

# The 15 Invaluable Laws Of Growth by John Maxwell

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Instructor Notes

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## About The Author: John Maxwell

For over 30 years, Maxwell has led churches in Indiana, Ohio, California, and Florida. After serving as senior pastor for 14 years, in 1995 he left Skyline Church, near San Diego, to devote himself full-time to speaking and writing. However, in 2004, he returned to congregational ministry at Christ Fellowship in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, where he is currently a teaching pastor. On November 16, 2008, he began serving as a guest pastor at the famous Crystal Cathedral in Orange County, California. Maxwell's mentor, Robert H. Schuller, has had a variety of noted evangelical pastors preach at his mega-church since his son, Robert A. Schuller, resigned as senior pastor in 2008. Maxwell has returned to preach at the Crystal Cathedral several times and his messages are broadcast worldwide on the Hour of Power television program, seen by an estimated 20 million viewers.

Maxwell is an internationally recognized leadership expert, speaker, and author who has sold over 19 million books. His organizations have trained more than five million leaders worldwide. He is the founder of INJOY, Maximum Impact, ISS and EQUIP, an international leadership development organization working to help leaders. EQUIP is involved with leaders from more than 80 nations.

Every year Maxwell speaks to Fortune 500 companies, international government leaders, and organizations as diverse as the United States Military Academy at West Point and the National Football League. A New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Business Week best-selling author, Maxwell was one of 25 authors and artists named to Amazon.com's 10th Anniversary Hall of Fame. Three of his books, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, *Developing the Leader Within You*, and *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader* have each sold over a million copies.

Maxwell serves on the Board of Trustees at Indiana Wesleyan University and has a building named after him there, the Maxwell Center for Business and Leadership.

Maxwell was a keynote speaker at National Agents Alliance NAA Leadership Conference several times most recently in 2010.

**You can gather more information about John C. Maxwell at [www.johnmaxwell.com](http://www.johnmaxwell.com)**



## Introduction to the Book

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Are there tried and true principles that are always certain to help a person grow? John Maxwell says the answer is yes. He has been passionate about personal development for over fifty years, and for the first time, he teaches everything he has gleaned about what it takes to reach our potential. In the way that only he can communicate, John teaches ...

- The Law of the Mirror: You Must See Value in Yourself to Add Value to Yourself
- The Law of Awareness: You Must Know Yourself to Grow Yourself
- The Law of Modeling: It's Hard to Improve When You Have No One But Yourself to Follow
- The Law of the Rubber Band: Growth Stops When You Lose the Tension Between Where You are and Where You Could Be
- The Law of Contribution: Developing Yourself Enables You to Develop Others

This third and final book in John Maxwell's Laws series (following 2-million seller *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* and *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*) will help you become a lifelong learner whose potential keeps increasing and never gets "used up."

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## Introduction

### Page xiii

Potential is a word based on possibilities. What a positive thought.

What about unfulfilled potential? That phrase is as negative as the word potential is positive.

To reach your potential you must grow, and to grow, you must be highly intentional about it.

### Page xiv

To discover your purpose, you need to grow in self-awareness. To become a better human being, you need to grow in character. To advance in your career, you need to grow in your skills. To be a better spouse or parent, you need to grow in relationships. To reach your financial goals, you



need to grow in your knowledge about how money works. To enrich your soul, you need to grow spiritually. The specifics of growth change from person to person, but the principles are the same for every person.

You cannot change your life until you change something you do every day. If you keep learning and growing every day over the course of many years, you will be astounded by how far it will take you.

## Chapter 1 – The Law Of Intentionality

### Growth Doesn't Just Happen

#### Page 1

Working hard doesn't guarantee success. And hope isn't a strategy.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*As we get started in this book, which for many is probably their 1<sup>st</sup> ever self-improvement book, the above two statements are widely accepted by today's society. Working hard can be defined in many different ways by many different people – this can be a trap. You can work hard at the wrong thing, for your entire life, and never reach success. This is the trap that gets handed down from parents to their children from generation to generation. Hard work doesn't equal success, and until you understand that, you have a very high percentage of never reaching your potential and remaining average.*

*Hope is silly because it really isn't anything. Hope is usually followed by zero action towards a specific goal that is not planned out or evaluated. Many people hope for what I think are two reasons: one, they haven't been taught how to properly plan; and two, they even if they knew how to plan they are lazy!*

#### Page 2

If you focus on goals, you may hit goals – but that doesn't guarantee you growth. If you focus on growth, you will grow and always hit your goals.

People are anxious to improve their circumstances but are unwilling to improve themselves; they therefore remain bound.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*Most people are unwilling to improve themselves because they have never been and internal growth has never really been emphasized to them so they are not "bought in" to the whole concept. Formal education "buys" them into the philosophy that academics equal success. They define academics as math, science, and English all of which have no direct bearing on your level of success in life.*

A time comes when you need to stop waiting for the person you want to become and start being the person you want to be.

## Pages 3-9

8 Misconceptions about growth that may be holding you back from being as intentional as you need to be:

### 1. **The Assumption Gap – I assume that I will automatically grow.**

When we are children, our bodies grow automatically. A year goes by, and we become taller, stronger, and more capable of doing new things and facing new challenges. I think many people carry into adulthood a subconscious belief that mental, spiritual, and emotional growth follows a similar automatic pattern.

The problem is that we don't improve by simply living. We have to be intentional about it. No one improves by accident.

Personal growth doesn't just happen on its own. And once you're done with your formal education, you must take complete ownership of the growth process, because nobody else will do it for you.

#### **Instructor notes:**

*I feel this is the biggest culprit of them all and it all comes down to education. If we don't teach people this concept in school then many misinformed people have children and they too get misinformed, so on and so on. You must be intentional and make the choice to personally growth for the better every day.*

### 2. **The Knowledge Gap – I don't know how to grow.**

Many people learn only from the school of hard knocks. Difficult experiences teach them lessons "the hard way," and they change – sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. The lessons are random and difficult. It's much better to plan your growth intentionally. You decide where you need or want to grow, you choose what you will learn, and you follow through with discipline going at the pace you set.

#### **Instructor notes:**

*Because this isn't taught to people in formal education many people use this as an excuse not to grow. In fact, when they are presented with ways to grow they usually don't understand it or the concept because it is so new to them. And on top of that many of these people don't know successful people who they can learn this from. I have found that you must go out yourself and seek these people out.*

### 3. **The Timing Gap – It's not the right time to begin.**

What great accomplishments we'd have in the world if everybody had done what they intended to do. Most people don't act as quickly as they should on things. They find themselves subject to the Law of Diminishing Intent, which says, "The longer you wait to do something you should do now, the greater odds that you will never actually do it."

The reality is that you will never get much done unless you go ahead and do it before you are ready. If you're not already intentionally growing, you need to get started today. If



you don't, you may reach some goals, which you can celebrate, but you will eventually plateau. Once you start growing intentionally, you can keep growing and keep asking, "What's next?"

#### 4. **The Mistake Gap – I'm afraid of making mistakes.**

Growing can be a messy business. It means admitting you don't have the answers. It requires making mistakes. It can make you look foolish. Most people don't enjoy that. But that is the price of admission if you want to improve.

A mistake is simply another way of doing things. To become intentional about growing, expect to make mistakes every day, and welcome them as a sign that you are moving in the right direction.

