

The best way to predict the future is to create it.” Abraham Lincoln

What’s Your Secret Sauce?

First of all, AWESOME job for getting to this page in the book. I hope you enjoyed the story of Lucy and how she shared her Secret Sauce with Mrs. Rock’s class and the impact she had on them. You too can and will make an impact on others’ lives—just like Lucy. Your Secret Sauce is sitting, waiting, and hoping you will slow your life down to be able to hear it, feel it, sense it, identify it, develop it, and finally, share it! If you are ready, say, “I’m ready.” Let’s get it!

Step 1

LISTEN. Listen to what your mind, body, and spirit are telling you. So often, we get uncomfortable sitting idly. The first step to identifying your Secret Sauce is to listen. Find the space in which you listen best. For me, it is walking in nature or at least in my neighborhood. I walk with no phone, no music, no distractions. Just walk and listen. What is that voice in your head telling you? What do you hope to stand for? What type of person do you want to be? What are your values, principles, morals?

Step 2

CHANGE. Realize that the person you are now as you read this is not the same person you will be as you identify and re-identify your Secret Sauce. Dr. Daniel Gilbert states, “Human beings are works in progress that mistakenly think they are finished.” What does this mean exactly to you? Take a breath and know and trust that life is about life-long learning. As I write this, I am 53 years old. I hope that upon my 54th birthday, I am a changed man. As soon as I stop learning, reaching, failing, growing, I will lose my way, my being, my ability to add some spice to my Secret Sauce.

Step 3

BE INTENTIONAL. Be intentional with who you want to become. I want to become the best at using the pizza-making process to create more love in the world. What does that mean? First, I have to put it out to the world—to state it, to spread the word, to take specific action steps toward making it happen. I do that by writing these books, by doing team-building and leadership training (using the pizza-making process and love as my guides), by hosting my podcast, by reaching out to different communities, and by building community—one slice at a time. Pouring all my energy into activities that put me in a position to LIVE my identity—to share my Secret Sauce—to add a new spice to my Secret Sauce.

So how can you get started? The first step is to keep it simple. Let’s start with you taking one word and using that word as your inspiration. For example, if your word is “character”: You decide you want to be a person of character. Great! What does that mean, though? Define it. After you define it, then apply it.

For instance, I define “character” as a person who cares and acts with honor. If I were a fourth-grade student wanting to be a person of character, a person who cares and acts with honor, then I would take action each day to living my words. I could hold the doors open for my

classmates and family. I could pick up trash that is in my neighborhood or on my school campus. I could find someone I respect who can teach me more about being a person of character. I could join a community group who stands for character development.

There are so many ways...just pick one and put your energy into that.

Last tip on this step is to take action early. One of the best things I do for myself is to journal. Journaling helps get me into a positive mindset. Once I am in a positive mindset, then I can take action toward sharing my Secret Sauce. To be clear, take action early in the day, even if it is brief. It is better to do something than nothing.

Step 4

MEASURE. Like I have mentioned earlier, life gets moving too fast, and if we don't have a way to measure what we are trying to accomplish, WE ACCOMPLISH NOTHING! How will you measure the steps you are attempting to take toward creating your Secret Sauce? I don't have the answer for you, but I do know the more specific you can be with what you are trying to accomplish, the higher the likelihood you will achieve your goal.

Let's get back to our example of being a person of character. One way to measure (Am I taking action each day to be a person who cares and acts with honor?) the development of my Secret Sauce, would be to ask: "Did I treat people with respect, with honor? Did I hold the door for my classmates/teachers (a sign of respect/honor)?" You see the essential ingredient in measuring; take the time to consider what actions you can take to reflect the identity you are creating—that reflect your Secret Sauce!

Step 5

REFLECT. Find time each day, perhaps at the end of the day, after dinner, to reflect with no distractions (that means no phone, tablet, TV, video game, and so on). Just sit and listen to your heart; replay certain parts of your day. Did you do what you set out to do—to be a person of character, a person who cares and acts with honor? Get a journal and write down a few of the actions you took. Celebrate those in your heart. How did it make you feel? Don't keep a scorecard of the great things that you do; that will change your focus to hitting numbers as opposed to *feeling* IT (whatever IT is for you) in your heart, mind, body, and spirit.

If for some reason, you were not a person of character that day, recover from it. How? If you did something that perhaps hurt someone, say you're sorry—own up to your mistake. If you didn't hit your goal, create opportunity first thing the next day to get off to a great start. Most definitely, do not beat yourself up. Life is too short, and you don't have the energy to put into negativity. Learn your lesson and move on. Own your mistake/failure/shortcoming and LET IT GO!

To recap and provide a simple action plan for you to identify, develop, and live your purpose (Secret Sauce):

1. LISTEN – What do I want to stand for? _____

2. CHANGE – Let me be open to lifelong learning and growth. Write a sentence affirming you are that person. _____

3. BE INTENTIONAL – What is the one word that captures who you want to become? Write the word, its definition (in your own words), and why you want to become what that word means? _____

4. MEASURE – How will you measure the actions you take each day? Be specific, and if need be, use SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely). _____

5. REFLECT – Did you do what you said you were going to do? If yes, humbly celebrate it; if no, learn from it and move on. _____

Please share what you are doing with me. My email is jeff@c4leaders.org. I would love to hear from you and help you identify, develop, and live your SECRET SAUCE!