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# The Road to GUMPTION

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*Using Your Inner Courage to Balance  
Your Work and Personal Life*

Gary Lim, M.A.



DORATO PRESS

Dedicated to my wife Judy, who not only travels with me  
on the Road to Gumption, but whose encouragement  
first put me on the Road to start with.

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PRAISE FOR

# THE ROAD TO GUMPTION

“In this story about facing and resolving uncertainty, Gary Lim’s concepts of the 5 P’s of Change and 11 Rules of Gumption offer a practical approach to the thought process of evaluating one’s direction in life. *The Road to Gumption* is a quick read that encourages a rewarding journey to self-discovery.”

— Dr. Cornelius B. Murphy Jr., President, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

“In *The Road to Gumption* the reader is introduced to a practical approach to making life's hard decisions. The story and guidance empower the reader to place more value on the “golf balls” (family, love, friends) in life, as opposed to the “pebbles” and “sand” (fancy cars, high powered careers, rat race, etc.). Let *The Road to Gumption* be your journey's next and long-term path.”

— Ina Jaye Dwyer, Director of National Strategic Services, Resources Global Professionals Inc.

“Gary Lim has written a timely and thought-provoking tale about creating personal change, full of wisdom and common sense. His ‘Rules of Gumption’ help bring clarity to the thought process. I really enjoyed this book, and so will you.”

— Dr. Debbie L. Sydow, President, Onondaga Community College

“*The Road to Gumption* addresses an underlying challenge of establishing a personal definition of success in one's career. It lays open this challenge in an engaging and entertaining way. It is a short, thought provoking read that can lead to large personal discoveries.”

— Steve Davis, Vice President of Marketing, Pyrotek Inc.

“Gary Lim’s *The Road to Gumption* introduces 11 Rules of Gumption and 5 P’s of Change that represent a good road map for resolving many personal conflicts and problematic attitudes. This is a great book that I really enjoyed reading.”

— Robert H. Linn, Office Managing Partner (ret.), Ernst & Young LLP

**gump•tion** (gŭmp'shən) *n.* *Informal.*

**1.** Boldness of enterprise; initiative or aggressiveness. **2.** Guts; spunk.

## Author's Note: About This Book

Available time appears to be getting increasingly scarce. In today's age of being constantly connected, by Bluetooth cell phones, instant messaging, voicemail, email, Blackberries, Treos, Qs, and other devices yet to be invented, the boundaries between work and personal lives risk becoming blurred.

As connected as we are through technology advances, balancing our work and our LOAF (my acronym for "loved ones and family") time is an increasing challenge. Though work allows us the cash flow to do things with our families and loved ones, if those work priorities take up too much time, there is no time left for LOAFing. As one overworked professional once told me glumly, "All the money in the world doesn't do me much good if I have no time to spend it with my family."

And yet we must continue to make that income, to pay the bills and provide for our lifestyles. The real question becomes what is that "right" level of lifestyle? The answer is highly individual and might require making a significant change in order to balance work and LOAF priorities.

Creating change and achieving success requires being open to dealing with uncertainty, and taking risks – in short, **it takes gumption** to change and succeed. Change is scary, but there's nothing wrong with recognizing that fact.

Your ability to embrace change will help you figure out the path to your goals. During the journey you might even discover new goals that are perhaps more timely or relevant. Reach your goals and you will live your dreams; though never perfect, it's a great life.

Surprisingly enough, if you meet your goals you face risk. Like it or not, there may be some people around you, maybe even some very close to you, who would not be as supportive as you think about your success. Your successes might make them feel left behind, and so you might find that they behave differently

around you. They might even complain that you're the one who is "not like you used to be."

And you wouldn't be like you used to be – having gumption is all about being able to make changes, and about taking risks that will move you closer to balancing your work and LOAF priorities. *The Road to Gumption* is a reminder that this journey is challenging, perpetual, and is one that takes courage, but the feelings and the ups and downs you experience will be quite expected. You're not alone – but many times it will definitely feel like you are.

In this parable that takes place in the fictional town of "Gumption," our traveler, from his home region of "The City" and "City Sprawl," discovers the town's spirit of gumption through some of its residents and their "Rules of Gumption." He leaves with a renewed sense of perspective, self-discovery, and purpose.

The Rules of Gumption are divided into 5 phases that I call **The 5 P's of Change**, laying a roadmap that can help you get to where you want to be:

- **Prepare** – mentally prepare to make a change
- **Plan** – create a plan for your change
- **Pursue** – implement the plan, pursue your goals
- **Persevere** – stick to it, through the rough spots
- **Positive** – keep your spirits up; stay positive

I hope you, too, will find *The Road to Gumption* full of useful rules and reminders, so you can reach out and successfully work towards your dreams, whatever they may be. And may that allow you to have as much time as you want for LOAFing around!