##### ***Instructor notes:***

*The mistake gap is fostered and nurtured throughout the formal education system. People are taught to not make mistakes and avoid failure at all costs, so what do we expect from the average person? We are a product of our own teachings so in order to overcome this challenge you must first change your mind-set and definition of a mistake or failure.*

*I find most things that hold us up in life come down to our personal definition of a word, term, or concept and how we perceive it. Two people can have different definitions of what a failure or a mistake is and because of that, take two different actions that produce two much different results. Following these simple definitions over the course of a lifetime can produce an average person or a successful person depending on what your definition of failure is. Does this make sense?*

#### 5. **The Perfection Gap – I have to find the best way before I start.**

I had to get started if I wanted to find the best way. It's similar to driving on an unfamiliar road at night. Ideally, you'd like to be able to see your whole route before you begin. But you see it progressively. As you move forward, a little more of the road is revealed to you. If you want to see more of the way, then get moving.

#### 6. **The Inspiration Gap – I don't feel like doing it.**

Motivation is not going to strike you like lightning. And motivation is not something that someone else can bestow or force on you. The whole idea of motivation is a trap. Forget motivation. Just do it.

After you start doing the thing, that's when the motivation comes and makes it easy for you to keep on doing it.

You may not feel inspired to aggressively pursue a growth plan if you haven't started yet. If that's the case, please trust me when I say that the reasons to keep growing far outweigh the reasons to start growing. And you discover the reasons to stay with growth only if you stick with it long enough to start reaping the benefits. So make a commitment to yourself to start and stick with it for at least 12 months. If you do, you will fall in love with the process, and you will be able to look back at the end of that year and see how far you've come.

**Instructor notes:**

*Usually if you don't feel like doing something it's because you don't have a passion for it or you don't understand why it is important to you. I think it's more-so the fact that people don't understand why self-improvement is so critical to their results in life. If you've been taught that hard work gets you ahead for 18 years (until you graduate high school) then it is very hard for people to understand the importance of self-improvement.*

**7. The Comparison Gap – Others are better than I am.**

You can only learn if others are ahead of you.

**8. The Expectation Gap – I thought it would be easier than this.**

I don't know any successful person who thinks growth comes quickly and climbing to the top is easy. It just doesn't happen. People create their own luck and here's the formula:

Preparation (growth) + Attitude + Opportunity + Action

(doing something about it) = Luck

You cannot change your destination overnight, but you can change your direction overnight.

**Instructor notes:**

*The instant gratification world that we live in “cons” us into thinking that we should have everything right now without growing or earning it. For example, isn't that why people have credit card debt? Their expectation is that they NEED to buy something they can't afford because they want it now. Their true expectation is to satisfy their instant gratification urge.*

*As far as luck goes, we'll talk about that concept much more as the curriculum advances.*

**Pages 10-13**

The sooner you make the transition to becoming intentional about your personal growth, the better it will be for you, because growth compounds and accelerates if you remain intentional about it.

**Here's how to make the change:**

**1. Ask The Big Question Now**

When committing to an intentional personal development program, the question in your mind will change from, “How long will this take?” to “How far can I go?” That is the question you should be asking yourself right now – not that you will be able to answer it.

Give growing your best shot so you can become your best.

**Instructor notes:**



*It will take as long as you want it to take. The person who invests the most consistent time into their personal growth program will develop faster. But it all comes down to what is your definition of fast? What are your expectations? There is no time frame because everyone starts their journey at a different point in their life with different mind-sets, skill sets, and desire.*

*How bad do you want to reach your potential and succeed? If your answer is “very bad,” then you will more than likely invest more time into yourself and will find that your results will come more quickly.*

## 2. Do It Now

The greatest danger you face in this moment is the idea that you will make intentional growth a priority later. Don't fall into that trap!

“Later” is one of those dream-killers, one of the countless obstacles we use to derail our chances of success.

Pick a resource that will help you grow and begin learning from it today.

## 3. Face The Fear Factor

Fears that keep people from becoming successful:

- Fear of failure.
- Fear of trading security for the unknown.
- Fear of being overextended financially.
- Fear of what others will say or think.
- Fear that success will alienate peers.

Feed your faith and starve your fear(s).

### *Instructor notes:*

*I think most people are worried what others are going to think and say. It's that peer pressure to stay with the “pack” and remain average. Because isn't average the “norm?” Why be something more than average? Who do you think you are to even think you can be something more than average?*

*I find that you must swim up-stream and go do what everyone else is not doing to get ahead. It is very simple – JUST FOLLOW DO WHAT SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO EACH DAY.*

## 4. Change From Accidental To Intentional Growth

People tend to get into ruts in life. They get in an easy groove, and they don't try to break out of it – even when it's taking them in the wrong direction. After a while, they just get by. If they learn something, it's because of a happy accident.

If that is the attitude you've developed, then you would do well to remember that the only difference between a rut and a grave is the length!





The choices we make are ultimately our responsibility.

If you want to reach your potential and become the person you were created to be, you must do much more than just experience life and hope that you learn what you need along the way. You must go out of your way to seize growth opportunities as if your future depended on it. Why? Because it does. Growth doesn't just happen – not for me, not for you, not for anybody. You have to go after it!

***Instructor notes:***

*The day that you understand this concept, and commit to a daily program, is the day you can look back and pin point when your life changed. All my success in life came as direct result of this one decision and taking consistent action daily. I wish I was taught this when I was young!!!*

## **Chapter 2 – The Law Of Awareness**

### **You Must Know Yourself To Grow Yourself**

#### **Page 17**

To grow, you must know yourself: your strengths and weaknesses, your interests and opportunities. You must be able to gauge not only where you have been, but also where you are now. Otherwise you cannot set a course for where you want to go. And of course, every time you want to learn something, you must be able to take the new thing you've learned today and build upon what you learned yesterday to keep growing. That's the only way to gain traction and keep improving yourself.

#### **Page 18**

To reach your potential, you must know where you want to go and where you currently are. Without both of these pieces of information, you're liable to get lost.

#### **There are 3 kinds of people when it comes to direction in life:**

1. People who don't know what they would like to do.

These people are often confused.

2. People who know what they would like to do but don't do it.

These people are usually frustrated.

3. People who know what they would like to do and do it.

The word that best describes them is fulfilled.



Yet most people seem to fall into the first category. They don't know what they want to do. I believe the main reason is that they don't know themselves as well as they should, and thus remain unfocused in their growth.

**Instructor notes:**

*I think most people actually know what they want to do in life at a very young age, however, the formal education system and society tell us that we should follow more traditional career paths. Look at young people like Shaun White, Ryan Sheckler, and Rob Dyrdek (they skateboard, snowboard, and own many businesses). A high school degree and they are millionaires because they followed their passion.*

*We do a terrible job at supporting what our children really want to do in life, and as parents, we tend to think what is best for our children based off our perceptions not theirs. Who am I as a parent to tell my child who loves skateboarding that they can't follow that as a career and make money? Does that make me look like a parent to other parents? Hmmmmmm....*

**Page 19**

Knowing yourself isn't an easy thing for everyone to do.

What makes finding themselves and growing to their potential difficult for some people is that it can be a bit of a catch-22. You have to know who you are to grow to your potential. But you have to grow in order to know who you are.

