

Are you reaching your true potential in your career or business? Do you constantly feel overwhelmed, not experiencing the happiness or quality of relationships that you desire? You can change that. Dr. Valencia Ray uses leading-edge neuroscience, cognitive psychology and ancient wisdom to teach business owners and professionals how their amazing brain can actually hijack personal power. She does this not in the abstract, but in the context of integrating business and personal life.

Dr. Ray, a board-certified eye surgeon and medical business owner for over 20 years before selling her practice, shares her own life changing process. By sharing her story, she helps others to expand their vision and learn that by living with purpose and confidence, it is possible to have a more integrated, healthier lifestyle—with less struggle, and more abundance.

Dr. Ray teaches you how to:

- Understand the science behind what thought is and how to direct your thoughts to experience better health, relationships and business success.
- Recognize the “autobiographical storyteller” of the brain, and create a new, more empowering perception so that you can heal painful memories.
- Take your personal power back from external voices and tune in to your own inner guidance.
- Discover the four-step process for reclaiming more of your intrinsic personal power so that you can live with more passion, purpose and happiness.
- Awaken the awareness that you are more than “only human,” and how this can help you to become a more peaceful YOU!



**VALENCIA RAY, M.D.**

*Purpose. Peace. Personal Power.*

Chicago area with her husband and two teen-aged children. For more information about her keynote addresses, training and coaching programs, visit [www.ValenciaRay.com](http://www.ValenciaRay.com)

**VALENCIA RAY, M.D.,** is the president of Collaborative Change Catalysts, LLC. She is a dynamic keynote speaker, facilitator/ seminar leader and corporate trainer who uses relevant new brain science concepts to teach entrepreneurship and to build collaborative leadership and teams. Dr. Ray lives in the

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EMPOWER UP! Retrain your Brain to Reclaim your True Personal Power VALENCIA RAY, M.D.

# EMPOWER UP!

*Retrain your Brain to  
Reclaim your True Personal Power*



**VALENCIA RAY, M.D.**

AMPERSAND, INC.

# Praise for *Empower Up!*

“Dr. Ray takes us on a fascinating and enlightening journey from the neural wiring of the human brain to the border between human consciousness and the divine. She has a rare ability to both explain and honor the blindness that limits our power and potential. When you read this book, you will be transported to a world in which everything you believe about yourself will become a stepping stone to a larger and grander you. I would love to live on a planet filled with people who had read this book and followed its recommendations. The sheer collective potential it would unlock staggers the mind! Your future awaits: use Dr. Ray’s simple steps to remove the blocks within your mind and unleash the powerful, fulfilled you longing to awaken.”

TIM KELLEY

*Author of True Purpose and founder of the True Purpose™ Institute*

“Want to gain the insights to reconnect with your true personal power? Read this book! As the Queen of Sales Conversion running a multi-million-dollar speaking and training business, I know how important it is to come from an authentic spirit-based center of personal power in order to have influence, healthy relationships and peace of mind. Valencia Ray has the experience and heart to empower you to reclaim your true potential for creating a bigger business and life vision and make it a reality.”

LISA SASEVICH, “*The Queen of Sales Conversion*”

[www.LisaSasevich.com](http://www.LisaSasevich.com)

“Dr. Ray has the unique combination of science and real world experience to deliver a message that will engage, educate and enlighten the reader. One need not have a medical license or an MBA to grasp the concepts offered in her book; just an open mind and a heart willing to explore the connection between beliefs, actions and the power to transform our lives. Dr. Ray’s credibility is borne out of her life journey and her willingness to share tips, tools and techniques that encourage and guide the reader. It is said, ‘fear is a natural reaction as we move closer to the truth.’ Dr. Ray guides the reader on a thoughtful and elegant journey to dealing with fear and discovering our power for increased productivity, peace and passion for life.”

CONNIE L. LINDSEY

*Executive Vice President, The Northern Trust Company*

*National President, Girl Scouts of the USA*

“I hold a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan, and have been a professional coach and consultant for over two decades. As a scientist-practitioner, and creator of the proprietary ‘CQ™ System for Developing Change Intelligence,’ I actively keep up with the literature, research, and seek out new ideas and approaches for facilitating change and professional growth. I recently found Dr. Valencia Ray’s *Empower Up: Retrain your Brain to Reclaim your True Personal Power* and learned a lot of new information that is very useful to me in business and in life. In particular, she offered valuable insights about the neurological basis of our mindsets based on brain science. I also loved her discussion of **FEAR—Fictitious Evidence Affecting Reality**. I highly recommend this book.”

