

SHARE YOUR MAGIC

Share Your MAGIC

Be a Magician, not a Pickpocket.

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Contents

Introduction 1

Abandon the Pickpocket Mentality . . 5

Pickpocket Practices Defined. 6

The World of Pickpocket Magic 8

My Pickpocket Mentality 10

All about “M.E.” 13

What does this mean for you? 16

Pickpockets are Everywhere! 18

You Might be a Pickpocket if 39

Discover Your Magic 47

Sharing Magic Defined 48

Magic: It’s not Just for Magicians . . . 49

A Lesson from Napoleon Dynamite . . 50

Your M.A.G.I.C. 53

You Might be a Magician if. 93

Deliver the Goods 99

Great Rewards and Final Words 101

About Devin Henderson 102

Introduction

Did you know that you are a magician? You have a bag of tricks all your own. Have you ever opened your bag? Maybe there are some deep, dark corners of the bag you have never explored. Or maybe there are some hidden pockets you are unaware of (after all, it is a *magic* bag). It's high time you dump out the contents, analyze what you've got, and put it to good use.

Your magic is the thing you are good at – the trait or traits people remember you for. Your magic is anything you possess that can be used to benefit others. It might be a musical talent, such as singing or playing the guitar. Your magic could be your ability to make people laugh, or your ability to laugh at yourself. When it comes down to it, anything that makes you memorable might be your magic.

As a professional magician, secrets are my life. I will reveal to you the secrets of how to discover and develop the abilities and interests you might find in your magic bag. And by the way, your magical traits are not just skills that you use to show off and make people say, “Wow – you are amazing!” They are also meant to make people say, “Wow – you made me *feel* amazing!” In other words, your magic is meant to be *shared* in a way that makes life better for people around you.

This book is for you. Whether you are a business professional or a stay-at-home parent, you have magic that is worth exploring. This book will help you bring your magic to life so that you can bring your magic to every area of your life. You will find there is great reward in doing so, because great blessings come when you learn to utilize your awesomeness. The two basic rewards of sharing your magic are self-fulfillment and healthier relationships.

There is one thing that can keep us from sharing our magic: *The Pickpocket Mentality*. In a nutshell, it means we humans have a natural tendency toward selfishness. It is such a hindrance, in fact, that I have devoted the first half of this short book to what it means to *Abandon the Pickpocket Mentality*. Once we address this concept we will focus on your magic. Now let's get to it!

Devin Henderson

1

Abandon the Pickpocket Mentality

Pickpocket Practices Defined:

*Actions, words or a mindset
intended to benefit self at the
expense of others.*

When the magician called me onto the stage I was terrified. Public speaking is the number one fear of humans, over death. Getting up in front of a huge crowd of people scares me even if I do not have to speak. But the magician put me at ease. He was nice. He shook my hand, looked me in the eye, smiled at me, remembered my name, and assured me I was doing a great job. He was personable and polite and made me feel comfortable. The trick went very well and he even had the audience applaud for me as I returned to my seat. He seemed very sincere – I never imagined the real trick, was that he had stolen my watch.

This may be what goes through people's minds after they assist me on stage. As a professional comedy magician and pickpocket entertainer, not only do I have the opportunity to provide the gift of laughter and amazement, I get to pick people's pockets in the process. Thankfully, I have never been arrested for this stunt, even after doing it for audiences consisting entirely of cops!

New to the World of Pickpocket Magic? Here's how it Works:

During my audience-interactive comedy magic show I invite people onto the stage to help me with various tricks. The volunteers on stage typically have no idea that they are about to be “victimized.”

During the trick I take whatever I can get my hands on, including watches, wallets, pens, cell phones, car keys and neckties. I accomplish this by diverting people's attention from their personal belongings onto the trick for which I “need their help.”

The steals are made under the pretense of helping spectators examine props or by physically repositioning them on the stage. For added comedy I often let the audience “in” on the steals that are being made, but the volunteers are typically unaware of what is going on until I hand back their valuables.

Disclaimer:

I use my pickpocketing skills strictly for entertainment purposes and in the end, everyone has a good laugh, including the “victims” themselves.