**Pages 20-33**

The first step toward change is awareness. The second is acceptance. If you want to change and grow, then you must know yourself and accept who you are before you can start building.

**10 questions to help find your passion and purpose:**

**1. Do You Like What You're Doing Now?**

If you're not enjoying what you do for a living, you need to take some time to examine why.

It is a risk to make a change from what you're currently doing to what you want to do but isn't there also a great risk in staying where you are? Which risk would you rather live with?

**Instructor notes:**

*The great thing about this concept is that you can make the decision to change this part of your life at any given moment no matter how old or young you are. Most people fear what they will give up in the short-term rather than work to gain more in the long-term. That fear is enough for them to lose belief in any dream they might have and work towards that dream, passion, or purpose.*

## 2. What Would You Like To Do?

Every successful person I've met has a strong sense of his or her abilities and aspirations. They're leaders in their own lives, and they dare to pursue their dreams on their own terms.

When you tap into your passion, it gives you the E & E factor: energy and excellence.

- You will never fulfill your destiny doing what you despise.
- Passion gives you an advantage over others, because one person with passions is greater than 99 who have only interest!
- Passion gives you energy.

Nothing's work unless you'd rather be doing something else. Want to know when I'll retire? When I die.

If you never figure out what you want to do, you will probably be frustrated all your life. Knowing yourself and what you want to do is one of the most important things you'll ever do in this life.

## 3. Can You Do What You Would Like To Do?

There's a big difference between having a dream that propels you to achieve and pulling an idea out of thin air that has no connection with who you are and what you can do.

Here are 3 questions to ask yourself if what you want to do it possible:

- a. Do you know the difference between what you want and what you're good at?
- b. Do you know what drives you and what gives you satisfaction?
- c. Do you know what your values and priorities are, and what your organization's values and priorities are?

One of the main keys to being successful and fulfilling your purpose is to understand your unique talents and to find the right arena in which to use them.

Discover your uniqueness; then discipline yourself to develop it.

## 4. Do You Know Why You Want To Do What You Would Like To Do?

I believe it's very important to not only know what you want to do, but also why you want to do it. I say that because motives matter. When you do things for the right reason, it gives you inner strength when things go wrong. Right motives help you build positive relationships because they prevent hidden agendas and incline you to put people ahead of your agenda.

Doing something for the right reasons also keeps life less cluttered and your path clearer. Not only is your vision clearer, but you also sleep well at night knowing you're on the right track.

Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. Who looks outside, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens.



## 5. Do You Know What To Do So You Can Do What You Want To Do?

To move from what you're doing now to what you want to do is a process.

**It begins with the following:**

**Awareness** – You have to start by becoming aware of the choices that lead you away from your desired destination. Become very conscious of every choice you make today so you can begin to make smarter choices moving forward.

You can change direction if you aren't aware that you're not headed where you want to go. But you won't know for sure until you start moving forward.

**Action** – You cannot win if you do not begin! You must take the initiative to every day to do something specific that will take you one step closer to your goal. Others will not do it for you.

**Accountability** – Few things prompt a person to follow through like accountability. Tracking my problems and missteps is one of the reasons I've accumulated the success I have. The process of accountability forces you to be conscious of your decisions.

**Attraction** – “Who you are is who you attract.” That is true in leadership, but it is also true in every other aspect of your life. As my mother used to say, “Birds of a feather flock together.”

If you want to be around growing people, become a growing person. If you're committed, you attract others who are committed. If you're growing, you attract others who are growing. This puts you in a position to begin building a community of like-minded people who can help one another succeed.

## 6. Do You Know People Who Do What You'd Like To Do?

My greatest growth has always come as a result of finding people ahead of me who were able to show me the way forward.

If you have discovered what you want to do, start finding people who do what you want to do with excellence. Then do what you must to learn from them.

- **Get committed.** Pay people for their time if necessary.
- **Be consistent.** Meet purposefully every month with someone who can teach you.
- **Be creative.** Start with their books if you can't meet them in person.
- **Be purposeful.** Spend two hours in preparation for every hour of interaction.
- **Be reflective.** Spend two hours in reflection for every hour of interaction.
- **Be grateful.** These people are gifts to your personal growth; be sure to let them know.

Always remember that you cannot get to where you want to go on your own. You will need the help of others to guide you on your way.

**Instructor notes:**

*The fastest way to success and doing what you love is to find someone who is doing that successfully already and ask them to become your mentor. Sometimes you must travel to find this person but isn't it worth it in the long run if you want to be successful?*

*You will learn much faster from people who have already made the mistakes that you have yet to make. It's a pretty simple concept however too many people take the journey alone and learn life lessons from the school of hard knocks.*

## 7. Should You Do What You'd Like To Do With Them?

If you find a potential mentor, know that the following are YOUR responsibility:

- Possess a teachable spirit.
- Always be prepared for the time you get with your mentor.
- Set the agenda by asking great questions.
- Demonstrate how you've learned from your time together.
- Be accountable for what you've learned.

The responsibilities of a mentor are:

- Strengths
- Temperament
- Track record
- Passion
- Choices
- Advice
- Support, Resources/People
- Game plan
- Feedback
- Encouragement

Every person who can help you is not necessarily the right person to help you. You must pick and choose. And so must they. Your goal should be to find a fit that is mutually beneficial for both mentor and mentee.

## 8. Will You Pay The Price To Do What You Want To Do?

When it comes to barriers to success, we are usually our own worst enemies.

Taking the steps necessary to live your dreams and do what you want to do will cost you. You will have to work hard. You will have to make sacrifices. You will have to keep learning and growing and changing. Are you willing to pay that price? I certainly hope you are. But know this: Most people aren't.

**Instructor notes:**

*I don't know, will you pay the price? That's the million dollar question that you need to answer for yourself. If not paying the price guarantees you to be average, but paying the*



*price will give you the potential to be successful, why not pay the price and see what happens? If it doesn't work out what is the worst that can happen? You stay average? Think about it. Are you just lazy and it's less effort to stay average?*

### 9. When Can You Start Doing What You'd Like To Do?

Ask people when they will do what they want to do, and most answer that they hope to do it "someday." Why not now? Because you're not ready? Perhaps you're not. But if you wait until you are, maybe you never will do it.

Most of the accomplishments that I've achieved in life I began to attempt before I was really ready.

Nobody ever got ready by waiting. You only get ready by starting.

### 10. What Will It Be Like When You Get To Do What You'd Like To Do?

When you do what you've always wanted to, it will be better than you ever imagined. When I started investing in my personal growth, I didn't anticipate a compounding return – for me personally a, for the individuals I've mentored, and for my team. And I never dreamed it would be this much fun! Nothing else compares to doing what you were created to do.

People say there are two great days in a person's life: The day you were born and the day you discover why. I want to encourage you to seek what you were put on this earth to do. Then pursue it with all your effort.

## Chapter 3 – The Law of The Mirror

### You Must See Value In Yourself To Add Value To Yourself

#### Page 35

Personal development is the belief that you are worth the effort, time, and energy needed to develop yourself.

I believe all people have the seeds of success within them. All they need to do is cultivate those seeds, water them, feed them, and they will begin to grow.

