

Visioneering: Your Guide for Discovering and Maintaining Personal Vision

Whatever Andy Stanley writes on leadership, I read it. It's just that simple. With characteristic clarity, in his book *Visioneering: Your Guide for Discovering and Maintaining Personal Vision*, he offers insights that are both wise and workable. Tracing the remarkable leadership of Nehemiah, Stanley serves as a trusted guide in discerning God's customized vision for your life and leadership. Check out these BookNotes to provide an introduction to a book to place on your list of must-reads.

Title: Visioneering: Your Guide for Discovering and Maintaining Personal Vision

Author: Andy Stanley

Copyright Date: 2016

Book Description:

Vision is a preferred future. A destination. Vision always stands in contrast to the world as it is. Visioneering, according to bestselling author Andy Stanley, is "a clear mental picture of what could be, fueled by the conviction that it should be." With warm, down-to-earth practicality, Andy Stanley explores the ordinary life of Nehemiah and his God-given vision for accomplishing the extraordinary. He shows how the life of this great ancient visionary, determined to rebuild the ruined walls of Jerusalem, reveals principles that can prepare us to find and follow God's multifaceted vision for our own lives.

In the bestselling *Visioneering*, Stanley builds a compelling case for the necessity of a clear, God-ordained vision for each of the roles of your life. Whether you're a parent with a vision for your children or a CEO pursuing a corporate vision, *Visioneering* is the perfect tool to help you develop and maintain God's unique purpose for your life.

Book Quotes:

Visioneering is the course one follows to make dreams a reality. It is the process whereby ideas and convictions take on substance. As the story of the Wright brothers illustrates, visioneering is the engineering of a vision. If I were to boil it down to a formula, it would look something like this: VISIONEERING = INSPIRATION + CONVICTION + ACTION + DETERMINATION + COMPLETION. LOCATION: 86

Everybody ends up somewhere in life. A few people end up somewhere on purpose. Those are the ones with vision. LOCATION: 94

Life is a multifaceted journey. It calls for a multifaceted vision. LOCATION: 97

A clear vision, along with the courage to follow through, dramatically increases your chances of coming to the end of your life, looking back with a deep abiding satisfaction, and thinking, I did it. I succeeded. I finished well. My life counted. LOCATION: 102

Vision brings your world into focus. Vision brings order to chaos. A clear vision enables you to see everything differently. LOCATION: 113

Specifically, vision weaves four things into the fabric of our daily experience.

1. **Passion** – Vision evokes emotion. There is no such thing as an emotionless vision. LOCATION: 115
Vision is always accompanied by strong emotion. And the clearer the vision, the stronger the emotion. LOCATION: 131
2. **Motivation** – Vision provides motivation. The mundane begins to matter. The details, chores, and routines of life become a worthwhile means to a planned-for end. LOCATION: 132
3. **Direction** – Maybe the most practical advantage of vision is it sets a direction for our lives. It serves as a road map. In this way, vision simplifies decision making. Anything that moves us toward the realization of our vision gets a green light. Everything else is approached with caution. LOCATION: 142
Vision will prioritize your values. A clear vision has the power to bring what's most important to the surface of your schedule and lifestyle. A clear vision makes it easy to weed out of your life those things that stand in the way of achieving what matters most. Vision empowers you to move purposefully in a predetermined direction. Once you have clarified your vision, or visions, many decisions are already made. Without vision, good things will hinder you from achieving the best things. LOCATION: 157
4. **Purpose** – Vision translates into purpose. A vision gives you a reason to get up in the morning. If you don't show up, something important won't be accomplished. Suddenly, you matter. You matter a lot! Without you, what could be—what should be—won't be. A vision makes you an important link between current reality and the future. That dynamic gives your life purpose. And purpose carries with it the momentum to move you through the barriers that would otherwise slow you down and trip you up. LOCATION: 163

Honoring God involves discovering his picture or vision of what our lives could and should be. Glorifying God involves discovering what we could and should accomplish. We were created and re-created with his purposes in mind. And until we discover his purpose—and follow through—there will always be a hole in our soul. LOCATION: 176

God has a vision for your life. That is, he has a mental image of what you could and should be as well as what you could and should do. In an earlier book, *Like a Rock*, I focused on his vision of what you could and should become. In this book, we are going to focus on what he wants you to accomplish. LOCATION: 186

Granted, this world offers a truckload of options when it comes to possible visions to pursue. But you were tailor-made, carefully crafted, minutely detailed for a selected divine agenda. It is what you were created and

re-created for. God's visions for your life are the things that will give your life impact beyond this life. For, as we will see, God's visions always have an eternal element. His individual vision for your life is a small part of a plan he envisioned and put in motion long before you or I came on the scene—but now I'm jumping ahead.

