Reflections on Actualizing Infinite Potential
By Louise Diamond

The process of bringing potential into form is an essential part of creative synergy. Having accessed many possibilities through various methods discussed earlier, now we consider how to translate potential into action. This process requires us to move from the subtle (thought, idea, ideal, goal) to the concrete (matter, behavior, structure).

We can look at this process through two lenses:

1. Manifesting a Goal or Ideal
Say we want to build a house. First we **conceptualize** our goal – what is our ideal house? Is it a comfortable home for our family? A functional place to eat and sleep? Should it be environmentally sound? Is it our work space as well? What purpose will it serve? What meaning do we ascribe to it?

Next, we **visualize** our ideal house with the greatest detail as possible. We design it. We see in our mind’s eye how it will look, how the rooms are related to one another, how we will get from one part of the house to another. We put that design on paper or in a blueprint form.

Next, we **energize** our design both tangibly and intangibly. Tangibly, we gather our resources: we hire a contractor, collect the building materials, get the necessary permits, secure the finances, etc. Intangibly, we give this project our attention, enthusiasm, appreciation, energy, prayers, even love.

Next, we **actualize** our home by doing the manual work: digging the foundation, laying the floor, raising the walls, putting on the roof and the siding, putting in the plumbing and electrical system, painting, etc.

Along every stage of this process we check back in with the other stages to **adjust and refine** our plans. As we start to build, for instance, we notice that the flooring material we had planned for won’t actually look the way we want, so we change it. We discover that getting the environmental permit requires us to dig a deeper well than planned. Our mother suddenly loses her job and wants to move in with us, so we decide we need to add a mother-in-law apartment, etc.

2. Choosing and Acting on Options
This refers to the classic problem-solving or decision-making process, whereby we pose a challenge, question, or problem, then generate a range of alternatives (as creative as possible), then evaluate the alternatives, choose the option we think best suits our needs, put it into practice, and assess its effectiveness. This is classically referred to as: Scan, Focus, Act, Feedback.

In the first scenario we start with a goal or idea/ideal. In the second we start with an identified problem or situation we wish to change. Obviously, these are connected. I have an ideal house in mind because I want to change my living situation. Noticing a problem in my life, I set a new goal.
Useful Tools
In addition to the standard decision-making tools, I’d like to highlight two tools that I think are useful in any actualization process: translation and making meaning.

Translation refers to taking a concept or experience from one form into another. For instance, if I have a mental experience, I translate it into written words or a drawn picture. If I have a visual image in my mind, I may translate it into a sculpture or poem. If I have an object in my hand, I may translate it into a ‘being’ through, say, giving it a voice. Translation helps us understand something from several different perspectives, thereby increasing our options.

Making meaning refers to the way we interpret an idea or experience. We do this via channels and patterns of meaning that are familiar to us, informed by our history, culture, values, desires, etc. Always we have a story we tell ourselves about any particular event or situation. What’s important to know about making meaning is that there is not only one meaning we can give to any experience – there are infinite meanings. For instance, the war in Iraq will have a different meaning to the wife or husband of a soldier serving there than to someone who knows no member of the military, or than to someone who served in Vietnam. Meaning can change over time as well: driving a car for the first time can have a profoundly different meaning than doing so after 30 years of driving.

Our challenge is to be able to discover different stories to tell ourselves about any one situation, so that, again, our range of options is broadened.