How my Pickpocket Mentality was Born

The first item I learned to “steal” was the wristwatch. I learned it from a video I bought in a magic shop. When I successfully stole my first watch without the owner’s detection, I was hooked. After a while, the first thing I began to notice about people was the type of watch they were wearing. *Is it a Timex? Is it a Rolex? Does it fasten with Velcro or is it a belt buckle-type?*

I became a student of watches, particularly the clasps. I quickly developed the ability to determine the type of clasp merely by catching a glimpse of the *face* of the watch. Upon spotting any watch I would think things like: *That one would be easy to take, Ooh - that one looks tough, or If I could only shake hands with that person I’d be home free.* Thus was born my *Pickpocket Mentality*.

From Watches to Neckties

Soon I began stealing more than watches. I started taking pens, neckties, cell phones and wallets. I picked pockets everywhere I went. I started by practicing on my family, then took it to church, the mall, restaurants, airports, and when I was ready, to the stage. Often, I would not spot a watch or other valuables on someone right away, but I found with most people that if you look hard enough you will find *something* to take.

The Pickpocket Parallel to Life

I soon realized that this fun art form contains life application. When we keep our eyes open, we begin to see what people have to offer us. It might be their money, their signature, or simply their approval we are after. We will use anything from subtle manipulation to outright bullying in order to get what we want. This kind of activity happens in business, politics, ministry and the family.

Pickpocket Mentality Characteristics

We have defined pickpocket practices as *actions, words or a mindset intended to benefit self at the expense of others*. This means that a pickpocket...

- Tries to get more out of people.
- Manipulates and bullies.
- Uses careless and hurtful words.
- Has no regard or respect for others' well-being, ideas, goals and dreams.
- Uses kindness only as a tool for personal gain.
- Refuses to help others get ahead for fear that it will put him or her behind.
- Lacks patience with others.
- Has a **ME**-driven mindset.

All About “ME”

There are two basic types of value a person can take: *material* and *emotional*. Because the pickpocket mentality is a “ME” mindset, an easy way to remember these two types of values is with those two letters: M.E.

MATERIAL EMOTIONAL

Just as we possess *material* value that can be taken, such as jewelry, credit cards or even a parking spot, we also hold *emotional* things of value that can be taken, such as joy, peace and self-confidence. A nasty comment that steals your joy can be just as bad as someone lifting your watch.

There is some overlap with these two components. For instance, if someone steals your identity, it will have material ramifications as well as emotional. Or if you have had your Rolex taken, you have also had your joy taken!

Stealing More than just Physical Goods

Emotional pickpocketing is perhaps more common in your day-to-day life than material pickpocketing. Here are examples of what we can steal from *inside* a person.

- Joy
- Enthusiasm
- Productivity
- Ambition
- Loyalty
- Innocence
- Self-image
- Self-confidence
- Self-worth
- Autonomy
- Trust
- Happiness
- Success
- Motivation
- Dreams
- Security
- Openness
- Satisfaction

“All relationships either add to or subtract from a person’s life.”

John Maxwell

What does all this mean for you?

Think about all of your relationships, both in your personal and in your professional life. Did you ever realize that in each one of those relationships, you are either a "pickpocket" or a "magician?"

The fact that you are reading this book most likely means you desire success. You are probably continually searching for avenues to move yourself forward, as you should be. The question is this: how do your methods for advancement affect others?

Again, like John Maxwell said, there are only two answers – either you give, or you take. In this highly competitive world, our blinders of self-interest often block us from seeing how our actions can damage the well-being of others. Abandoning the pickpocket mentality is about pursuing success in a manner that not only looks to our own interests, but also looks to the interests of others.

Getting Busted

No pickpocket entertainer is perfect with every steal – we all get busted from time to time. Sometimes by chance I call people onto the stage who have seen me work before, and they walk onto the stage emptying their pockets or holding tightly to their watch. These people are obviously the ones who are most likely to bust me on my pickpocketing attempts. In the same way, selfish motives in this life eventually catch up to a person. Everyone who tries to get ahead by taking value from others is eventually going to “get busted.”

Honest Success and True Success

The truth is, the more we bring others down, the further we bring ourselves down. Likewise, the more value we add to others, the more value we add to ourselves. Thus, abandoning the pickpocket mentality is not only the first step in adding value to others, it is the first step in achieving conscience-friendly, self-fulfilling, enduring, through-the-roof success.