BARBARA A. TRAUTLEIN, *Ph.D.*

*Organizational Change and Leadership Consultant*

“Dr. Ray’s story, a personal search for fulfillment and a design for accomplishing goals, touches the lives and souls of many of us. Through application of integrative content—drawn from most recent findings in the sciences and social sciences and from philosophy and spiritual literature—she, convincingly, moves us to envision change, to effect change, and to support change in others. Her message is an impressive, timely, timeless challenging call to professional and personal leaders as well as to any who aspire to improve, to learn, to lead. This book should be on a list of required reading.”

GERALDINE D. BROWNLEE, *Ph.D.*

*Professor Emerita, University of Illinois, Chicago*

“*Empower Up!* sizzles with wisdom and energy on how to reach new levels in your life both personally and professionally. As a successful but stressed and overwhelmed woman business owner of a multimillion dollar company and single mother I was caught in the daily grind of living. This book unlocked the secrets within me to start living NOW with the purpose, intention and authentic happiness I once only dreamed was possible.”

THERESE GLORIOSO KOVATCH, *R.N., B.S.N.*

*President, QualCare, LLC*

# EMPOWER UP!

*Retrain your Brain to  
Reclaim your True Personal Power*

VALENCIA RAY, M.D.

AMP&RSAND, INC.

*Chicago • New Orleans*

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## PREFACE

**T**here are no coincidences. You are reading this now because at some level, conscious or otherwise, you are seeking the wisdom and guidance to help you grow and expand your self-awareness. You were born for such a time as this. You are meant to be here at this time in history on our planet because you are significant and have an important role to play. The purpose of this book is to introduce you to how our brain impacts our relationship to our self, our personal identity. This will influence our personal and business relationships, as well as our level of happiness and professional success. If you do not recognize how your brain can hijack your attention, you will not apply your leadership and business skill sets effectively.

You have a purpose that is within your heart. The challenge to you is, will you take the time, or rather make the time, to understand it and live it? Or will you wander aimlessly and get to the end of the journey and look back with regret at what you know could have been? As Shakespeare wrote,

*“All the world’s a stage and all the men and women merely players...  
they have their exits and their entrances; and one man  
in his time plays many parts.”*

I write this book from my heart to yours, and from my vantage point, which has evolved from seeing the world as unfriendly, rejecting and competitive to seeing an increasingly expanding universe of love, acceptance and overflowing abundance. It all has boiled down to understanding my

spiritual self, my thoughts and feelings and the role that each contributes to creating my life experience.

*“The most important decision we make is whether we believe  
we live in a friendly or hostile universe.”*

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Our Universe—you can call it God, Infinite Intelligence, the Source, the Force, it matters not—is majestic; it exceeds definition. How you experience it will depend on how you look at it. Life is a mirror, and it will reflect back to you according to who and what you believe you are.

My intention for you is that you will find the missing pieces that have kept you from winning in life. It is time to wake up from the nightmares we are co-creating and consciously begin to co-create the life of our dreams. I say co-create, as I recognize that while we have a will to choose, we are interacting with the creative field of spirit, the quantum field. Spirit is the life force, the energy that infuses all of creation. Our lives are a reflection of how we use our consciousness along with this creative power to form our experiences in life. We are good enough just by our presence. Life has only good intentions for us, and our Great Creator makes no mistakes. Whether we experience heaven or hell on earth will depend on our perceptions, because they lead to our choices. It all starts within, and the power to win is within. As you change from the inside out, what you see as your inner images will be reflected back to you differently by the great mirror of life, and your view of life will change accordingly.

May you be inspired to co-create your abundant, whole life!

Playing to win,  
Valencia

## INTRODUCTION

**W**e live in challenging times. Life in this digital age is full of information, but how useful is this information in helping individuals have peace of mind and a lifestyle of their choosing? And it is one thing to learn new information, but another to apply it. This book will reveal new ideas to some and reinforce already known ideas for others. The key is in the title. Notice the action words, the energy in “*Empower Up! Retrain your Brain to Reclaim your True Personal Power*”—they all require action on your part. But action does not have to mean “hard work.” Play and fun are also active. The difference is in the MINDSET, and that is what this book is all about.