LOCATION: 197

The hole you are trying to fill has an eternal and spiritual dimension that only matters of eternity and spirituality can satisfy. This is why it is imperative that you discover and participate in God's multifaceted vision for your life. It is what you were made for. Your homespun visions—as challenging and demanding as they may be—fall short. They will always leave you wondering. LOCATION: 209

Vision is born in the soul of a man or woman who is consumed with the tension between what is and what could be. Anyone who is emotionally involved—frustrated, brokenhearted, maybe even angry—about the way things are in light of the way they believe things could be, is a candidate for a vision. Visions form in the hearts of those who are dissatisfied with the status quo. LOCATION: 267

There is always a moral element to vision. Vision carries with it a sense of conviction. Anyone with a vision will tell you this is not merely something that could be done. This is something that should be done. This is something that must happen. It is this element that catapults men and women out of the realm of passive concern and into action. It is the moral element that gives a vision a sense of urgency. LOCATION: 272

Vision is a clear mental picture of what could be, fueled by the conviction that it should be. LOCATION: 276

BUILDING BLOCK #1 = A vision begins as a concern. LOCATION: 297

A God-ordained vision will begin as a concern. You will hear or see something that gets your attention. A thought related to the future will generate an emotion. Something will bother you about the way things are or the way things are headed. Unlike many passing concerns, these will stick with you. You will find yourself thinking about them in your free time. You may lose sleep over them. You won't be able to let them go because they won't let you go. LOCATION: 299

Every significant nonprofit organization that has positively impacted this world began with a brokenhearted leader. LOCATION: 304

Developing or discovering a vision for a particular area of our lives takes time. Visioneering is a process. Sometimes it is a painful process. Because of the time required, it can be agonizing. But it is a process that yields a product worth every bit of the agony along the way. LOCATION: 317

BUILDING BLOCK #2 = A vision does not necessarily require immediate action. LOCATION: 403

A vision rarely requires immediate action. It always requires patience. LOCATION: 409

A God-ordained vision will eventually feel like a moral imperative. LOCATION: 419

A God-ordained vision will be in line with what God is up to in the world. LOCATION: 425

All divinely inspired visions are in some way tied into God's master plan. LOCATION: 430

It is interesting that Nehemiah never prayed for God to rebuild the wall. What he prays for is an opportunity to go rebuild it himself. That is the difference between a dreamer and a visionary. Dreamers dream about things being different. Visionaries envision themselves making a difference. Dreamers think about how nice it would be for something to be done. Visionaries look for an opportunity to do something. LOCATION: 517

In many instances, opportunity apart from preparation results in missed opportunity. LOCATION: 591

BUILDING BLOCK #3 = Pray for opportunities and plan as if you expect God to answer your prayers.
LOCATION: 631

BUILDING BLOCK #4 = God is using your circumstances to position and prepare you. LOCATION: 708

God is using your circumstances to prepare you to accomplish his vision for your life. Your present circumstances are part of the vision. You are not wasting your time. You are not spinning your wheels. You are not wandering in the wilderness. If you are “seeking first” his kingdom where you are, then where you are is where he has positioned you. And he has positioned you there with a purpose in mind. LOCATION: 741

Waiting time is not wasted time for anyone in whose heart God has placed a vision. Difficult time. Painful time. Frustrating time. But not wasted time. LOCATION: 806

BUILDING BLOCK #5 = What God originates, he orchestrates. LOCATION: 916

You probably need to put this one on your bathroom mirror for a month or two. How is never a problem for God. It is usually a big problem for us. But how is God’s specialty. If the Old and New Testament teach us anything, they teach us that nothing is too difficult for God. What he originates, he orchestrates. LOCATION: 918

Spiritually speaking, faith is confidence that God is who he says he is and that he will do what he has promised to do. Faith is not a power or a force. It is not a vehicle by which we can coerce God into something against his will. It is simply an expression of confidence in his person and character. It is the proper response to the promise or revelation of God. LOCATION: 1042

Few things distort our perspective like public success. The rewards that accompany success can turn a humble man or woman into a tyrant. Success often leads to self-sufficiency. Rare is the successful individual who has not lost sight of what he would be without God. LOCATION: 1110

How ironic that men and women who credit God with their call to ministry are often slow to give him credit for their success in ministry. LOCATION: 1114