Pickpockets are Everywhere!

One of my missions as a speaker is to help people ensure that their presence does not make others feel like victims of a pickpocket mentality.

Following are some real-life “pickpocket” stories. My purpose here is to simply help you become aware of everyday situations where we you can choose to add or take. You will find examples of both material and emotional pickpocketing attempts.

I have even included a story of where I exercised the pickpocket mentality myself – and got busted!

Material Pickpocketing

Jewelry Store "Theft"

One of the professions into which the pickpocket mentality can sneak very easily is sales. I have nothing against salespeople; in fact, as an entrepreneur I am a salesman myself. I have much respect for skilled sales professionals who show respect for their customers and believe their quality product or service is to the customer's benefit.

An unpleasant buying experience for me was years ago when I went engagement ring shopping. I visited about a dozen jewelry stores during this time, and in nearly every store I felt like a victim of the pickpocket mentality.

I understand that a sales professional's job and livelihood is on the line each time a customer walks through the door. Assertiveness is a must. But when that assertiveness turned to aggressiveness, my experiences became sour.

Several of the salespeople I encountered did many things right. For example, I appreciated being smiled at as I walked in the door. I appreciated someone approaching me right away, asking how I was doing and how I could be helped. I even enjoyed the small talk and the questions about my plans for popping the big question. These are all great sales techniques for connecting with customers and many people practice them sincerely.

But personally, what I wanted after the small talk was to be left alone so I could look at rings and simply think. I would tell them that, but they would not listen. They would follow me around like a lion after its prey. When I would simply pause and fixate on a certain area they would pounce on me – “This is a *really* nice one here. I *like* this one. It’s beautiful and we have seven others similar to it. Each one comes in yellow gold *and* white gold. This diamond is a princess-cut and it’s an ‘F.’ You can upgrade to a ‘D’ for only a few thousand dollars more.”

With some salespeople, no matter how many times I told them I just wanted to look, they would still turn up the heat. I even tried saying, “I would just like to look and I will let you know if I need your help.” That did not work well either. So I developed a defense strategy when entering stores.

First, I decided not to make eye contact and engage in small talk when I entered the store. Also, if the sales people initiated a conversation, I gave a very short reply or ignored them – still making no eye contact. If they persisted with showing rings or offering unsolicited advice, as a last resort I would say a quick “thanks” and try to throw them off my trail by walking away to another part of the store.

The salespeople’s obligation to listen to me and show sensitivity to my needs was trumped by their burning desire to make a sale. Something is very wrong when a customer feels the need to develop a plan of defense against the sales force!

My response to the pressure of jewelry salespeople shows how people respond to the pickpocket mentality – they throw up defenses and keep their distance. They may even go somewhere else, like I eventually did. Nobody wants to be taken advantage of.

As frustrating as the jewelry store experiences were, I am thankful for them. At the time I was only a few years into my entrepreneurship, and I learned a valuable lesson about the importance of listening to the needs and concerns of my clients.

I ended up buying a ring from a place where the people respected my personal need to shop all by myself – until I asked for their help. I did not feel at all like they were trying to pick my pockets. Instead, they did everything they could to make sure that I had everything I needed in the way I needed it. It was an overall pleasant experience, and they are the first ones I will go to when I am in need of more jewelry.

That's my Parking Spot!

People become animals when they get behind the wheel. Old people become turtles.

Teenagers become monkeys. And many become a combination of cheetah and pit bull – they are the fast and the furious.

When road rage takes to the parking lot, I call it “pick-parketing,” or if you’re from Boston, “pick-pahketing,” in which case it sounds like “pickpocketing.” Here is my confession about a time I attempted a pick-parketing stunt, only to be busted by my wife.

The first weekend of every June our city holds its annual festival, Old Shawnee Days, at which I have performed many times in the past. On Saturday morning of the festival, many organizations and clubs participate in a parade. It was something I enjoyed as a child and now enjoy with my own children.

We always park at the First Baptist Church of Shawnee, because it is a primo spot along the parade route and is also adjacent to Old Shawnee Town, the location of the festival. Every year during the parade, without fail, the church parking lot is completely packed.

What do you do when a parking lot is full? Again, some people become animals, in this case buzzards circling continuously in search of a spot. Others make their own spots. And some of us become stalkers – watching for people who are walking to their cars in the hope they are leaving so we can take their spots. I am a stalker.