So why do many people fail to grow and reach their potential? I've concluded that one of the main reasons is low self-esteem. Many people don't believe in themselves. They don't see the possibilities that God put in them. They possess a hundred acres of possibilities, yet never cultivate them because they are convinced that they won't be able to learn and grow and blossom into something wonderful.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*At a very young age most children suffer from poor self-esteem and low personal belief of what they can achieve. As you advance through the curriculum, you will understand that*



*their environment around them is 95% to blame. I feel that until this issue is addressed, it is very difficult to ever change and believe in yourself more than you do now. You must be given permission by the people around you to believe more in yourself and abilities. Most times, this means changing your environment of people who is around you.*

### Page 37

You get a chance to be anyone you want in life if you make the choice, take action, develop a plan, and not quit.

### Page 39

If you don't realize that you have genuine value and that you are worth investing in, then you will never put in the time and effort needed to grow to your potential.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*The simple fact that a person decides that THEY THEMSELVES are not worth investing in is just crazy. I am sorry. People actually do not invest in themselves but expect employers or others to invest into them. You are the number one thing you should be investing in EVERY DAY!*

Self-esteem is the single most significant key to a person's behavior.

It's impossible to consistently behave in a manner inconsistent with how we see ourselves. We can do very few things in a positive way if we feel negative about ourselves.

Low self-esteem puts a ceiling on our potential.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*I think people believe that their low self-esteem issues will just "go away" someday and it will just better. I think people choose to have a low-esteem because they do not want to put forth the effort to change it themselves. Do you know people who continue to have a low self-esteem because the attention it gives them? This is the pain vs. pleasure syndrome that you will learn later in this curriculum with Tony Robbins book Awaken The Giant Within.*

*Don't you also know people who are in a career, earn a nice income, but have a low self-esteem about themselves? They hate their job even though they make good money and don't have the belief they can do anything else in life?*

### Page 40

If your desire is a 10 but your self-esteem is a 5, you'll never perform at the level of a 10. You perform as a 5 or lower. People are never able to outperform their self-image.

The value we place on ourselves is usually the value others place on us. Most people live their lives according to what others believe about them. If the important people in their lives expect them to go nowhere, then that's what they expect for themselves.

You shouldn't become too concerned about what others might think of you. You should be more concerned about what you think of yourself.



If you put a small value on yourself, rest assured the world will not raise the price. If you want to become the person you have the potential to be, you must believe you can!

## Pages 41-48

### **10 steps to build your self-image:**

#### **1. Guard Your Self-Talk**

By the time you're 17 yrs. old, you've heard "No, you can't," an average of 150,000 times. You've heard "Yes, you can," about 5,000 times. That's 30 no's for every yes. That makes for a powerful belief of "I can't."

If we want to change our lives, we have to change the way we think of ourselves. If we want to change the way we think of ourselves, we need to change the way we talk to ourselves. And the older we are, the more responsible we are for how we think, talk, and believe.

Every time you make a mistake, don't bring up everything that's wrong with yourself; tell yourself that you're paying the price for growth and that you will learn to do better next time. Every positive thing you can say to yourself will help.

#### **Instructor notes:**

*Wait until you get to our self-talk module in this curriculum. You will more than likely say exactly what I did when I first read the books, "why the heck didn't they teach me this in school?" Hello????*

#### **2. Stop Comparing Yourself To Others**

What happens when you compare yourself to others? Usually it's one of two things: either you perceive the other person to be far ahead of you and you feel discouraged, or you perceive yourself to be better than the other person, and you become proud. Neither of those is good for you, and neither will help you grow.

The only one you should compare yourself to is you. Your mission is to become better today than you were yesterday. You do that by focusing on what you can do today to improve and grow.

#### **Instructor notes:**

*This happens all the time, be honest. People will usually fall in a comfort zone of comparing themselves with people lesser than them because it makes them feel good and helps their self-esteem. They fail to realize it is holding them back even if their self-esteem feels better to them. The only way to move forward is to chase people who are better than you.*

*If someone has invested more time than you at something, and is better than you at whatever it is, don't we need to expect that they WILL be better than us? Does that even matter in the big picture? Are you worried about learning and becoming better or about being not as good as someone else?*

#### **3. Move Beyond Your Limiting Beliefs**





The greatest limitations people experience on their lives are usually the ones they impose upon themselves.

When a man has put a limit on what he will do, he has put a limit on what he can do.

Remember, in the end, it isn't what you are that holds you back; it's what you think you're not.

**Instructor notes:**

*At the end of the day, you are your own worst enemy. You create the box you live in (your limitations you give yourself) and most people don't realize that the average person's "box" gets smaller as they get older. This happens because their personal belief continues to decrease over time.*

*The successful person's "box" gets bigger as they get older due to the investment in personal growth. That is why you will find successful people continue to have extraordinary success throughout their life. To the average person it "looks" as if they are just lucky and they get all the breaks.*

**4. Add Value To Others**

Making a difference – even a small one – in the lives of other people lifts one's self-esteem. It's hard to feel bad about yourself when you're doing something good for someone else. In addition to that, adding value to others makes them value you more. It creates a cycle of positive feeling from one person to another.

**5. Do The Right Thing, Even If It's The Hard Thing**

One of the best ways to build self-esteem is to do what's right. It gives a strong sense of satisfaction.

Being true to yourself and your value is a tremendous self-esteem builder. Every time you take action that builds your character, you become stronger as a person – the harder the task, the greater the character builder.

**Instructor notes:**

*Do you cut corners in this department? This IS NOT one that can ever be compromised!*

**6. Practice A Small Discipline Daily In A Specific Area of Your Life**

If there is an area in your life that seems overwhelming to you, try chipping away at it a little bit every day instead of trying to tackle it all at once.

Discipline is a morale builder. Boost yours by taking small steps that will take you in a positive direction.

**7. Celebrate Small Victories**



Taking a break to celebrate is good for you. If nothing is ever good enough, you can lose heart. Celebrating encourages you. It helps to inspire you to keep going. Don't underestimate its power.

### **8. Embrace A Positive Vision For Your Life Based On What You Value**

If you have a positive vision for your life and you take action to fulfill that vision, then you will more readily recognize that your life matters.

If you tap into what you value and try to see what could be, it can inspire you to take positive action. And every positive action you take helps you believe in yourself, which in turn helps you to take more positive action.

### **9. Practice The One-Word Strategy**

If you could pick one word to describe yourself, what would it be?

### **10. Take Responsibility For Your Life**

We tend to get in life what we are willing to tolerate. If we don't have a plan and purpose for our lives, we will become part of someone else's!

Keep moving forward, and keep believing.

*Instructor notes:*

*Ut-oh....the "R" word...responsibility...isn't that a bad word? LOL*

*You and no one else is responsible for your life and your results, no matter what you think or what excuses you make. You control your decisions and actions. You can't blame uncontrollables (things you can't control) on your lack of success.*

## **Chapter 4 – The Law Of Reflection**

### **Learning To Pause Allows Growth To Catch Up With You**

#### **Page 51**

There are many different ways of growing and an infinite number of lessons to be learned in life. But there are some kinds of growth that come to us only if we are willing to stop, pause, and allow the lesson to catch up with us.

#### **Page 53-58**

**How reflection can help you grow:**

#### **1. Reflection Turns Experience Into Sight**

Experience is not the best teacher. Evaluated experience is!



