

# The Cliff

UNLEASH YOUR IMPACT!

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I was all about looking brave that day. But my heart was pounding so hard in my chest that I was certain the others could have heard it if they stood too close. I had to keep relaxing my face, my shoulders, every few moments. And breathing. Why does breathing seem so unnatural at times like this? The very act of breathing irritated me, like my body was suddenly this awkward contraption that I had to keep priming every few seconds to make it go.

Two of the others had already made the jump, and were splashing around in the deep blue currents 40 feet below, waving their arms and cheering me to get on with it. The other guy stood up top with me, grinning ear to ear like there was not one fearful bone in his body, looking at the water and then at me and then at the water again. *Well? Well? Hurry up, will you! It's hot out here.* His thoughts screamed at me. I wanted to deck him, but only shook out

my arms and tried to look busy being relaxed and unhurried. I curled my toes over the rocky ledge and thought how it's best not to think at times like this. Just jump. Just jump. Just jump! C'mon jump already will you? You're only feeding the fear.

Somehow my body got tired of waiting, and jumped without me. I caught up with it a few seconds later as my head rose out of the cold deep blue and sucked in the cleanest breath of air I'd had since I was a kid who didn't know any better. And in the exhilaration of the moment I wondered who that guy was that I had been just a few moments before. What was his problem? Why didn't he believe? Believing is so much more fun.

The cliff that day was in Peru, on the Urubamba River not far from the mighty Amazon. But as nerve-wracking and life-giving as that experience was, it was minor compared to another category of cliffs we all face in



our lives from time to time: We might call it the Cliff of Faith, the Cliff of New Direction, the Cliff of the Unknown and Uncharted, the Cliff of God's Big Dream for Our Lives. But whatever its name, its demand on our souls is always the same: Jump...or die.

I often talk about the metaphor of the cliff with my clients as a way to help them explore the reality of what it really means to follow God in faith, and the choice that lies before them. For every worthy endeavor in life, there is a leap of absolute surrender and trust that must be taken. Usually, in fact, there are many such leaps in the course of

the journey of pursuing God's highest dream for your life, and becoming more than you have previously believed possible. But the first jump is always the most terrifying of all. Will God come through? Will I survive? What if I lose everything? Will I have what it takes to carry this through?

The journey of becoming is not for the weak of heart. It requires extraordinary courage and faith—the willingness to let go of what is comfortable and secure in order to reach out and grasp the noble dream that is far

bigger than you can master without God's power to aid you. Cliff jumping is essential to the process of personal transformation. Without leaping off a few terrifying precipices, you will never become all that you were created to be.

*\* Where in your life are you standing on a cliff?*

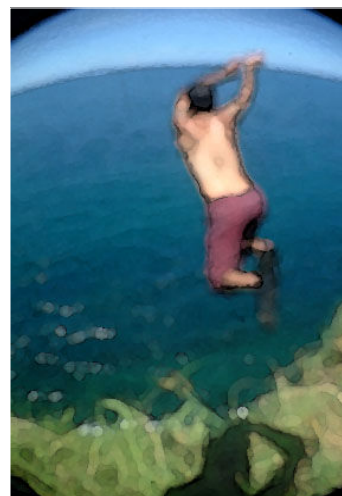
*\* What is the noble dream that holds you there?*

*\* What is the fear that holds you back from jumping?*

You have the freedom to choose what kind of life you will live.

You don't have to jump. Lots of people don't. It's true, their lives may be safer for it. But are they better? Are they really, fully alive? As Thoreau observed, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation."

Don't settle for life on the cliff. Surrender yourself to God, and jump in the direction of His highest dream...for the life you could have, and the person you could become.



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*Michael D. Warden is a Professional Co-Active Coach, nationally certified through the Coaches Training Institute in San Rafael, CA, and a member of the International Coach Federation. Michael's clients' one common trait is their passion to live a bigger life—to discover what they're here for, and boldly go after that vision with confidence and authenticity. Find more on his life and work at [www.ascentcoachinggroup.com](http://www.ascentcoachinggroup.com).*

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