



10 WAYS  
TO RISE ABOVE  
THE STATUS QUO

# CRUSHING MEDIOCRITY

RENÉ BANGLES DORF  
& LISA COPELAND

## What leaders are saying about **Crushing Mediocrity**:

Crushing Mediocrity serves as a catalyst to success for those that might find mediocrity or complacency forming in their businesses, families, and/or everything in between. René and Lisa's real-life anecdotes support principles that they've found useful during their time as mothers, wives, and successful business leaders. This book is a useful tool to help recognize and steer away from mediocrity and focus toward a meaningful existence and success in your professional and personal life.

-RC Buford, President, San Antonio Spurs,  
2015-2016 NBA Executive of the Year

After decades of business consulting, we know that everyone wants to be exceptional. But to have any hope of breaking away from the pack, you have to learn how to stand out, clearly define your purpose, and recover when you fall. In this fun-to-read and yet important book, René Banglesdorf and Lisa Copeland provide a road map for success in business and life. They write from their own rich experience, and also introduce us to a cast of fascinating people who have made a difference in this world by Crushing Mediocrity.

-Adrian Gostick & Chester Elton  
New York Times bestselling authors of *All In*,  
*What Motivates Me* & *The Carrot Principle*

If you want inspiring, yet practical, road-tested, and easy-to-absorb advice for rising above the crowd and turning adversity into fuel for massive success, confidence, fulfillment, and happiness, then *Crushing Mediocrity* is for you. It's a must-have-now, read-more-than-once field guide that belongs in your professional library.

-Patti DeNucci, author *The Intentional Networker*:  
*Attracting Powerful Relationships,*  
*Referrals & Results in Business*

Kudos for this keen insight on how to rise above the status quo by crushing mediocrity. Like the WPO 50 Fastest Growing Women-Owned/Led Companies Guide to Growth, *Crushing Mediocrity* offers real life stories about the hurdles experienced along the way in climbing the ladder of success as well as actionable tips leaders can use to avoid getting stuck. We all want to leave a positive and meaningful legacy.

-Dr. Marsha Firestone, President & Founder,  
Women Presidents' Organization

In *Crushing Mediocrity*, René and Lisa weave practical advice with personal stories to identify how to leave a legacy that matters. We've seen some of the most successful leaders in the world take these steps . . . they work.

-John and Lisa Bevere, Best-Selling Authors  
Founders of Messenger International

*Crushing Mediocrity* brings the depth and breadth of Lisa and René's experiences to light as they reveal the secrets of how to become more effective leaders. The book takes a very common sense approach to mapping the way to standing out and becoming an agent of change within an organization. I found it to be insightful and inspiring; it is required reading for anyone who wishes to take their career to the next level.

-Tim Watts, President/CEO, Victorville Motors Inc.  
Desert Alfa Romeo/FIAT

*Crushing Mediocrity* is an easy read that makes a life changing point. Not settling for the status quo is the key to leaving the world a better place than you found it. Whether you need to face a fear or get out of a rut Lisa and René guide you through the steps to do it with a positive, can-do approach while engendering a willingness to mentor others along the way. The book reminds us not to settle for mediocrity but rather to set goals and self-expectations high then continuously strive to achieve them.

-Lisa S. Richardson, attorney

We all want to rise above the status quo. This book unravels the challenges that you may face in crushing mediocrity, such as leaving behind the ever-so-easy comfort zone, what it really means to own your choices, why it's important to be teachable, the vital importance of working together with others, how to stand out from the crowd, how to leverage your fears, how to face failure and finally how to be a good and positive change as you leave behind the status quo and find yourself in a whole new realm of possibility. Lisa and René's instruction makes this less-traveled path more predictable, understood, workable and achievable. It is a fantastic read for anyone who is called to live a joyful, passionate life and at service of a much greater purpose in life.

-Kate Pejman, CEO & Founder  
Pejman International Training Center Inc.