I have been on a quest for “The Secrets of the Universe” since I was around the age of 12. It seems that I was born questioning the status quo of my environment, and due to early experiences of feeling unnoticed and rejected, I never quite felt that I belonged in my world. As far back as I can recall, I’ve had a strong desire to be around people and to learn about life. But it seemed that the people in my immediate world—family and neighborhood friends—were close to me, yet not close, accepting of me, yet not accepting.

I did not know then that how I perceived my life and others, my personal perspective, shaped my experiences and memories. Because of some very early experiences, even before the age of five, I had come to expect rejection, because I interpreted others’ behavior through my limited child’s worldview.

By the time I was 13 and experiencing the emotional upheaval that typically occurs at that age, I had so much anger, fear and resentment

toward my family members that turmoil and conflict became the rule rather than the exception. It was during these critical and sensitive years that my self-image and confidence seemed to evaporate.

I had been raised in a strict, fire-and-brimstone religious environment. Though I remember always looking for God, I felt unhappy with the beliefs I had been given. At the same time I felt that God was the only one I could turn to during those years; I felt ambivalent toward God/Spirit as presented through my religion. I resented the hand I had been dealt. Fortunately, my inner knowing to turn to Spirit and my determination to overcome my circumstances and “prove them wrong” gave me the courage and faith to move toward my future with hope, rather than self-destructing.

It has been many years of seeking and finding, struggling and overcoming, loneliness and support from others, that has led me to the point where I could write this book. Little did I know at age 12 when I had the vision that I would one day grow up and travel the world, teaching people “The Secrets of the Universe,” that I would first have to go through the fire. Words can never express the gratitude and sense of empowerment I have gained by turning to Spirit and listening to that still, quiet voice within me. Mine has been a journey to empowerment and the restoration of my sense of self and true personal power. I now feel strongly about sharing what I have learned with others who are seeking to improve the quality of their lives.

Once I hit the wall and came to my senses, I began to awaken to what I have come to know as my “True Self.” What I discovered is similar to the lesson in one of my favorite childhood stories, *The Wizard of Oz*. I discovered, as Dorothy did, that what I was seeking was here all along, that security, love and self-esteem were already within me. Because of my way of looking at life, coupled with my environment and what I had been taught, I had lost sight of it. This began the never-enough cycle of needing approval from outside of myself. Eventually, when the pain became unbearable, I began to seek the answers that would change my life.

Through this process, I returned to my childhood vision of traveling the world and teaching others “The Secrets of the Universe.” What I do now in my keynotes, team facilitation, corporate training and business coaching is a type of metaphor for what I did as an eye surgeon for over 20 years. I owned and operated a successful medical practice, helping patients improve their eyesight or maintain their physical vision; now I help my clients use their mind’s eye to see a new vision for their life. I teach business owners and corporate leaders how to eliminate “Cataracts of the Soul”—misperceptions that are formed by how we unwittingly wire our brain.

I believe that our true power comes from within, from our core. When you understand how to align your mind with your heart, you can tap into this inner power. People have learned to give their power away to sources outside of themselves. We look to others to give us our sense of security, love and self-esteem. As long as we do this we will be like Dorothy, in search of peace “over the rainbow” but finding only the illusion, the fake wizard behind the curtain.

At our core is the very life force and wisdom of the universe. If we try to only live in our heads and pursue logic alone without the wisdom of intuition and spirit, we set ourselves up to stay incomplete and live in the world of ego, the mental arena. For far too long, humankind has believed in the subjective paradigm of “survival of the fittest.” This is the outcome of living only in the mental realm of ego.

A more accurate view of who is the most fit for the 21st century is the one most adaptable to the rapid change we see all around us. I use a blend of science, personal development concepts and ancient spiritual principles to help people to understand what thought, emotions and feelings really are, and what role perception plays in wiring the brain and nervous system. I do this in a simple and practical way. These are the factors that determine the quality of your life.

When you understand and apply the most recent scientific discoveries, along with universal spiritual principles, you can be an empowered,

confident co-creator of your life. For more than 10 years now, I have tried many methods to heal my painful memories and raise my confidence and self-esteem. I have found the most effective way is to work at the level of all creation—thought, feeling and emotion—and to understand the role energy plays in the co-creative process. Our life force, our essence *is* energy, and energy is Spirit. In my coaching practice this method of integrating science with spiritual principle is most effective. The key is to work in an integrated way—spirit, mind/emotion and body—using the left and right hemispheres of the brain. Happiness, inner peace and a purposeful, abundant life are the unfolding, natural result.