We waited for a few minutes, and bingo – we spotted three teenage girls walking to their car. As I turned to pursue the trio, I noticed out of the corner of my eye that another car was already in hot pursuit. But this car was following the girls backwards. Immediately I called “foul.” That’s just dangerous. So without making eye contact, I cut off the other car, and began following the girls myself.

While watching the other car in my rearview mirror, it became apparent to me that the person saw what I was doing. This person slammed on the brakes and sped forward to race around the block of cars, hoping to luck out and beat me to the spot. But chance would have it that the girls did not go far and I was waiting at their spot with my blinker on as my opponent came peeling around the corner.

I had manipulated the situation perfectly. I had some kids in the back seat who were eager to see a parade, and I needed a parking spot – *now*.

Then my wife said, “Should we let them have it?” And I was thinking, *no*. But I didn’t say that. Instead, I said the two words that have saved me many times. “Yes, dear.” She was not going to let me do it – I was busted! Even though I could have argued that I earned the spot and now it was rightfully mine, it was only right that I considered the other person.

As I drove forward, I paused, rolled my window down and called out to the other driver, “Would you like this spot?” The driver was a little old lady, and as she looked up at me and shielded her eyes from the sun, I could see there was a cast on her arm. She replied, “That would be wonderful.” I said, “It’s all yours.”

It felt good – no, it felt *really* good to put my own wants aside and focus on someone else who needed the parking spot more than me. I am thankful that I have an amazing woman who helps remind me at times to think outside of myself and live out the things that I encourage other people to live out.

In that situation I was faced with the choice of being a pickpocket or a magician. Those were, and always are, the only two options. After we drove off and found a parking spot further down the street, I was able to walk with my family to the parade knowing that in that situation I had performed well...I had acted as a magician.

Let Me Pick (pocket) Your Brain

When I am giving longer Share Your Magic presentations, I include some discussion time where the attendees share personal experiences with each other. One of my discussion questions, is: “What is a way that someone has pickpocketed you?”

I presented this question for discussion when I was speaking to an audience of nursing home managers and directors of nursing. After the attendees had time to answer the question with a partner, I asked if anyone would like to share their pickpocketing experience with the entire group. One gentleman named Randy so generously volunteered.

Randy said that years back, while he was working on his masters degree, he was also employed as an adult education teacher providing body conditioning classes to handicapped and senior adults in nursing facilities to work his way through school. The Principal for the Adult Education program

asked him if he would be willing to write a program that teaches body conditioning to handicapped seniors in nursing homes. Randy agreed to do so.

He pre-vamped the program, wrote up the lesson plan and submitted it to be approved by the State. The lesson plan was approved by the State and Randy began teaching body conditioning in numerous Nursing Centers, Assisted Living Centers and Senior Centers for approximately six years.

About ten years later, one of Randy's colleagues bought a book on teaching body conditioning to handicap seniors in nursing homes. Recognizing the material as Randy's, she showed him the book. Randy couldn't believe his eyes! In this book was the program that he himself had developed about ten years back! It was the very material and equipment he had developed!

At the time the program was just getting underway, a certain individual had come into one of the care facilities and carefully observed Randy's program. Randy did not think anything of it at the time; after all, he did design the material for it to be used. This man who observed Randy's program later published the material as his own.

Randy admits it was his own fault that this happened. He did not copyright the material, even after being advised to do so. But that is really beside the point. The fact is, Randy got pickpocketed. It was his idea and his program, and he deserves the credit. Did the other man break the law? No. But was his behavior ethical? I think not. When he decided to write up the program, he should have inquired with Randy. But instead, he slyly picked Randy's pocket!

What was the result? As Randy so eloquently put it, "I felt robbed. He made money. I got screwed!"

Emotional Pickpocketing

Restaurant Management

As a magician, I got my start in restaurants. That venue gave me insight into what it means to manage in a way that keeps a staff happy, motivated, and around for a while.

Having never been a waiter, I enjoyed experiencing the behind-the-scenes aspects of restaurants. It was interesting hearing staff complain about patrons rather than the other way around, feeling the anxiety of the managers needing to turn tables quickly on a busy night, and seeing the wait staff getting totally ticked-off when the hostess seated too many tables in their section again.