*Crushing Mediocrity* delivers a unique perspective on how to best navigate your life out of "neutral mode." Ultimately, René and Lisa isolate the top 10 steps that are essential for both personal and professional success. The principles that René and Lisa outline are not simply based on anecdotal evidence, but instead validated by their remarkable success in male dominated industries. I would recommend *Crushing Mediocrity* to anyone that is struggling in an area of their life or to those looking to take their game to the next level.

-Todd Stewart, CSO, Dealer Wizard, LLC

René Banglesdorf and Lisa Copeland, authors of *Crushing Mediocrity: 10 Ways to Rise Above The Status Quo*, have written a succinct manifesto on navigating life with confidence and purpose. The chapter on using your influence for good really resonated with me personally. Living a purpose-filled life by making a greater impact for good is the best way to Crush Mediocrity in our lives and in our world. After you read and apply these principles to your own life story, gift this book to the women in your life so they can join you in a #**CrushingIt** life.

-Jody DeVere, CEO, AskPatty.com

For more than a decade, we have watched René and Lisa steadily rise above the status quo in every area of their lives and careers. The principles they teach in *Crushing Mediocrity* are timeless and well-proven in both of their lives. It is a must-read for leaders who have grown tired of complacency and lackluster performance.

-Joe and Lori Champion, Pastors, Celebration Church  
Association of Related Churches Board Members

Wow. Every chapter in this book hits on some relevant emotion, challenging me to rise up and join with other like-minded women to impact the world. The fact that these authors have excelled outside of “typical” female-populated businesses underlines their advice that once you identify your purpose, you are so focused on fulfilling that purpose that you are willing to take risks, make choices, face fears and failure with confidence, work together, continue to learn, give back, and influence the world. If we support and encourage each other, we can all impact and move through life greater than we can alone!

-Dr. Natalie Phillips, Au.D.

Crushing Mediocrity serves as a strong reminder that life is all about making choices. The decisions we make during challenging times are likely the ones that have the most profound impact on our lives. Lisa and René are great examples of women who have chosen to empower themselves to succeed as leaders in male-dominated industries. Years of wisdom are shared through the powerful stories included in this book.

-Jose Puente, GM & Founder of Flexdrive,  
a Cox Automotive company

In a world where pundits are found on every minute of cable news, it’s refreshing to hear from true change agents who’ve actually made the tough choices and done the hard work to build successful businesses and revolutionize their respective industries. The title of this book just grabbed you because a desire to crush mediocrity is embedded within all of us. Banglesdorf and Copeland have done it. You can too.

-David Pyle, Senior Vice President, Cox Automotive Inc.

# **CRUSHING MEDIOCRITY**

10 WAYS TO RISE ABOVE  
THE STATUS QUO

by René Banglesdorf  
& Lisa Copeland



# Introduction

What do you want out of life?

Seriously, is your goal to finish in the middle of the pack, with a humdrum existence, unremarkable career, or average kids? We hope not. It doesn't benefit any of us. Yet many people today seem to be drifting in a river of mediocrity. Some may blame it on "the system," or lack of opportunities, or too low of a minimum wage. They may have experienced a troubled childhood, a missed promotion, or a divorce. But everyone has at least one thing in common: the option to rise above the status quo, to crush mediocrity, and to change the world around them.

The truth is, *You* have the option to do all of these things. You too can improve your world, rise above the status quo, and crush mediocrity. And you can make an impact right where you are today. Whether you are young or old, male or female, a teacher's aide or a senator, a mechanic or a CFO, a police woman or a stay-at-home-dad, you can leave a mark on your world. It will take determination and hard work, but you can do it. Even if it means adopting a new perspective or enduring a less-than-comfortable change, we know you can do it. We can all do it! Just imagine the possibilities if we all are brave enough to make that pledge and see it through.

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Together we could improve our lives, our families, our communities, our schools, our churches, our penal system, our nation, our planet.