There's an old joke that experience is a hard teacher because the test is given first and the lesson is given afterward. That's true, but only if the person takes time to reflect after the experience. Otherwise, you receive the test first and the lesson may never come.

People have innumerable experiences every day, and many learn nothing from them because they never take the time to pause and reflect. That's why it is so important to pause and let understanding catch up with us.

**Instructors notes:**

*I think people make a big mistake here because they're so focused on activity, being busy, and rush-rush-rush. The thought of taking time to reflect and evaluate their actions is too overwhelming. They tell themselves that they have no time to stop and reflect because they can't afford to stop to take away from the activity. Doesn't more activity get you ahead in life? Hence the problem with the average person...the failure to realize that doing a lot of the same will get you a lot of the same unless you stop, reflect, evaluate, and change your strategy.*

**2. Everyone Needs A Time And A Place To Pause**

I have yet to meet a person who doesn't benefit from pausing and reflecting. In fact, stopping to reflect is one of the most valuable activities a person can do to grow. It has much greater value to them than motivation or encouragement. Pausing allows them to make sure they are on the right track. After all, if someone is going down the wrong road, he doesn't need motivation to speed up. He needs to stop, reflect, and change course.

If we don't take the time to pause and reflect, we can miss the significance of such events. Reflection allows those experiences to move from being like markers to life makers. If we pause to allow growth to catch up with us, it makes our lives better, because we not only better understand the significance of what we've experienced, but we can implement changes and course corrections as a result. We are also better equipped to teach others from the wisdom we have gained.

**Instructor notes:**

*I personally take several times a day to reflect but I find it best for me to "reflect on the fly" as I am doing things. I used to be very spontaneous and just go with ideas but found that I was making far too many mistakes. These mistakes actually slowed me down in the long run. Now, I've trained myself to reflect as I go even if it takes a little longer because in the long run I find myself way ahead of schedule while doing a better job.*

*I also reflect and evaluate my past performances with my mentors. I also find myself bouncing things off them as I reflect on the fly. At this point in my life it just a habitually pattern of what I do in a day and don't even think twice about it. I used to do everything on my own and just kept working hard finding myself running a hamster wheel but getting nowhere.*

**3. Pausing With Intention Expands And Enriches Thinking**

Leaders are so action oriented and have so many responsibilities that they are often guilty of moving all the time and neglecting to stop and take time to think. Yet this is one of the



most important things a leader can do. A minute of thought is worth more than an hour of talk.

I strongly encourage you to find a place to think and to discipline yourself to pause and use it, because it has the potential to change your life. It can help you figure out what's really important and what isn't.

#### 4. When You Take Time To Pause, Use Your I's

**Investigation** – Pausing means more than just slowing down to smell the roses. It means stopping and really figuring them out.

**Incubation** – Incubation is taking an experience of life and putting it into the slow cooker of your mind to simmer for a while.

**Illumination** – These are the “aha” moments in your life, the epiphanies when you experience sudden realization or insight. It's when the proverbial light-bulb turns on. Few things in life are more rewarding than such moments.

**Illustration** – Most good ideas are like skeletons. They provide good structure, but they need meat on their bones. They lack substance, and until they have it, they aren't that useful. All of us are watcher – of television, of time clocks, of traffic on the freeway – but few are observers. Everyone is looking, not many are seeing.

#### Page 59

Successful people ask better questions, and as a result, they get better answers.

If your questions are honest, they will lead you to solid convictions. If you ask quality questions, they will help you create a high-quality life.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*This is concept that you must master, because when you do, life becomes so much easier. It becomes very easy and you become more effective at dealing with people. In the end, that is 100% of what our life revolves around – communication with others.*

*Asking quality questions also makes you more efficient while gathering better information. I would rather spend the time to think of the quality questions I need to ask and work less because I have better information, rather than asking poor questions which directly leads me to working harder because I have poor information,*

If a person will begin with certainties, he will end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he will end in certainties.

#### Page 59-64

Questions to help develop your personal awareness:

1. What is my biggest asset?
2. What is my biggest liability?
3. What is my highest high?



4. What is my lowest low?
5. What is my most worthwhile emotion?
6. What is my least worthwhile emotion?
7. What is my best habit?
8. What is my worst habit?
9. What is most fulfilling to me?
10. What do I prize most highly?

What you want to accomplish in life and where you are in the journey will determine what areas you most need to think about today, tailoring the questions to yourself. But the most important thing you must do is write out the questions and write out the answers. Why? Because you will discover that what you think after you write the answer is different from what you thought before you wrote it. Writing helps you to discover what you truly know, think, and believe.

### Page 65

All of this probably sounds like a lot of steps and a lot of trouble. You're right; it is. That's why most people never do it. But it is worth every bit of effort you put into it. The farther you go in life, the more critical it is that you take time to pause and think.

*Instructor notes:*

*Bull's eye! This slows you down and you can't afford to slow down right? Wrong!*

*It is more trouble learning from the school of hard knocks than taking the time to stop, reflect, and evaluate so you can avoid the school of hard knocks teachings. I have found from experience that the school of hard knocks isn't much fun. Especially if you didn't learn your lesson the first time!*

### Page 66

Never forget that your goal in personal growth is reaching your potential. To do that, you need to keep pausing, keep asking questions, and keep growing every day.

## **Chapter 5 – The Law Of Consistency**

### **Motivation Gets You Going – Discipline Keeps You Growing**

#### Page 69

The hallmark of excellence, the test of greatness, is consistency.

When it comes to personal growth: Motivation gets you going, but discipline keeps you growing. That's the Law of Consistency. It doesn't matter how talented you are. It doesn't matter how many opportunities you receive. If you want to grow, consistency is key.

**Instructor notes:**

*Those who follow our curriculum and actually spend just a simple 30 minutes a day on themselves using our tools, will be amazed at the person who they become, what they start to achieve, and the people who they attract in their lives because of it.*

*Everyone reading this is already a master at consistency and that is the good news! You either have developed good or bad habits through some sort of consistent pattern. All we have to do is make a little “tweek” and what we are doing consistently each day to get our desired result.*

*I think people create so much anxiety over the word consistency that they fail to realize that they are already very consistent in their life. Just consistent at the wrong daily actions – there lies the need to change the activity but remain consistent like they were at doing the wrong things.*

**Pages 70-79**

If you want to become more disciplined and consistent in your personal performance, you need to become more discipline and consistent in your growth.

Consider the following questions about your growth:

**1. Do You Know What You Need To Improve?**

Your future is dependent upon your personal growth. Improving yourself daily guarantees you a future filled with possibilities. When you expand yourself, you expand your horizons, your options, your opportunities, your potential.

The successful person has the habit of doing the things that failures don't like to do. The successful person doesn't like doing them either, but his dislike is subordinated to the strength of his purpose. The more tuned in you are to your purpose, and the more dedicated you are to toward it, the better chances of reaching your potential, expanding your possibilities, and doing something significant.

**Instructor notes:**

*Most people don't know what they need to improve and that is understandable because they have never been taught. However, I find that those same people recognized this BUT use it as an excuse because they are unwilling to put forth the effort to find out what is needed to improve.*

*If they do find out what is needed to improve the only way they take action is by determining if they are willing to pay the price.*

**2. Do You Know How You Are Supposed To Improve?**

**Match Your Motivation To Your Personality** – Not everyone gets motivated the same way or is motivated by the same things. Identify your personality (phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine, melancholic), tap into its strength, and set yourself up for success when it comes to motivation.



