



# Testing the Waters

*“There is no point  
forcing learning on  
anyone who is not  
ready to swim in  
its waters.”*

■ Tom Butler-Bowdon

**W**e believe there is a reason this book is in your hands at this moment. Perhaps you were intrigued by the title. Maybe someone you admire recommended the book to you. On the other hand, you may know one or both of us and wanted to see what we've been up to for the past eight years. There is of course the possibility that you are a self-help junkie and are always on the lookout for something more to read about the final frontier... the depths inside of you. Whatever the reason, we want to take some time for you to dip your toe into the waters of what we have to offer, making sure you are ready to swim. We promise to try not to throw you into the deep end right



## CREATING YOUR BE-PRINT

away, and we hope to give you ample time along the way to simply float and enjoy. We know that some of you may be afraid of the deep waters of self-evaluation. If this is you, take it slow, one small step at a time. Stick your toe in and when that's comfortable, perhaps your whole foot. No one but your inner voice will be looking over your shoulder judging your bravery. Some say that that little voice in your head is not your conscious, but your ego. Let go of your ego and enjoy the water. Confronting our fears brings the greatest joy in the end. If you feel yourself going under, call for help, by visiting us online at [www.BE-Print.net](http://www.BE-Print.net). There we will give you some ideas for putting on a life preserver so you can relax in these new waters for a while or head to shore by setting the book aside and coming back when you are ready. Whatever works for you in this exploration of **you** — recognize it, savor it, remember it, and learn from it.

For over thirty years now, we have been helping people help themselves to become the people they wanted to be. We have challenged individuals, groups, and organizations to look within to find the answers that will move them in the direction they wish to go. We have challenged them, not with our beliefs, but with *their own* beliefs. That is what this book is all about: having you look deep within to explore the depths of **you!** This may be uncharted territory. What makes this approach to exploration different is its strong foundation in scientific research on human behavior — Perceptual Control Theory (PCT) along with the latest thinking on learning, change, leadership, and organizational development. We are both self-proclaimed knowledge junkies, and we both know that by synthesizing these bodies of research we can better address a broader audience of learners.



When we began this journey we did not know each other. We lived in different parts of the country and came from different yet similar fields of study, Glenn from psychology and Shelley from education. We did have several things in common: our compassion for all living systems, our desire to give back, and our insatiable thirst for the continuous growth of mind, body, and spirit. When we met near the end of the twentieth century, we both were involved with exploring the work of William Glasser and William T. Powers. Shelley, being the more technical-oriented, was very involved with understanding the theoretical underpinnings and research supporting PCT, while Glenn was more involved in exploring and experimenting with the implementation of the ideas. We both valued the practicality of these ideas and saw the importance of using them when working with the individuals and organizations we served.

There are three things that make this book different from most self-help books.

■ Everything we do today is based on our understanding of PCT, a scientifically proven theory of human behavior and motivation that crosses all cultures.

■ The focus of this book is on this moment forward. We believe in living in the now with our eye on the future. Every great swimmer knows that you keep looking at where you are going not at where you have been, and if you get tired you tread water and stay put. The only time we will ask you to open the door to your past is to find strategies that have worked for you. We also encourage you to recognize those things that haven't work in the past and pull those lessons into your present situation. *It is only your frustration over*



## CREATING YOUR BE-PRINT

*your past that is an issue in the present.*

■ In this book, we will be consciously focusing on the positive aspects of your present and future. We know that many programs and counselors believe you must first heal old wounds before you can try to overcome them. That's not us. We will ask you to engage in self-evaluation and self-reflection, trying to pull from within you the person you want to be. Remember, we hope to challenge your beliefs not with *our* beliefs but with *your own* beliefs. This means you need to take time to figure out what you believe. We did not come to this with a specific picture of what "normal" is or what a "good" person is. Nor do we believe we have the answers for you. Based on PCT, we believe that we are most effective when we help others find the answers within themselves.