Most of us have been conditioned to look at life as struggle, a competition. It does not have to be that way. Yes, it takes discipline to accomplish what you want, especially if it goes against the norm. But discipline weighs ounces; regret weighs tons.

As an integrated being—spirit, mind/emotion and body—you can be a powerful co-creator of your life. That is what this book is about—becoming a *conscious* co-creator so that you can create a masterpiece from the work of art that is you. True personal power comes from the inside. It is *within* you. It is stable and consistent; since the world did not give it, the world cannot take it away.

I am a practical person, and I will give you practical information to begin and continue this journey of personal transformation. I will be introducing you to concepts from modern psychology and ancient spiritual wisdom, as well as presenting evidence from leading-edge neuroscience. This evidence supports these concepts, demonstrating how our brains—and in turn our whole bodies—are *physically* affected by our beliefs and thoughts. This book is not written for scientists, but for the general public. I will use some scientific terminology, but I will not become overly technical and complicated as I explain these concepts. Some of the science is theoretical and evolving, but we can benefit from it now in our everyday lives.

Some of the information in this book is empirical, meaning that by strict scientific method it is too subjective to prove. It is my own firsthand, observable experience, as well as the experiences of others I have known or whose stories I have read. It cannot be seen under the microscope or plugged into a mathematical equation, but that does not make it any less real. Use your own inner authority to decide for yourself if what you are reading resonates with you. Stop waiting for “authorities” to give you permission to cultivate your own inner power and unfold your destiny. My motto is be informed but not intimidated by scientific research. If you would like to go into more scientific detail regarding some of the information contained in this book, I have provided a recommended list of books by authors who are respected, progressive, leading-edge medical and scientific researchers.

We live in an era when it is imperative that we take personal responsibility for our beliefs and the way we think. To make constructive changes, we must understand the power that thoughts and beliefs have in shaping our experiences. I learned this personally, and now there is emerging science to support this viewpoint. Whether we rise to the challenges we face will determine how we recover from these tough times—or if we can recover. The future of humanity depends on it.

My own life illustrates how human beings learn to look outside themselves for answers, to look to others for validation. But that is not the way to walk in the truth of who we really are. As long as we look to someone else to tell us what direction to take, we cannot fully live our life’s purpose.

Empowerment is not about having power over anyone else. It is about personal power, self-mastery that allows you to steer your own course without being tossed around by the opinions and beliefs of others.

What I will call the “ego self” is constructed from patterns of thought you have come to associate with your very identity. I will also point to the neuroscience that explains what the ego is and how it is formed. This book is about understanding that you are first a spiritual being having

a human experience, and what that could mean for how you view the world. I offer a practical way of learning how to “deconstruct” the ego so that you can tame it to serve your higher purpose and consciously co-create your best possible life. That is how to live as a fully integrated, whole being.

What is your definition of “winning?” Do you know what that looks like, sounds like or feels like? Have you thought about it lately? If not, get ready to explore your hopes and dreams, something that may feel scary at first but is exciting. Life can be an adventure, though it can become unbearable when we try to make it a predictable treadmill. By playing it safe and holding our breath, we build mental and emotional prisons that keep us limited and small. It is time to free yourself by expanding your mind and opening your heart.

At various points in the book I will give you the opportunity to take action. There will be Insight Keys for self-reflection, designed to help you go a bit deeper than simply reading the information. When we take action, our brains wire the brain cells more efficiently to form new habits. Just by focusing your attention, adding feeling and self-reflection, the process of learning is reinforced.

These are my truths, based on my spiritual evolution. Take what feels right for you, disagree with what does not work for you—the choice is yours. We are all on a journey and have the right to change course.

I want to make an important point here about the autobiographical stories I am about to share. My childhood pain and memories were formed during a time in my life when, of course, I was a child, with a child’s narrow perspective. I share this psychological profile of myself to illustrate how I came to see the world as I did. I want to emphasize that I now believe that my mother, who is still living, and my father, who is deceased, genuinely had the best of intentions for their children, and they, as we all do, were operating at the highest level of awareness they had at the time. *Consciousness or awareness evolves.*