**Start With The Simple Stuff** – The problem many have when approaching personal development for the first time is attempting too much. This results in discouragement. When you attempt to do too much too soon, you're almost guaranteed to fall short of your desired results. That is demotivating. The secret to building motivation momentum is to start small with simple stuff.

**Instructor notes:**

*We tend to complicate things before we even get started and make the process too difficult so they either never take action or stop taking action because of this. Even though things might be simple, that doesn't mean that you're moving forward. Just taking action and moving forward gives you the much needed energy to continue.*

It's important in management never to ask people to try to accomplish goals they can't accept.

If you want to gain momentum and improve your motivation, begin by setting goals that are worthwhile but highly achievable. Master the basics. Then practice them every day without fail. Small disciplines repeated with consistency every day lead to great achievements gained slowly over time. This is an especially good idea to implement when reading a book.

**Be Patient** - Impatience comes from having unrealistic expectations – for yourself and others. Have patience. All things are difficult before they become easy. Most people never realize how close they are to achieving significant things, because they give up too soon. Everything worthwhile in life takes dedication and time. The people who grow and achieve the most are the ones who harness the power of patience and persistence.

**Instructor notes:**

*Ugh....patience! I used to be soooooo impatient and found that it was due to having unrealistic expectations. Be my expectations were driven off my "want," rather than a detailed plan, I always*

**Value The Process** – One of the best things you can do for yourself as a learner is to cultivate the ability to value and enjoy the process of growth. It is going to take a long time, so you might as well enjoy the journey.

You can visualize tomorrow using it as motivation to grow, but if you want to actually grow, your focus needs to be on today. If you value today and find a way to enjoy it, you will invest in today. And the small steps you take today will lead to bigger steps you take someday.

### 3. **Do You Know Why You Want To Keep Improving?**

Knowing what to improve and how to improve are critical to consistency in personal growth. But so is knowing why. The how and what will only take you so far. The why is what keeps you motivated long after that first rush of energy and enthusiasm wears off. It can carry you through when willpower isn't enough. Think of it as why-power.



Having a strong why will help keep you going when the discipline of learning becomes difficult, discouraging, or tedious. If your growth is connected to your values, dreams, and purpose, you'll know why you're doing it. And you will be more likely to follow through.

**Instructor notes:**

*If you are doing this because someone else wants to you or because other think you should BUT you don't know "why" you're actually doing it, it's just a matter of time before you quit.*

*For myself, I know exactly what I want out of life and that gets me very excited. I also know, from past experience, that following the average techniques I learned from high school and college just wasn't producing the results. My "why" for success is very strong, and since my success hinges on my getting better, I am very passionate and excited when investing time into myself daily.*

If you have the motivation you need, discipline is no problem. If you lack motivation, discipline is always a problem.

You have to give yourself more and bigger whys so you can keep wanting to put effort in to grow. The greater number of reasons you give yourself to grow, the more likely you will be to follow through.

Once you learn to quit it become habit.

When you make the right choices – however small – and do it consistently over time, it can make a huge difference in your life. If you remember why you're making those choices, it becomes easier.

#### **4. Do You Know When You Are Supposed To Improve?**

Life lived tomorrow will always be just a day away from realized. So you need to get started if you haven't yet. More important, you need today to be every day.

You will never change your life until you change something you do daily. That means developing great habits. Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishments, and that bridge must be crossed every day. Over time that daily crossing becomes a habit. And ultimately, people do not decide their future; they decide their habits and their habits decide their future.

A bad habit never goes away by itself. It's always an undo-it-yourself project. What are you willing to change doing today in order to change what you will be doing tomorrow?

**Instructor notes:**

*For the average person, there is always an excuse, and most times it's never them, and that's the reason they can't get started. It's always something or someone else but them. They find it easier to blame outside situations to avoid any change or the simple fear of the unknown.*

To be successful we must learn to become consistent. You must figure out what works for you.





Instead of being goal conscious, focus on being growth conscious.

**Page 80**

The great composer does not set to work because he is inspired, but becomes inspired because he is working.

**Page 82**

Anyone who does what he must only when he is in the mood or when it's convenient, isn't going to be successful.

If you develop the habits of success, you'll make success a habit.

Never forget: Motivation gets you started, but discipline keeps you growing.

## **Chapter 6 – The Law Of The Environment**

### **Growth Thrives In Conducive Surroundings**

**Page 84**

The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment you first find yourself in.

At some point in every person's lifetime, there comes a need to change environments in order to grow.

If we want to reach our potential, we must be in the right environment. That usually requires us to make changes in our life.

**Page 85**

The best place to learn is always where others are ahead of you.

If you are always at the head of the class, then you're in the wrong class.

***Instructor notes:***

*It's very comfortable for people to learn from others better than them so they avoid it. They can't see to humble themselves enough, even if they are skilled themselves, to even consider someone has figured out a better way and they can learn from them.*

*The average person likes to be the big fish in a little pond because it boosts their self-esteem. You will find that with kids usually the "ring leader" is the most insecure of the bunch when to the others in that group they perceive them as being the one with the best self-esteem. It's funny how it works.*



*You should always be working to be the low-person on the totem pole but constantly working to love up the pole until you reach the top. At that point you need to find a new pole where are at the bottom again with even better people to learn from.*

## **Page 86**

It's possible to change without growing, but it's impossible to grow without changing.

When you change your attitude regarding a problem, you open up many possibilities for growth.

Whether you are a success or a failure in life has little to do with your circumstances; it has much more to do with your choices.

## **Pages 86-96**

### **6 choices to put yourself in a better place for growth:**

#### **1. Assess Your Current Environment**

Change just for the sake of change is not going to help you. If you are going to make changes, you must make sure they're the right ones. Start by assessing where you are now and why you want to change.

One of the ways to judge whether you're growing and in a conducive growth environment is to discern whether you're looking forward to what you're doing or looking back at what you've done. If the future looks dull, routine, or confining, you may need to start looking to make changes.

#### ***Instructor notes:***

*It's difficult at first to determine that your current group is not good for you. The fear of leaving what you have and are comfortable with many times strong enough to stay in your environment.*

*When others in your environment recognize that you're attempting to change it can become even more difficult and the peer pressure many be enough to give you second thoughts of changing.*

*My tip is this. If you can find just one person who inspire you to change, and they are willing to be your partner in change, the move to a new environment is not as difficult. In fact, looking back for me, it was rather simple because I had a strong "why" to make that change.*

#### **2. Change Yourself And Your Environment**

- Change yourself but not your environment – growth will be slow and difficult.
- Change your environment but not yourself – growth will be slow and less difficult.
- Change your environment and yourself – growth will be faster and more successful.

**The Poker Principle** – To a poker red hot put it next to the fire. We are just like a poker ourselves. If our environment is cold, we're cold. If it's hot, we're hot. If you want to



grow, then spend time with great people; visit great places; attend great events; read great books; listen to great audio files.

If you put a pumpkin in a jug when it's the size of a walnut, it will grow to the size and shape of the jug and never get bigger. That can happen to a person's thinking. Don't allow that to happen to you.