One of our friends has taken exactly that approach. Gigi Edwards Bryant grew up in the Texas foster care system five decades ago. She was separated from her three siblings, shuffled through more than 20 homes over the course of 12 years. And to make it even worse, she was sexually abused by several foster family members. With such a background, she was expected to fail by the very system that was created to protect her. Gigi had every reason to simply adopt a victim mentality and become a despondent statistic. However, she clung to her grandmother's teachings of faith and instead of becoming a sad statistic, she built a legacy.

Gigi chose a path that required everything she had and then some. Instead of the popular liberal arts route, Gigi studied computer science in college while caring for her family and holding down a full-time job, and not at the local burger joint either. She worked at several state agencies, including the Comptroller of Public Accounts, Parks and Wildlife, and the Texas Legislative Council. But even that wasn't enough for her. Gigi made it her life's goal to serve as an advocate for education and for the young people she now calls "our children" in the child protective services program.

She got involved in the community, something she never had the opportunity to do as she was shuffled from "home" to "home" and school to school while growing up. As an active volunteer, she eventually was appointed as chair of the Texas School Safety Center by Governor George W. Bush. She also was recognized by Governor Rick Perry when asked to be the head of the Texas Department of Family Protective Services Advisory Council—a place she knew she could make a difference because she had experienced the problems first-hand.



Gigi regularly shocks us with how wide and how far her reach extends in making an impact. Recently a group of us were enjoying a relaxing day at the spa (lounging around in nondescript white robes sans makeup), when Gigi said, “Oh, there’s my friend Gayle King. We worked on some stuff together. Do you want to meet her?” Of course, we did. The CBS morning-show host and Oprah’s best friend invited us to pull up chairs and hear how impactful our humble friend Gigi has been. We had no idea.

Today Gigi holds a board position at Austin Community College, which provides vocational training or continuing education for more than 50,000 students a year. She works relentlessly to help others rise above their circumstances, no matter their beginnings. She says she focuses her life’s work around education and foster children because these institutions affected her life so greatly.

Gigi’s mark on the world was born from a painful childhood, limited choices, and a determination not to settle for the status quo. Your mark on this world begins with who you are and accelerates with what you do with what you have. It’s found in intentional daily living, with an end in mind.

As business leaders and authors, our lives also have been marked by daily decisions—the good choices as well as the bad ones. Through it all, we have found our own ways to move ahead, blazing a trail for our families, our careers and our communities.

We both found our opportunities to disrupt the status quo in good-ole-boy networks—automotive and aviation. While being women in male-dominated industries does present unique challenges, we’ve discovered some foundational truths that transcend gender, job fields, or responsibilities. These are common denominators in earning a good reputation, building healthy personal and professional relationships, and leaving an extraordinary

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legacy. We both follow practices that help us disrupt the status quo in our industries and challenge mediocrity in our spheres of influence. This is what we hope to impart to you.

Named as one of the most powerful women in automotive this decade by *Automotive News*, Lisa sits among the most elite businesspeople in the country as a revolutionary in her industry. As managing partner of the Austin Fiat dealership, Lisa helped launch the Fiat brand in the United States and held the spot as the number one dealership for four out of five years in that role. She served four terms on Fiat Chrysler Automobiles' National Dealer Council, won several national best workplace awards, and is an advocate for women in the automotive industry.

René owns and runs a private jet sales company, also in Austin. She and her husband started Charlie Bravo Aviation in 2008, just before the general aviation industry began the worst downward spiral since the Wright brothers started powered flight. By using the principles outlined in the following chapters, she has managed to build the company into one of the top aircraft brokerages in the world, and one of the few woman-led companies of its type. In a 96-percent male-led industry, René's aim has been to promote higher integrity in a vastly unregulated market and to encourage more women to consider aircraft ownership or careers in the aviation field.

While both of us have succeeded as women in fast-paced, male-dominated fields, our personalities are as different as can be. Lisa's bold, visionary, outgoing nature contrasts with René's analytical, more introverted personality. That's how we know these principles work universally. We each use them from completely different perspectives.

The two of us believe in standing our ground, performing at a high level, and maintaining a healthy

quality of life against all odds. We don't subscribe to ideas like settling, good enough, and status quo, and neither of us encourages people who complain about the way things are but do nothing about it.

