a mindset. A direction. I know from how far I’ve come. I have seen how far others have come. I know what results you can get joining this mindset since I have experienced it myself, and others. In my world, there is only plan A. This is my plan A. What will you do?

INTRODUCTION.

Wayne Dyer, a spiritual teacher, once said: “When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” Actually he probably said it more than once, but the purpose of this sentence is, in my opinion, a very profound one. I’ll explain with a story.

Some time ago I heard a story about an alcoholic father and his two sons. The sons grew up while their father wasn’t there for them. This made things a bit more difficult for them, so to say. During that time, they felt rejected and hurt by their father.

What was interesting, though, was that although the two brothers had the same father, they both experienced a life very different from each other.

One son, or brother, was in a loving relationship with a wife and children of his own. He had a fulfilling job and he felt happy inside. He did sports, had an occasional drink with his friends, and just generally had fun in life. Of course, he had his ups and downs, but they weren’t too bad and since he was stable, the ups were never too far away from the downs.

The other son, or brother, was alone. He didn’t have a wife or kids. He felt frustrated and unhappy with his work and did it just because he had to. When he came home from work, instead of, say, going to the gym, he opened a can of beer so that he didn’t have to feel so frustrated, unhappy or lonely. Yes, he became an alcoholic, just like his father.

When an interviewer asked the sons why they were the way they were, they both gave the same answer: “Because my father was an alcoholic.”

What I find interesting is that two brothers, with almost the same upbringing, lived completely different lives from each other. That makes me wonder. And personally, I can

relate to such a story. Not that my father was an alcoholic, but to the feelings of rejection and loneliness.

When I was around 14 years old, my parents broke up. My dad moved abroad for a few years and while living with my mum, she got a new boyfriend. He became an alcoholic and even dragged my mother into it for a short while. There were also some other bad things that were happening at the time, and my whole world was turned upside down. Even though I was lucky to have the support of a few people around me, I felt rejected, confused and alone. I shut off my heart from myself and other people. When someone came close, I just pushed them away.

Now, I could blame everybody who was involved at the time, which I did... But it wasn't empowering for myself and the people around me. I believe that my curiosity allowed me to become acutely aware of a few things. Myself, my life, and the people around me. This changed my perspective.

Instead of choosing to live life as a victim and blame everyone else, I chose to take responsibility for my own life and learn from what I saw around me. To use it as inspiration. Not as desperation.

Looking back on the story of the two brothers, the first brother saw his alcoholic father as inspiration. He told the interviewer that he felt gratitude and compassion towards him and this gave him a loving life which he shared with others.

The other brother told the interviewer he was angry with his father. More than 20 years later he still lived in the past and complained about him. This resulted in an unfulfilling, lonely life.

Two different lives. Two different perspectives. Both coming from a similar experience. "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." The first brother saw it as inspiration. The other as desperation. The results are clear.

This book will give you the tools to change your perspective yourself if you feel you want to and you're ready. Well, you picked up this book so it's probably safe to assume you are, in

fact, ready. Your life will change. Not just you: your perspective. You will create new awareness.

Reading is good, but taking action is even better. This book is here to empower you to also take action. This book is not *the* way to Rome, because there are many ways that lead to Rome. But it's *a* way, and maybe it's the way you need.

What I will share in this book is my journey. My way to Rome, which empowered me to be who and where I am today. I know that this can empower you, too, to move towards a life similar to that of the first son. Regardless of your past. I've seen others do it, too.

Everybody has their own story. The thing is, what are you going to do with that story? Brené Brown, a best-selling author, put it beautifully when she said, "When we deny our stories, they define us. When we own our stories, we get to write a brave new ending." I chose to own my story. I chose to empower others to do the same. You need to choose for yourself. What choice will you make?

To help you make your own choice, this book talks about meditation and describes tools to learn to love yourself. This will empower you, for example, to let go of what other people could think of you. In time you will be able to accept yourself for who you are. This book gives you the tools to know what you want from life. I will ask you many questions about the four areas of life: love, health, wealth and happiness. You will get the tools to investigate why – your inner-motivation. This can give you a sense of purpose in life. You will get the tools to step outside of your comfort zone on the street. This can empower you to share more of yourself. Not in a braggart way, but in a way of gaining experience in letting go of limiting beliefs like anxiety when approaching people. You will get tools on how to start, hold and finish a conversation with a person you like during the day. This way you can find the right partner offline to spend your life with.