Gary Lim  
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## Contents

Author's Note: About This Book	iii
The Traveler	7
The Journey of Revelation Begins	18
Starting to See the Light	37
Executing the Plan	55
Sailing the Rough Seas	72
Staying in the Sunlight	89
Epilogue	101
The 11 Rules of Gumption	105
About the Author	106

## The Traveler

As John prepared to leave for his sixth business trip in as many weeks, the conversation with his wife Shelly started to get tense again. He was standing by the bed, packing his bag for the long drive out of state. Shelly, looking at the back of her husband's head, said curtly, "So when *are* we going to have the time to discuss these things?"

"I told you, when I get back at the end of the week," said John, shaking his head without turning around, clearly annoyed.

"But when you get home, you're usually exhausted – completely beat. Then you don't want to have any heavy discussions." Shelly was not the only one getting tired of treading old ground.

"You know how my schedule is," complained John, almost throwing his folded slacks into the suitcase. "During this time of the year the job has me pretty much on the road from Tuesday through Friday. Could be worse – my territory could be bigger."

"I know, I know." Shelly folded her arms and leaned against the doorframe. "But we're going to have to talk about our lives sometime. We hardly have time to eat together – what happened to balancing our lives and trying to plan for kids? Sometimes I feel like we're on a big treadmill."

"Well *excuse me* for creating such an inconvenience!" John turned to glare at her, his face starting to flush as



his voice jumped a few decibels. “It takes money to provide for a balanced lifestyle and kids, you know!” He was practically shouting now.

“Yeah, but what good is it if we don’t have any time or energy left to do anything?!” Shelly was irritated too. She and John had gone around and around on this topic before, with John usually being the reluctant one to discuss things. “That’s what I mean about a treadmill – are we going to continue working our butts off, making good money, but having almost no time to enjoy it?”

John threw the last of his shirts into his bag, and zipped it closed in sullen silence. He didn’t have an answer to that question. His and his wife’s schedules were hectic, with the two of them seeing each other only from Friday night until Monday or Tuesday morning. And though he didn’t like to admit it, Shelly was right, when he was home, he was often too tired to talk about heavy subjects. Sometimes he was too tired to talk, period.

John straightened up, bag in hand, and looked angrily at his wife. “Well, as usual, I have no answer to your usually unanswerable questions!” He brushed by her and stalked out of the bedroom, heading for the kitchen.

Shelly caught up with him by the sink and put a hand on his arm. In a suddenly more conciliatory tone, she said, “Look, dear, I know it’s not a great time to talk about this ...”

“It’s *never* a great time when you waylay me with this, just as I’m heading out the door on another trip!” John interrupted explosively.

“So then when *are* we going to talk about our future?!” Shelly, angered again by John’s tone, found her own voice rising. “You always say there are no answers, but we can’t even decide what the questions are!”

Turning to look at his wife, John could only stare at her in frustration. Suddenly, it was as if the resolve went out of his body, and his shoulders slumped. He looked at the floor, took a deep breath, then replied in a quieter voice, “Okay, I guess we ought to talk after I get back from this trip on Friday night. I mean, let’s make sure we talk about it this weekend.”

Surprised by her husband’s sudden change of demeanor, Shelly said in a much calmer tone, “Okay, dear, let’s do that. We both probably have a lot to think about before then.”

John snapped his head up and stared at his wife. “Oh, and what’s that supposed to mean?” he asked in an accusing tone, sounding combative again. “Are you trying to tell me something?”

“Geez, no!” exclaimed Shelly, instantly irritated once more by the emotional mood swings of their conversation. “I just meant that we both have to do a lot of thinking about what we want to do, and how we get there! This is making me mad!” She shook her head and threw up her hands in frustration.

“Well, I certainly don’t want to be the cause of you getting mad!” retorted John sarcastically. “So why don’t

I just remove the source of trouble, and be on my way right now!” He grabbed his bag and laptop case, and headed towards the door to the garage.

“C’mon, John, let’s not be this way,” said Shelly as her husband passed through the doorway into the garage.

The door between the kitchen and the garage slammed, and a minute later, she heard his car start up, then back out. As the garage door lowered, Shelly realized that this was the first time he’d gone on a trip without them saying goodbye to each other.

She leaned against the kitchen counter, looked out the window, and took a deep breath, exhaling slowly. Not good, she thought, but she was angry, frustrated, and upset all at once. She couldn’t help but wonder if this was the beginning of the end.

The garage door lowered, as John backed out into the street, fast, without really looking. Fortunately, no other vehicles or people were around. He threw the car into Drive and took off, tires squealing at first.

“That really ticks me off,” he muttered under his breath. He fumed about the parting shouting match he had with Shelly, and found himself gripping the steering wheel tightly.