Success has a way of weaning us off our dependency on God. In the throes of success it is easy to take responsibility for maintaining our success. Without ever meaning to, we shift from a God orientation to a self orientation. LOCATION: 1134

I think it is safe to assume that most Christians are not attempting anything that requires God’s intervention. They are not looking for God to do anything special. They are not aware that they need him to do anything special. LOCATION: 1186

BUILDING BLOCK #6 = Walk before you talk; investigate before you initiate. LOCATION: 1231

Painting a verbal picture is the essence of visioncasting. LOCATION: 1399

Every compelling vision includes these four components: 1. The problem 2. The solution 3. The reason something must be done 4. The reason something must be done now. LOCATION: 1411

BUILDING BLOCK #7 = Communicate your vision as a solution to a problem that must be addressed now. LOCATION: 1415

Visioncasting will always include an element of waking people out of their apathy. Visioncasters rarely bring new information to the table. What they bring is an impassioned concern about an existing problem. They bring fresh eyes. LOCATION: 1436

This is critical to visioncasting. Whereas a clear explanation of the problem engages the mind, the solution engages the imagination. A vision invites us to imagine the future in a way that demands change in the present. A vision necessitates a willingness on the part of the audience to overlook present reality for the time being and imagine what could be. LOCATION: 1457

I'm reminded of something Howard Hendricks said on many occasions during my seminary years. The context was preaching, but it certainly pertains to our discussion. "Men," he'd say, "if it's a mist in the pulpit, it will be a fog in the pew." LOCATION: 1490

A clear explanation of the problem engages the mind. The solution will engage the imagination. But a compelling reason will engage the heart. The vision calls us to imagine what could be. The reason behind what could be moves us to believe that it should be. Once you cross this threshold, you are committed. There will be passion in your voice when you cast your vision. LOCATION: 1615

People are looking for something to give their lives to. If God has given you a vision, he is going to raise up a team to work with you to that end. So prepare to cast your vision. What is the problem? What is the solution? Why must something be done? Why now? Answering these four questions gives you the potential to engage people's minds, hearts, imaginations, and energy. When you can clearly verbalize the answer to these four questions, you are ready to go public with your vision. LOCATION: 1756

Vision is powerful. Particularly when it is cast by someone we look up to and respect, someone we trust and are prone to emulate. Chances are you either have or will have people in your life who feel that way about you. LOCATION: 1859

What would happen if you were to begin speaking to people's potential rather than their performance? LOCATION: 1914

Uncertainty in a leader is always magnified in the heart of the follower. LOCATION: 2039

If God has birthed a vision in your heart, the day will come when you will be called upon to make a sacrifice to achieve it. And you will have to make the sacrifice with no guarantee of success. LOCATION: 2101

Don't expect others to take greater risks or make greater sacrifices than you have. LOCATION: 2162

For reasons known only to him, God has chosen to work through men and women who are willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the "thing" he has placed in their hearts to do. His choicest vehicles are those men and women who courageously lay the things that represent safety and security at his feet for the sake of what could be and should be. In a small way, that is what we did. And at some point, you will be required to do the same. LOCATION: 2216

When we sacrifice in order to do the thing God has put in our hearts to do, we are recognizing and responding to his greatness. We are in effect saying, "Father, this vision is worth whatever sacrifice I need to make. You are worthy of my allegiance." LOCATION: 2223

Your heart and your treasure are linked. If you want to know what you are really committed to, look at your checkbook and credit card statements. There is your heart, plain and simple. There is no clearer reflection of your priorities and values. The way you handle your money is an indicator of where your heart is. LOCATION:

BUILDING BLOCK #10 = Don't confuse your plans with God's vision. LOCATION: 2564

Here's the distinction: • A vision is what could and should be. • A plan is a guess as to the best way to accomplish the vision. LOCATION: 2570

BUILDING BLOCK #11 = Visions are refined—they don't change; plans are revised—they rarely stay the same. LOCATION: 2600

Visions thrive in an environment of unity. They die in an environment of disunity. No matter what kind of organization you are in—business, school, church, family—when personal goals and agendas conflict with an agreed-upon corporate vision, the corporate vision suffers. Conflicting agendas within an organization will eventually pull people's attention away from the vision, the common goal, and onto smaller, more personal concerns. If these conflicts go unresolved, they can bring progress to a grinding halt. And they can make for a miserable working or living environment. LOCATION: 2769