### 3. Change Who You Spend Your Time With

The people with whom you habitually associate with are called your "reference group," and these people determine as much as 95% of your success or failure in life.

You are the same today that you are going to be in five years from now except for two things: the people with whom you associate and the books you read.

We become the combined average of the five people we hang around the most. You can tell the quality of your health, attitude, and income by looking at the people around you. You will start to eat what they eat, talk like they talk, read what they read, think like they think, watch what they watch, and dress like they dress.

**The 33% Rule** – You can divide people in a school, on your team, at work, or anywhere else into the bottom, middle, and top thirds, and they always have the same characteristics: The bottom third suck the life out of you because nothing is ever good enough for them. The middle third are happy and positive when things are going well, but down in times of adversity. The top third maintains a positive attitude even in tough times. These are the leaders, influencers, and game-changers. Those are the kinds of people you should spend your time with.

It's not always comfortable, but it is always profitable to associate with people larger than ourselves.

It is also highly recommended that you also find an accountability partner to take the journey with you. That person will help you to stick with your right decisions and help you avoid making wrong ones.

You cannot take the growth journey alone, not if you want to reach your potential. The most significant factor in any person's environment is the people. If you change nothing else in your life for the better than that, you will have increased your chances of success tenfold.

### 4. Challenge Yourself In Your New Environment

One of the first ways to challenge yourself is by making your goals public. Few things push a person like a deadline and an audience.

#### ***Instructor notes:***

*Here is a tip about making your goals public. If you have a "give up" goal like losing weight, quitting smoking, or where you are giving up something let me everyone know about! They will support you in the process.*

*But if you have a “get up goal” be sure to share them with ONLY supportive people. A “get up goal” is when you want to improve to a better place like earning more money, doing some different or better in life, or anything that will take you away from your current average environment. If you share this publicly you will be amazed at how many people will tell you that you can’t achieve it. These are the same people that will support you in your “give up” goals. Interesting, isn’t it?*

Look at one major growth opportunity every week, follow through on it, and learn from it.

A better growth environment won’t help you much if you don’t do everything in your power to make the most of it.

## 5. Focus On The Moment

The changes we want to make in our lives come only in the present. What we do now controls who we become and where we are in the future. We live and work in the present.

Today is when everything that’s going to happen from now on begins.

Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We only have today. Let us begin. If you need to make changes in yourself and your environment, don’t dwell in your past. You can’t change it. Don’t worry about your future. You can’t control it. Focus on the current moment and what you can do now.

## 6. Move Forward Despite Criticism

Do not wait for a change of environment before you act. Cause a change of environment through your action. You can act upon your present environment so as to cause yourself to be transferred to a better environment.

Growth always comes from taking action, and taking action almost always brings criticism. Move forward anyway.

### *Instructor notes:*

*I know people are reading this one and are saying, “it’s easier said than done,” and I can understand their feelings. No one wants to be criticized, however, at the end of the day it’s just a bunch of hot air. Anyone’s criticism is nothing more than words and the last time that I checked, words have no bearing on your future success.*

*If you let criticism affect you, then it’s your fault, not anyone else’s! Grow some tough skin and get over it.*

Before making a major change, seek wise counsel if you can, but make your own decisions. You are ultimately accountable for the choices you make in your life.

### Page 98

Growth thrives in conducive surroundings. If you are in a positive growth environment, be grateful. If you’re not, do what you must to change your environment and yourself.



## Chapter 7 – The Law Of Design

### To Maximize Growth, Develop Strategies

#### Page 101

If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they may have planned for you? Not much.

#### Page 102

There's no substitute for being strategic. To maximize growth, you must develop strategies. That's the law of Design.

#### Pages 103- 106

Most people allow their lives to simply happen to them. They float along. They wait. They react. And by the time a large portion of their life is behind them, they realize they should have been more proactive and strategic.

Here are some ways to help you learn in the process:

#### **1. Life Is Very Simple But Keeping It That Way Is Very Difficult**

Despite what others might say, I believe life is pretty simple. It's a matter of knowing your values, making some key decisions based on those values, and then managing those decisions on a day-to-day basis. That's pretty straightforward. And at least in theory, the longer we live and the more we learn, the more experience and the more knowledge we acquire that should make life even simpler. But life has a way of becoming complicated, and it is only through great effort that we can keep it simple.

Just remember as you develop strategies for growth to keep them personal, repeatable, and transferrable. A beautifully conceived strategy does you no good if you can use or apply it.

#### **2. Designing Your Life Is More Important Than Designing Your Career**

The majority of people spend more time planning for Christmas or their vacation than they do their career or life. Why? People focus on what they think will give them the greatest return. If you don't believe you can succeed in your life in the long term, you're not very likely to give it the planning attention it deserves.

Planning your life is about finding yourself, knowing who you are, and then customizing a design for your growth. Once you draw the blueprint for your life, then you can apply it to your career.

**Instructor notes:**

*I used to live like this myself. When I look back and reflect, I can tell you that at the time I didn't realize how much time I spent on planning for vacation, Christmas, birthday parties, etc. and how little time I spent on planning out what I wanted my life to look like.*

*I had thoughts in my head of what I wanted it to look like, and I think many people are the same, but I didn't spend much time sitting down and planning it out on paper. To be honest, I found the thought very overwhelming and difficult because I never was taught how to do it.*

*Once I established a mentor it became very clear what I was doing wrong. I was living in the moment rather than living for a lifetime.*

**3. Life Is Not A Dress Rehearsal!**

There is no warm-up for life, no dress rehearsal, yet that's the way many people seem to be treating it. Each of us goes on stage cold, with no preparation, and we have to figure it out as we go along. That can be messy. We fail. We make mistakes. But we still need to give it our best from the very start.

Regret over not being proactive enough is a common theme among people looking back on their lives.

In a recent poll of 70 yr. old executives, they were asked what they would do differently if they could live their lives over again.

The #1 ranked answer ahead of any other answer was: I should have taken charge of my life and set my goals earlier. Life isn't practice, it's the real thing

We don't get a rehearsal for life. We have to do the best we can in the moment. But we can learn from others who have gone before us. You only live once. But if you work it right, once is enough.

**Instructor notes:**

*It's unfortunate but many people live their whole life as if it's a dress rehearsal. And from those who I know like this, they live a very hard and stressful life. In many cases, I think they become belligerent and care a lot of past baggage with them that they are refusing to let go. Because of this, it's next to impossible for them to move forward, but it's their choice, not mine.*

**4. In Planning Your Life, Multiply Everything By Two**

I've found that multiplying everything by two infuses realism into my optimism.

**Page 107**

To develop strategies, depend on systems. One of the greatest secrets to my personal growth and high productivity is that I use systems for everything.

**Instructor notes:**

*I learned this concept from my ex-father-in-law. In 1972 he was in a tragic accident at work and 85% of his body was badly burned leaving his fingers clinched. It was a long road to recovery and he still has many limitations but that has never stopped him. He works harder and accomplishes more than 10 average people put together.*

*One day I asked him how the heck he does this and he said, "Son, it's all about having a system for everything you do. Once you can figure out the system that works for you, everything becomes much simpler." Because he lost many normal functions HE WAS FORCED to figure out systems to survive. I think the average person takes things for granted and is never forced to develop the most efficient and effective system for them. This leads to complacency which leads to accepting the status quo. And in my opinion, the status quo is like not living at all.*

**Page 109**

Systems permit ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results predictably. However, without a system, even extra extraordinary people find it difficult to predictably achieve even ordinary results.