We still strive to do the things our parents taught us as children growing up on opposite sides of the country—putting our best foot forward, telling the truth, earning our way, and respecting those around us—but as we look around, those qualities don't seem to be valued anymore.

Communication by text messaging, online dating, always-on-24/7 jobs fueled by smartphone applications, and unprecedented access to information have disrupted the way we learned to relate as well as how we balance and enjoy success. Coming advances in artificial intelligence may help clear some of the clutter, but they also give us more excuses to drift or coast or settle. If that's not what we want, we must do something disruptive ourselves.

We're ready to work diligently and make some sacrifices for the sake of generations to come, and it's our sincere hope that if you are drawn to this book, you are too. Crushing mediocrity is a lifestyle we embrace from a shared belief that what we see evolving in today's society is not the legacy we want to leave. So together, we are raising a battle cry to transform the future into something we can all celebrate. We want to continue impacting our sphere of influence in a positive way, and we want to challenge you to do the same.

That is the impetus for this book. We decided to start the conversation about rising above our mistakes, shortcomings, and epic failures. Even if just a small percentage of people join us in the challenge to crush mediocrity, we can change the world.

This movement starts with us, and it starts with you. We may not know your exact struggles or fears. We may not know the challenges that stand in your way, but we are intimately acquainted with ours. Some we still face

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every day. However, we persevere, recover, strategize, renegotiate, thicken our skin, and take more risks. When the odds are overwhelmingly against us, we don't run, quit, or shrug our shoulders and say, "Well, at least we got this far." No, we focus on the legacy we are determined to build, and we keep going. You can do the same.

When we all focus on rising above the status quo, we can turn complacency into life-saving innovations and global competitiveness. We can replace political correctness with authenticity, and come up with real solutions to social ills. We can stop "just minding our own business" and get involved in making a difference in the lives of others. Together, we can encourage and mentor a generation that's growing up on social media to make an unprecedented impact on the real world. They have short attention spans and lack long-term planning skills. They need our guidance. We *must* inspire, empower, encourage and motivate them.

We can't do any of this by pointing fingers, and we certainly can't do it alone. Our success depends on you joining the fight.

Be brave. Crush mediocrity. Take some risks. Redefine *your* legacy. The world is waiting for you to do something to change it. What are you waiting for?

# 1

## Identify Your Purpose

*We believe your unique purpose helps you rise above the status quo.*

Most toddlers have a favorite word: *why*. It signals a sense of wonderment and inquisitiveness. This curiosity makes three-year-olds both endearing and annoying.

As we age, our questions shift from “Why is the sky blue?” or “Why did that man say a bad word?” to the more complex: “Why do bad things happen to good people?” and “Why am I here?”

Our questions become driven less by an insatiable appetite to learn, and more from a lack of fulfillment in our lives. We believe there should be more to life.

Why is life so hard to figure out? Maybe it’s because we haven’t found our true purpose yet or maybe we’re trying to be someone we are not.

According to the Association for Psychological Science, developing a sense of purpose may add years to your life. Patrick Hill of Carleton University in Canada and Nicholas Turiano of the University of Rochester Medical Center studied over 6,000 people and did a follow-up 14 years later.<sup>1</sup> They concluded those who reported a greater

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sense of purpose and direction in life were more likely to outlive their peers.

Lead researcher Patrick Hill said: “Our findings point to the fact that finding direction for life, and setting overarching goals for what you want to achieve can help you actually live longer, regardless of when you find your purpose. So the earlier someone comes to a direction for life, the earlier these protective effects may be able to occur.”

Anthony Burro, a developmental psychologist at Cornell University, tested this theory. Not only did he concur, but he found that those who found a sense of purpose also protected themselves from much of the stress in their lives.<sup>2</sup>

We believe you are on this earth for a unique purpose; you are here to share your gifts, talents, skills, and life experiences. This purpose gets you out of bed in the morning and helps you continue in the face of adversity. It also awards you the greatest sense of accomplishment. You may not know what your purpose is or how to pursue it, but the world is missing out on something if you are unable or unwilling to discover or fulfill it.