Your influence is far more critical to the success of your vision than your position. Generally speaking, it is not men and women of position that give birth to and deliver great visions. A visionary often has nothing to leverage other than his influence. It is the influence of the visionary, regardless of how limited it may be, that serves as his platform and podium. Influence is often the only vehicle available for moving others to act. In many cases, influence is enough. LOCATION: 2913

Every great leader, every successful father and mother, anybody who has ever received and followed through successfully with a God-given vision has possessed a form of authority that rests not on position or accomplishment, but on an inner conviction and the willingness to bring his or her life into alignment with that conviction. It is the alignment between a person's convictions and his behavior that makes his life persuasive. Herein is the key to sustained influence. LOCATION: 2934

The phrase that best captures this dynamic is moral authority. To gain and maintain your influence you must have moral authority. Moral authority is the critical, nonnegotiable, can't-be-without ingredient of sustained influence. Without moral authority, your influence will be limited and short-lived. LOCATION: 2938

Moral authority is the credibility you earn by walking your talk. It is the relationship other people see between what you say and what you do, between what you claim to be and what you are. A person with moral authority is beyond reproach. That is, when you look for a discrepancy between what he says he believes and what he does, you come up empty. There is alignment between conviction and action, belief and behavior. LOCATION: 2940

We will not allow ourselves to be influenced by those who lack moral authority in our eyes. Inconsistency between what is said and what is done inflicts a mortal wound on a leader's influence. LOCATION: 2946

As a visionary, the one thing you can control and must protect at all costs is your moral authority. Moral authority makes you a leader worth following. Moral authority positions you to influence people at the deepest level: heart, mind, and conscience. For this reason, your moral authority will enable you to maintain your influence with those who feel called to follow you. LOCATION: 2952

Moral authority is not a method. It is not a way to get things done. It is not a means to a prearranged end. Genuine moral authority is not something a leader sets out to develop in order to become a better leader or to gain influence with people. Leaders and influencers who are driven purely by a desire to be leaders and influencers rarely maintain their moral authority. Why? Because great leadership is rooted in something other

than a desire to be a great leader. Influence is rooted in something other than a desire to be an influencer. LOCATION: 3006

Moral authority is a reflection of a man or woman's commitment to something outside the realm of influence and leadership. Moral authority is the result of a commitment to do what's right. Regardless. Men and women who maintain their moral authority are not playing to the crowd. They are not driven by a desire to gain influence. Their number one concern is doing the right thing—even if doing the right thing appears to jeopardize their influence. LOCATION: 3021

Your ability to gain and maintain moral authority with the people who are partnering with you will have far more to do with the condition of your heart than your commitment to lead. Moral authority is rooted in a desire to please God rather than man. Moral authority is the overflow of character, not leadership ability. LOCATION: 3055

You must take full responsibility for your actions and the consequences of your actions. It is the second part of that equation that trips people up. Being sorry in your heart may gain you favor with God but not with man. To regain your moral authority you must take responsibility for the practical ramifications of your actions. That may mean restitution. It will most certainly mean some sort of sacrifice. LOCATION: 3258

BUILDING BLOCK #17 = The end of a God-ordained vision is God.

If you are pursuing a vision God has birthed in your heart, there will be moments along the way when you will find yourself standing in awe of what he has done on your behalf. In those moments your attention will be drawn away from the work of your hands to the faithfulness of your heavenly Father. LOCATION: 3916

God's vision for you and me is maturity. Spiritual maturity is measured by how readily we respond to the person of God rather than the promises of God. It involves coming to the place where who is asking is more important than what we are being asked to do. Your vision is an avenue God will more than likely use to bring you to that place. And once there, if God says to build a hut in your front yard and live in it for a week, you will start collecting branches, no questions asked. LOCATION: 4014

From time to time you will be tempted to compromise your character for the sake of expediency. Resist. Maintain your moral authority. Your moral authority is what makes you a leader worth following. Abandon the vision before you abandon your moral authority. Protect your moral authority and the moral authority of your team by developing a set of core beliefs and behaviors. Live and work within those boundaries even when doing so impedes your progress. In this way you remain blessable. LOCATION: 4515

The job you have right now has the potential to supply you with all the purpose you need to feel fulfilled and satisfied in your role as leader—you just need to change the way you think about your job. Based on my work with thousands of leaders over the past two decades, I believe it comes down to this: The key is to see yourself as more than a mere manager. Begin to perceive your role as that of a career and life improver for the people you lead! When you take on that challenge, you'll find your job overflowing with purpose. LOCATION: 153