I found that when managers have a positive attitude, handle conflict well, respect staff, and can keep their cool, the restaurant functions well and there is minimal staff turnover. And vice versa. I saw the best of both worlds.

One restaurant I worked in was on top of their game, and it started with the owners. They worked as a team and knew how to treat their staff well. I was shocked at how long some of the staff had stayed on there.

Then there was the restaurant that was just the opposite. I did not see a collaborative effort among the staff. One night when business was slow I was talking with a waiter and the manager came by, tossed a wet rag to the waiter, and said sarcastically, “Those tables aren’t going to clean themselves.” The waiter caught the rag, and as the manager walked away, the waiter gave him one of the dirtiest, most hateful looks imaginable.

He did not feel respected. The manager took his will to work hard and his motivation to *show* respect. Weeks later, that same staff member was terminated for giving away a free bottle of wine at the bar, which is strictly against restaurant policy. It is not too hard to imagine that perhaps his behavior was an act of defiance against his negative experiences.

These two types of restaurants taught me the value of abandoning the pickpocket mentality in leadership and management. Pickpocket your team members and they will break the rules, show disrespect, and get the heck out of Dodge (unless they get fired first). But act as a magician, and your organization will thrive.

“You’ve Aged!”

Using hurtful and careless words is another way people steal value.

One time before a speaker showcase I was chatting with a fellow speaker. She had just visited my website and was complimenting me on how good she thought it looked. Boom – value added. “Thanks a lot,” I told her. She said she especially liked the pictures, and asked me when I had them taken. This is where things went south. I thought for a few seconds and told her the pictures were taken about three years earlier. “Wow!” she said, “You’ve aged!” Thanks, lady. Self-esteem killer. Need I say more?

That's my Dad You're Talking About!

My dad had a similar experience. One time he bought a new suit. He felt good in the suit and he was proud to wear it to work. Someone at work said, "That's a nice suit, Bill – too bad it doesn't fit you right." That man picked the self-confidence right out of the pockets of my dad's new suit!

Sometimes when we say hurtful things, we think the follow-up words "I was joking" fix everything. But they don't, because the comment still sticks. It's like my good friend Joe always says, "There is a little bit of truth in every joke." What we say is irreversible. The same tongue that has the power to uplift has an equal and opposite ability to completely tear down.

Eight Months Pregnant

As I write this, my wife is eight months pregnant. Just yesterday she was out shopping with our two daughters. Our oldest, Claire, who is four years old, likes to remind people that her mommy is pregnant. Claire told this to the girl taking their order at a restaurant, which made the girl laugh. Then the girl commented to my wife that she looks great and it is hard to believe she only has four weeks left in the pregnancy, which of course made my wife feel good about herself.

Later in the day my girls were checking out at a department store and the woman behind the counter asked how far along my wife was. My wife told her she was eight months along. Then the woman asked, “Are you sure you only have one in there?” to which my wife replied, “Why, does it look like I have more than one in there?” and the woman gave her a raised-eyebrow look, which my wife took as, *it sure looks like there is more than one.*

It is amazing what we are capable of saying when we don't stop to think about how our words will affect someone. My wife said she has read on her friends' facebook profiles the inconsiderate comments people have made to them while they were pregnant. She told me she remembers thinking, *do people really say these things?* And now she knows they do.

“Credit” Fraud

Many years ago my sister Gretchen told me a story about something that happened to her after a high school marching band practice. One day Kari, the drum major (the person who directs the band), was intensely looking for an apparently important stack of papers. My sister found them. As she went to let Kari know she had found them, another band member grabbed the papers right out of Gretchen's hand and ran after Kari, letting her know "he" had found the papers.

This of course created unpleasant emotions for my sister. First of all, this guy was not

someone she knew very well, and she was mad that he had just ripped the papers right out of her hand without saying a word. But probably what evoked even stronger emotions was the fact that she did not get the credit for finding the papers. We humans like to feel that we matter, and when we can help people out it makes us feel great. But when we accomplish something and someone else robs the credit from us, it takes the joy that the moment brings.