Unless you are intentional about your purpose, you slide toward *living a life without purpose*. Try as you might, without purpose, you will feel aimless, chaotic, pointless, random, indecisive, fruitless, impotent, inconsequential, ineffective, and trivial. Who wants any of that?

As a couple of boot-wearing Texas women, we are committed to crushing that mediocre mindset. In this book, we share stories and practical applications we’ve learned. It’s our hope to leave you with clear

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**When you are are not  
walking in all you could  
be, you can become  
mired in mediocrity.**

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ideas for crushing mediocrity, first in your life, then in the lives of those you influence most, and finally in the world around you. We won't claim to have arrived, but we're willing to share our journey and labor with you along the way.

### **Find Your Underlying Purpose**

We believe that to rise above the status quo, you need to know and operate in your underlying purpose. If you don't know why you are here—or you feel like your mission might need some refining—the next few pages should help. If you already know what your purpose is, use the following points and suggestions to help others find theirs.

We define our underlying purpose as our *why*. If you haven't seen Simon Sinek's Ted Talk<sup>3</sup> or read his book *Start with Why*,<sup>4</sup> we highly recommend them. Simon suggests that many people can tell you what they do and how they do it, but they fail to define why they're doing it. He gives examples of individuals and companies who can define what they do and how they do it, but by starting with the "why," they become radically different from their competitors.

An underlying purpose fuels you. It guides your career choices, your extracurricular activities and even the way your personality develops over time. Thinking about it keeps you up at night. Purpose drives you to keep going when your brain tells you to quit. It awakens you and inspires you.

Lisa's underlying purpose is to empower women. Outside of her family, everything she chooses to do stems from this passion. Lisa is known as an automotive sales expert. In fact, she owned one of the best car dealerships in the nation. But her purpose is not in breaking sales records. It's to help women feel valued in every aspect of life. It's hiring women and teaching them sales or

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management skills. It's chairing the American Heart Association initiative to educate women about the risks of heart disease. It's raising a half a million dollars to fund STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) initiatives for Girl Scouts. It's helping other automotive leaders develop a culture that engages, encourages, and empowers women.

If you look at Lisa's social media outlets, you see all sorts of encouragement for women, from personal congratulations, to inspirational quotes, and even funny pictures. The causes and charities she supports primarily serve women. No doubt about it, Lisa's purpose is to empower women.

René's underlying purpose is coming up with creative solutions to problems. She feels most fulfilled when she negotiates a contract, helps someone navigate a difficult situation, figures out a clear and accurate way to tell a story, or equips others to make good decisions. She funds charities that help people help themselves, from the Feeding Cabo Kids fishing boat ministry to an anti-trafficking organization in Cambodia that rescues women and teaches them how to design and sew purses from reclaimed fabrics.

Her purpose is somewhat harder to peg than others because it operates under the surface in everything she does. But if you look closely, it's the common denominator to her passions, not the outward display.

It took time for us to figure out how to teach people how they can discover their purpose. After quite a bit of research and a few marathon dinner conversations, we decided there are many ways to go about the process. You might already have a good idea. Sometimes life circumstances change your purpose. At the end of the day, you must explore the possibilities. Here are some concepts that may help:



### **You Just Know**

Lisa's purpose never really needed to be uncovered. In her words, "It's just who I am," and everyone else knows it too. For instance, a few years back she got a call from another car dealer who told her she just had to meet a young woman named Stacy Johnson. He said that Lisa would love her because she was a single mom trying to make a difference in the world.

Not only did Lisa meet Stacy, but she also ended up hiring her, even though she knew that Stacy would be there for only a short time. Stacy grew up in foster care, and she had a dream and a passion for opening a foster house that would make a difference to some hurting kids. Lisa opened her heart and her contact list and did everything possible to help Stacy. Sure enough, six months later, Lisa was there to celebrate the grand opening of Stacy's foster house.