Commute habits soon took over, and he clicked on the radio, tuning first to a news station. “Traffic’s really backed up around the interchange right now,” warned

## About the Author

Gary Lim, M.A., is the President of Aurarius LLC, a strategic and business management consulting firm he first founded in San Jose, California, then relocated to Upstate New York. In addition to Aurarius, he founded CEO PrivateLine, and is a co-founder of HealthcareBusinessOffice LLC.

An experienced speaker from the platform, Gary has spoken live to audiences ranging in numbers literally from 2 to 2,000 people. Cumulatively over his career, his speaking engagements have been attended by over 10,000 attendees, through keynote speeches, conference workshops, corporate/executive seminars, product launches, and training courses.

Gary is also Visiting Professor of Entrepreneurship at the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, located in Syracuse, New York. He was previously the inaugural Managing Director of the entrepreneurship program at Syracuse University.

His educational credentials include a Bachelor's degree earned *cum laude* from Princeton University in electrical engineering and computer science. Later in his career, he earned a Master's degree in organizational management from University of Phoenix.

Gary's experience and skill set are focused in the areas of helping companies, organizations, and individuals achieve even higher levels of performance. This is accomplished by creating and applying the right strategies and focusing implementation on key critical issues. In his work with client companies and seminar attendees, Gary is often referred to as being one of the best at assessing complex situations, distilling them to a few key issues, and creating solutions that are clear and concise.

After a corporate and entrepreneurial career that spanned twenty years in the region of the San Francisco Bay Area known as "Silicon Valley", Gary and his wife took their own journey

down the Road to Gumption. The process of self-examination they went through formed the genesis of the book *The Road to Gumption*. The result was relocation to Upstate New York when Gary accepted a position at a major university, doing something quite different than he had ever done in his business career.

The journey continues, and currently Gary divides his time between consulting, speaking, writing, teaching, managing multiple ventures that he co-owns with his wife Judy, and evaluating new business opportunities. Being on the Road to Gumption has also enabled the couple to set aside quality time for LOAFing around with their young daughter.

For more information on Gumption™ workshops, custom seminars, or volume purchases of this book:

<b>Book Web site:</b>	<a href="http://www.RoadToGumption.com">www.RoadToGumption.com</a>
<b>Consulting Web site:</b>	<a href="http://www.AurariusLLC.com">www.AurariusLLC.com</a>
<b>Email contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@RoadToGumption.com">info@RoadToGumption.com</a>
<b>Phone contact:</b>	315-885-1532 (direct)

Summary information on Gumption™ workshops appear on the next two pages.

# GUMPTION™ WORKSHOPS

Two Gumption™ workshops are based on the book *The Road to Gumption: Using Your Inner Courage to Balance Your Work and Personal Life*. The public seminar is "Weekend of Gumption™," and the custom onsite workshop is "The Road to Business Gumption™".

## **Weekend of Gumption™**

Taking place on select Saturdays in different cities throughout the U.S., *Weekend of Gumption* allows attendees to immerse themselves in their own journeys on the Road to Gumption, with author Gary Lim facilitating and coaching.

During a concentrated Saturday session, participants will apply the Rules of Gumption specifically to their own needs, in a private and supportive environment.

- Start to develop your plan for your journey.
- Ask the questions you've been hesitant to ask.
- Float the ideas you've been afraid to run by friends and family.
- Freely express, then address, your doubts about your journey,
- Get suggestions, help and advice on implementation.
- Receive honest and objective feedback.

No naysayers here! Everyone who attends wants to travel their own Road to Gumption to reach their goals. Small sessions (10-20 attendees) allows high levels of interactivity. After the workshop ends, attendees also receive 3 months of unlimited email dialogue with the author, as they start their journey down their Roads to Gumption.

Included with each *Weekend of Gumption*:

- Intensive and focused Saturday workshop session
- All seminar materials

- Continental breakfast and refreshments
- Unlimited post-workshop follow-up via email dialogue with the author for 3 months (couples receive 6 months)

Visit the Web site for full details and currently scheduled seminar cities:

[www.RoadToGumption.com/workshops.html](http://www.RoadToGumption.com/workshops.html)

### **The Road to Business Gumption™ (Custom Onsite Workshop)**

*The Road to Gumption* is actually a story about creating change in situations where one might not know exactly where to begin. Because this is a dilemma that many corporate and not-for-profit organizations face, we offer the custom seminar *The Road to Business Gumption™: Creating Change in Your Organization*.

In a customized, half-day onsite session, your management and associates will apply The 5 Ps of Change™ and the Rules of Gumption™ to their organizational issues and priorities. This methodology tends to create a greater openness to a culture of change, making the process of executing change less mystical and more focused.

The workshop, facilitated personally by author Gary Lim, can be held at your corporate location, offsite meeting, industry symposium, or other conference venue. Contact the author to request a no-obligation detailed quote:

Phone: 315-885-1532

Email: [info@RoadToGumption.com](mailto:info@RoadToGumption.com)