For some reason, this seemingly insignificant story stuck with me for a long time. But the feelings my sister felt at that moment were not insignificant; otherwise, she would not have shared the story of it with me. I was in middle school at the time my sister told me about this, and was looking forward to being on the drumline in the high school band in a few years. I think what made me remember the story was that this guy was on drumline and was someone I looked up to. When my sister told me this story I lost respect for him.

After recounting this story, Gretchen so cleverly named this type of pickpocketing “credit” fraud. I thought about taking the credit for that brilliant title, but then I would be guilty of the very practice.

**Now the Important Question is...
Are *You* a Pickpocket?**

Think for a minute about your interactions over the past week, over the past few days... even just today. Has there been an instance where you have picked a pocket?

You may be familiar with the hilarious Jeff Foxworthy's "**You might be a redneck if...**" routines. Inspired by that premise, I present: "**You might be a pickpocket if...**" to provide you with the opportunity to reflect on your mindset, motives and methods when dealing with others.

As you read the following pages, be honest with yourself as you seek the answer to the question, "Do I have pickpocket tendencies?"

You will find a little humor in some of these statements, but you will find truth in all of them.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You begrudge doing favors for others.
- You get upset when someone doesn't repay you for your kindness.
- You keep track of your good deeds.
- You are more concerned with your own accomplishments being recognized and less concerned about recognizing the accomplishments of others.
- You cut people off on the highway and then don't let other cars in.
- You are always asking, "What's in it for me?"
- While eating out, you despise when others order the chicken and then ask to try a bite of your steak.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You do not serve others or volunteer your time in any way.
- Every time you call your friends, the first words out of their mouth are, “What do you want now?”
- Your friends stop answering their phones when your name pops up on caller I.D.
- You consciously make under-handed comments that cut people down.
- You *subconsciously* make under-handed comments that cut people down.
- You are quick to receive credit but slow to accept blame.
- Gossip is fun, pleasurable, and makes you feel better about yourself.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You demand the undivided attention of others but exhibit poor listening skills and do nothing to improve them.
- You think every parking spot in the world has an invisible sign with your name on it.
- You have a hiding place for the remote control.
- Your flattery is as sweet and as thick as Mrs. Butterworth's maple syrup: *"Flattery is from the teeth out. Sincere appreciation is from the heart out."* –Dale Carnegie
- You re-gift junk.
- Your politeness, smile and kindness are contingent upon the politeness, smiles and kindness of others.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You enjoy “telling off” in-laws, co-workers and telemarketers and then proudly share stories about it with others.
- You light up a room...by leaving it.
- Your kids’ friends aren’t welcome in your home because they might put a hole in the wall, ruffle the carpet and otherwise tear up the place.
- You’ve ever taken the biggest, juiciest chicken breast from the fried chicken bowl at the Sunday church potluck.
- You’ve ever taken the last deviled egg at the neighborhood barbecue.
- Your parents/caregivers were pickpockets. It is often hereditary.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You never make sacrifices of any kind.
- You lay early claim to movie theater and airplane armrests.
- You've ever taken a nice, long, warm shower and the five people after you took cold showers.
- Your criticisms run rampant: *“Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain and most fools do.”* –Dale Carnegie
- You've ever strategically placed your brownies at the head of the dessert table.
- You've ever told someone they've aged or gained weight.
- You associate Salvation Army bell-ringers with guilt.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You are only willing to look at situations from your own perspective – never anyone else's.
- You think it is your job to burst people's bubble at times in order to give them an ego check and downsize their head.
- The ribbons on the gifts you give are tied to your hand.
- Where *you* want to eat is always “convenient in every way,” but where *they* want to eat is always “farther away, more expensive, has a longer wait, and the service is terrible.”
- You are secretive about making long-distant phone calls or copies at work that cost your company money.
- You are human.

A New Habit

So what do you think? Do you have pickpocket tendencies?

In pointing out the pickpocket mentality, I am not saying we are all horrible people out for blood. I think there is good in all of us. It is not my intent to shame or guilt you. My goal here is to simply help you become *aware* of the pickpocket mentality. Since we humans are by nature selfish, often times we do not even realize we are taking value.

It would not be fair for me to encourage you to abandon the pickpocket mentality without offering you a solution. We overcome pickpocket practices the same way we overcome any bad habit – by replacing the bad habits with good habits. Pickpocket practices can be replaced with the good habit of *sharing your magic*, and that is the focus of the remainder of this book.