The mutual friend who called knew Lisa well enough to know that she would want to invest in this young world-changer. And by operating in her underlying purpose, Lisa empowered someone else to crush mediocrity and fulfill her own underlying purpose.

### **You Build Upon a Crisis**

René met Kisha Makerney when she guest-hosted a television show that honored wounded veterans with fun hunting trips. Kisha was in her early 20s and had a prosthetic leg. Her story is inspiring. She completed her first tour of duty in Iraq at age 19. When she came home, she took her motorcycle to a local store to rent a movie. After experiencing a front tire blow out, she lost control of the bike and hit a road sign. Her leg was severed in the crash. She was in a ditch, alone, her leg attached only by a piece of ligament.

Her first thought about her future was not that she wouldn't be able to wear high heels at her wedding, nor

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feel the sand with all ten toes. Kisha's first thought was that because she had only one leg, the Army would never let her go back to train soldiers in an oppressed part of the world. She had dreamed of serving her country her entire life, and now, just three short years into living her dream, it was threatened by a crisis.

Through a lot of hard work and a strong faith, Kisha became the first woman to return to a combat zone with a prosthetic limb when she was deployed to Iraq in 2008. Then, after she came back to the States from this second tour, she became a highly competitive sharpshooter. Mastering that, Kisha set out to accomplish another first. She earned a warrant officer slot with the Army's Rotary Wing Flight Program, which made her the first Army amputee with a prosthetic limb to challenge the Army's flight school.

Kisha has had to battle for good medical attention because her injury didn't occur in the line of duty. She worked through discrimination, an abusive relationship, and a prosthesis so ill-fitting she is often on crutches to continue living her purpose to protect our country. That's crushing mediocrity and building a legacy of hope for those who follow.

### **You Answer a Higher Calling**

We would be remiss in not mentioning the most popular book of all time regarding purpose, Rick Warren's *Purpose-Driven Life*.<sup>5</sup> Rick starts his book with two quotes. The first from atheist Bertrand Russell: "Unless you assume a God, the question of life's purpose is meaningless." The second quote is Colossians 1:16 from the Message translation of the Bible, "For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, ... everything got started in [God] and finds its purpose in him."

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Rick goes on to say that our purpose is not about us: The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind, or even your happiness. It's far greater than your family, your career, or even your wildest dreams and ambitions. If you want to know why you were placed on this planet, you must begin with God. You were born by his purpose and for his purpose.

The search for the purpose of life has puzzled people for thousands of years. That's because we typically begin at the wrong starting point – ourselves. We ask self-centered questions like what do *I* want to be? What should *I* do with *my* life? What are *my* goals, *my* ambitions, *my* dreams for *my* future? But focusing on ourselves will never reveal our life's purpose.

No one epitomizes this better than our friend Lori Champion. Lori, her mom, and her two younger brothers always sat in the front row at her dad's church in New Orleans. One particular Sunday, when the car was packed to leave for spring break right after service, Lori's life changed forever. In the middle of the sermon, her father had a heart attack and fell dead at the pulpit.

After that loss, Lori went to Louisiana State University to study advertising because she was determined not to follow in her family's footsteps to go into the ministry. She felt she had sacrificed enough. But she eventually realized that she couldn't escape her calling. Lori feels her underlying purpose is to connect people to their destiny. She does that today as a senior pastor at a large church in Austin, as the head of women's ministries for the Association of Related Churches, as an advisor for Women of Faith, and as someone who doesn't forget anyone.

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Lori can remember details from conversations years earlier that help her connect people who she believes might work well together or bond over a common experience. With thousands of church members, it's remarkable that she knows so many people by name, but she claims this kind of gift is what happens when you're living your God-given purpose. Hers is to connect people to their destiny.

### **You Do Some Soul Searching**

You may feel that you're not that passionate about any one thing and that if you could just stir up some strong emotions about anything, maybe it would inspire you to do something significant. René's search for her purpose took this path.