Those are some of the results I have achieved. Those are some of the results members of WeSocialMEN have achieved. And those are some of the results you, too, can achieve. Of course I can't promise you will, but if you make the effort, you will improve your life one way or another. This book is part one of, probably, two.

As mentioned on the back cover, Carl Jung, a well-known psychotherapist, said that we can experience four stages in life, regardless of age or accomplishments.

- I The athlete: the least mature and most self-absorbed stage. There are many people who never get past it. This is that stage I was at when I started to blame everybody else around me.
- II The warrior: this is where we begin to take responsibility and focus on our goals. This stage is characterised by the struggles in our lives that early adulthood can throw at us. People in this stage talk about 're-inventing' themselves.
- III The statement: here you mature on a deeper level. This stage means it's time to reflect on what you have accomplished, and how you can continue to move forward. But not only for yourself: also for other people in your life.
- IV The spirit: in this stage, you realise that you are more than you have accumulated. That you are a spiritual being having a human experience.

At the moment of writing, I continuously shift between stages 2 and the beginnings of stage 3. And I make some forays already into stage 4. Part two of this book is about moving into stages 3 and 4 completely, but please give me some time to do so. This part is about escaping stage 1 and reaching stage 2, and, depending on how you are doing, maybe even explore stage 3 a little.

I should also say that this book is written from a masculine, heterosexual, male perspective. 80% is based on my life experiences and 20% on book knowledge. As a masculine heterosexual man, you can read this book for example to empower your feminine side when connecting with others. As a feminine heterosexual man, you can read this book for example to empower your masculine side when going for what you want. As a masculine or feminine homosexual man, you can read this book for example to approach a man you like during the day. As a masculine or feminine woman, you can read this book for example to gain a perspective of the struggles men have in the dating and relationship arena to gain a better understanding and more compassion. In other

words, although this book is called WE SOCIAL MEN, this book is for anyone who is open to it.

The perspective I have created of the things that happened *for* (rather than *to*) me in my youth empowered me to change my life completely and open my heart again. But I went through many ups and downs. This book is about the journey to empower you. You decide how far you'll travel.

And most importantly: have fun!

Robin Kastermans
Founder of WeSocialMEN

CHAPTER ONE.

CREATING DIRECTION IN YOUR LIFE.

WESOCIALMEN

1.1. ONE BIG QUESTION.

Okay, here's a question: "Do you love yourself?"

Some time ago my mentor asked me this question. There I was, sitting on his sailing boat and letting the question *sink* in.

After a bit of thinking about it, I got annoyed and my inner-voice told me things like, "Who the hell does he think he is?" "Is he trying to break me or something?" And, "Is he asking this for the money?" Looking back on these thoughts, it shouldn't be a mystery what my answer at the time was. Somewhere deep down I already knew I had a lot of potential, but my first inner-response in that very moment was this.

After I thought about it longer, my first answer was, "Erm, I guess I do..." Lars, the mentor in question, smiled and remained calm. He listened carefully to what I said and simply repeated the question: "Robin, do you love yourself?"

I thought about it more seriously. I started to really *try* to see if I loved myself. Yes, or no? And also how much I loved myself. I felt tension in my body, my breathing became shorter and faster. These were all signs that I didn't love myself that much, since he was able to push my buttons so easily with the question. Still, I didn't share these thoughts and feelings. Why? Because my ego was there trying to protect me. That's the main purpose of your ego, trying to help you survive by protecting you, and me, from feeling pain, shame, vulnerability and more things we don't want to feel. Back then, I was aware of my ego, but I had a lot to learn. I let my ego lead me instead of the other way around.

Well, prepare yourself. Over the course of this book you will get many opportunities to live your life the other way around. To lead yourself. To not be led by your ego.

What I was doing at that time when talking with him was I was walking away from the truth: I had thoughts and feelings that showed me I didn't love myself deeply. This was the first time I became aware of them and I did not have the guts to