We encourage you to make notes in this book or grab a blank journal to take along your journey. Simply reading the exercises will not give you the full benefit of practicing the exercises. Both the process and the product are important. With several of these exercises, you may find you need to come back to them and revise or rethink them. You may want to use a pencil, not a pen.

**This is not a one-time process; this is a lifetime process.** Creating a habit of self-evaluation requires discipline. We will be asking you to see where in your life you are already self-disciplined and how you might transfer some of those skills and strategies to creating and living your BE-Print™. As your life's journey continues you may find what was a priority five years ago is a non-issue today. Our beliefs, desires, and priorities change over time. We will encourage you to keep revisiting your BE-Print™. When we wake up



day after day and recommit to our personal beliefs and principles, we are still changing and recreating ourselves. We are also being self-disciplined. The principles we are trying to live — such as acting with integrity, being loving, being open, being courageous, being successful, being spiritual — transform and change as we grow and learn. What being loving is like at the age of 20 may be very different than at the age of 50. We are firm believers in constantly self-evaluating and practicing personal reflection. **We believe that self-evaluation is the no. 1 life skill.** Life is a process of creation, and we are re-creating ourselves day to day. Neal Donald Walsch, in his book *Conversations with God*, explains it this way: “The deepest secret is that life is not a process of discovery, but a process of creation. You are not discovering yourself, but creating yourself anew. Seek, therefore, not to find out Who You Are, seek to determine Who You Want to Be.”

There are two problems facing most people: they do not apply self-discipline to creating the life they desire and most people have no clue what criteria on which to evaluate themselves. If this criteria does not exist, individuals are prone to evaluate others, worry about how others evaluate them, and evaluate what is happening to them. With BE-Print™, the focus shifts from others to you and who you want to be in any given situation. What we hope for you is that this journey will help you construct the life of your dreams and provide you a ruler with which to measure your success. **Asking yourself daily “Who do I want to be in this situation?” is a habit that can help you each and every day in all sorts of situations.** Glenn is often fond of saying, “Just as an architect needs a blueprint to build a structure, a person needs a BE-Print™ to build a life.” That is what this book is about: you



## CREATING YOUR BE-PRINT

creating your own unique BE-Print™ to become the person you really want to be.

Parts of the BE-Print™ (beliefs, principles, and actions) perform together like a well-executed freestyle swim — arms, legs, breath, and rhythm all working together in harmony. We are going to talk a lot about alignment among the components of your BE-Print™. Living in alignment allows you to create a harmonious life, one in which you practice your beliefs on a regular basis. When people act in alignment to their beliefs and principles, they experience less stress, which is then reflected in all areas of their lives — mind, body, and spirit. We believe the processes of alignment and self-evaluation are missing from the lives of many people. To encourage alignment, you will be asked to look at what principles you are living that represent your beliefs, and then what actions you are taking in relation to those principles.

Along the way, we will share how we ourselves and others have put these ideas into practice. We thank each of them for their willingness to share their lives with our readers. We also believe in modeling as the no. 1 teaching strategy. *Practicing what we teach* is who we want to be as facilitators. We each have our own BE-Print™ and we are continually updating them. Portions of our individual BE-Prints™ appear on our website under “About Us.” You are welcome to visit us often and see how we are engaging in our own conscious process of revision and self-evaluation. As facilitators, we try to be entertaining, practical, humorous, and in depth. We have tried to incorporate all of these qualities into this book, as well.

As you wade into the process of creating your BE-Print™, please remember we want to see you swim through life with grace and style, becoming the person you have always wanted to be. We would love you to share your experiences with us and other swimmers



along the way. You will find a section on our website for just that purpose. We hope you will be encouraged by your own progress and the success of others as you make this journey. No one said it better than the ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu: “The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.” Or one stroke — stroke of the pen, that is.



*What is one reason you picked up this book and started reading it?*

*What do you hope will be different when you finish reading it?*