After a milestone birthday, she began questioning herself about what she was doing with her life and how she wanted to be remembered at the end of it. Her questions remained unanswered. Meanwhile, to come up with fresh marketing messaging for her company, she signed up for a Media Bombshell seminar, which turned into something different than what she expected.

In a small group setting of all women, the leader, Ellie Brett, asked each woman to identify her character strengths. Then she asked them what characteristics they saw in each person in the group, people they had only met that morning. The results were surprising. Each woman learned something new about herself that day. Ellie then told the participants to go home and ask those closest to them what they observed. René complied.

She was told she was confident, detail-oriented, honest, discerning, a good manager, and diplomatic. Her husband said she was a problem solver. Her daughter-in-law told her that she didn't let conflict simmer: she got it on the table at the first opportunity and dealt with it.

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René reflected on her strengths along with the things she enjoyed in life and work—performing to the best of her ability, having harmony, making others better by being around her, and learning new things.

Then she looked for a common denominator. She likes puzzles. She majored in journalism to investigate stories. She loves her job when there's a fresh challenge. And voila, the purpose revealed itself, like a gold nugget in a pan of silt and rock. René's underlying purpose is to get to the bottom of things and solve problems in a way that others might not have considered. She likes the combination of creativity and analysis.

If you haven't identified your purpose yet—or if you're living it and trying to help others find one—you are reading the right book. We've identified four different ways you can find your purpose. However, having an idea of what your purpose might be without acting on it won't do you any good. We challenge you to find your purpose and exercise the fortitude to fulfill it. For either task, here's where you can start.

First, think about your character strengths. Write them down. Don't do it later, do it now. Grab a pen and paper or write in this book (okay, take notes electronically if you are reading an e-book.) Go ahead. Get the pen!

Now, list your character strengths. Be honest with yourself.

Second, ask others what they see in you. You might not be able to do that this very moment but make a point of doing it soon, while your curiosity is fresh. For now, work with your list of your character strengths.

Third, identify the things you love to do. Then analyze what it is you love about them.

Fourth, examine the lists, the list of your strengths and the list of things you're passionate about. We can't tell you exactly when it will happen, but it's right about

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this point when an underlying theme starts to make itself known. If not, you may have to dig deeper.

As an example, we can look at René's son Jake who is passionate about college football. It connects him with people. He played football. He can talk about football intelligently. He can share an afternoon building a friendship with someone while watching a football game. It's all about relationships for him. Football is merely a conduit that allows him to foster friendships and professional relationships. His underlying purpose is to build relationships.

Identifying your underlying purpose may require some soul searching and some analytical thinking. But once you figure out what awakens you, what keeps you going, at what part of the day you get your second wind, and what makes you pump your fist in the air, your purpose will become clear to you, which is a fist-pumping occasion if there ever was one.

Now, begin making choices based on purpose. Those choices will help you build a legacy that changes the world.

**You can order the rest of the book on Amazon or  
[www.crushingitacademy.com/merchandise](http://www.crushingitacademy.com/merchandise).**

To learn more about the #CrushingIt movement, visit us at [www.crushingitacademy.com](http://www.crushingitacademy.com). We also invite you to share your #CrushingIt story on our facebook page!

A photograph of two women embracing in front of a private jet. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and is wearing a dark top. The woman on the right has long red hair, is wearing a blue and black striped blazer over a black dress, and black thigh-high boots. They are both smiling. The background shows the tail section of a white private jet with red and gold stripes.

Are you surrounded by people who are stuck in the "status quo" or satisfied with participation trophies? Is this mediocrity your new standard? Have you settled for a mundane existence, as it would appear millions of people have? Is that what you envisioned for your family, your workplace, or your community?

The truth is, you have the option to improve your world, rise above the status quo, and crush mediocrity. With some genuine encouragement and a little guidance, you can take the first steps to making a much bigger impact, starting right where you are today.

No matter your age, your circumstances, your background, or your struggles with fear and failure, you can make choices today that will transform your life and legacy into something great.

*"The world is waiting for you to do something to change it. What are you waiting for?"*