**Instructor notes:**

*Why do 50% of all college graduates work for people who only have a high school degree? Wouldn't the most intelligent person have less intelligent people working for them instead of the other way around?*

*Effective systems allow the less intelligent people to thrive over the more intelligent people without systems. By the way, when we talk about intelligence, who actually has more intelligence in the example above? The person who with less intelligence but who hires a team of people with more intelligence or the people who are hired because they are more intelligent? I guess it depends on you ask!*

What is a system? It's a process for predictably achieving a goal based on specific, orderly, repeatable principles and practices. Systems leverage your time, money, and abilities. They are great tools for personal growth. Systems are deliberate, intentional, and practical. They really work – regardless of your profession, talent level, or experience. They improve your performance. A life without any systems is a life where the person must face every task and challenge from the scratch.

**Pages 110-116**

**What systems include:**

**1. Effective Systems Take The Big Picture Into Account**

We may be very busy, we may be very efficient, but we will also be truly effective only when we begin with the end in mind.

People who excel, regardless of their profession, develop systems to help them achieve the big picture.



It's not enough to be busy. If you're busy planning, busy reading books, and busy going to conferences, but they aren't targeted on the areas essential to your success, you're not helping yourself.

Stop reading books for pleasure and start reading books that will help you in your areas of your strengths. Growth is intentional and you make the choice how to spend your time.

## 2. Effective Systems Make Use Of Priorities

A system is of limited help to you if it doesn't take into account your priorities.

## 3. Effective Systems Include Measurement

Any kind of progress requires the ability to measure, and for that reasons, your systems must include a way to measure your results.

Measurement is the first step that leads to control and eventually to improvement. If you can't measure something, you can't understand it. If you can't understand it, you can't control it. If you can't control it, you can't improve it.

Measurement is the key to improvement. In fact, measurement itself can even create improvement.

Measurement makes a difference. It enables you to set goals, evaluate progress, judge results, and diagnose problems. If you want to stimulate your growth progress and evaluate the results, build measurement into your systems.

### **Instructor notes:**

*Many people don't like measurement because "the data doesn't lie." You can't make excuses when progress is measured. You can say one thing, but if the data says the opposite, then I think you know which is telling a more accurate account of the situation.*

*We can call measurement accountability. The average person runs from accountability because they can't hide their faults but the successful person runs toward accountability because they know it's an important party to accomplishing anything worthwhile. The key word is "worthwhile." It doesn't take any accountability to accomplish something worth very little.*

## 4. Effective Systems Include Application

No plan is worth the paper it is printed on unless it starts you doing something.

Both plan and action must go together. The plan creates the track. The action provides the traction. So anytime you have a goal but you think you won't be able to reach it, don't adjust the goal. Adjust the action steps.

People who develop systems that include action steps are almost always more successful than people who don't. Even less talented people with fewer resources accomplish more if they have developed the habit of taking action.



**Instructor notes:**

*I can't under state this concept. You can learn everything you want in the world, and be an expert knowing it but, if you can't apply it and take action it's absolutely worthless.*

*Do you know how many people have several academic degrees but can't find a job because they can't apply all that knowledge to generate money or an income? If you keep your eyes open you will notice there are many of these people wandering around your life somewhere.*

## **5. Effective Systems Employ Organization**

The number one time waster for most people is looking for things that are lost.

Everything we do requires time, yet many people take it for granted. How you spend your time is more important than how you spend your money. Money mistakes can be corrected. But once time has passed, it's game forever.

Being organized gives a sense of power.

## **6. Effective Systems Promote Consistency**

If you want to succeed in the long run, you must learn to be consistent day in and day out, week in week out, year in and year out.

You will change your life until you change something you do daily. Any system you develop needs to promote consistency, and you must follow it consistently.

**Instructor notes:**

*The simpler the system, the more effective it is. Overtime your mind will turn that system into a habitual pattern. If the system is difficult, your mind will do just the opposite and fight you every step of the way until you quit. Willpower will very rarely beat the subconscious mind.*

*There is nothing wrong with simple. We have been told for generations that, "it's too good to be true," and when we are presented with a simple but effective system, too many people immediately think, "It's too good to be true so it must not be good. Let's complicate this matter and really mess it up!"*

### **Page 118**

As you seek to develop strategies to maximize your growth, you should also seek out principles that have stood the test of time.

Don't simply adopt someone else's practices as your own. Customize them to yourself. Use them to build your strengths and reach your goals.

If you go to work on your goals, your goals will work on you. If you go to work on your plan, your plan will go to work on you. Whatever good things we build end up building us.

## Chapter 8 – The Law Of Pain

### Good Management Of Bad Experiences Leads To Great Growth

#### Page 121

Each time we encounter a painful experience, we get to know ourselves a little better. Pain can stop us in our tracks. Or it can cause us to make decisions we would like to put off, deal with issues we would rather not face, and make changes that make us feel uncomfortable. Pain prompts us to face who we are and where we are. What we do with that experience defines who we become.

#### Pages 124-134

What separates people who thrive from those who merely survive? I believe it's how they face their problems.

#### **Here is what I know about bad experiences:**

##### **1. Everyone Has Them**

No matter who you are, where you live, what you do, or what your background is, you will have to deal with bad experiences.

Expecting the world to treat you fairly just because you're a good person is a little like expecting a bull not to charge you because you're a vegetarian.

You have to have realistic expectations when it comes to pain and problems. You can't avoid them.

##### **2. No One Likes Them**

No one likes it when they're in the middle of bad experiences. It's usually just painful. But if they manage the experience well, then they enjoy talking about it afterward. It becomes a great war story.

##### **3. Few People Make Bad Experiences Positive Experiences**

Life's difficulties do not allow us to stay the same. They move us. The question is, in which direction will we be moved: forward or backward?

Success in life comes not from holding a good hand, but playing a bad hand well.

Most successful people will point out the hard times in their lives as key points in their journey of development. If you are dedicated to growth, then you must become committed to managing your bad experiences well.

To let your discomfort be your catalyst for your development, growth is the best possible outcome for any negative experience.

**Instructor notes:**

*Because the majority of people are reactive, when a bad experience occurs they usually go-with-the-flow and make the best out of the situation but seldom do they take the time to look for the positive “nugget” or learning experience that can help them grow.*

*For myself, whenever I encounter a bad experience, I first separate what is a happening. Is it a controllable or an uncontrollable? If it's an uncontrollable, I mentally shift my focus 100% to my attitude and what I need to do to control all of my actions. By shifting my mind-set, it allows me to not focus on the event that was uncontrollable because just giving it ANY thought is a waste of time.*

*As far as divorces go, I had a great experience due largely to this mind-set. By focusing on only what I could control and not worry about the “why” it happened, it allowed me to focus strictly on the “what” I had to do and “how” I needed to do it. Because of that the experience went very smoothly.*

**How to turn your pain into gain:**

**1. Choose A positive Life Stance**

If you can maintain a positive life stance, you put yourself in the best position to manage bad experiences and turn them into positive growth.

You cannot control much of what happens to you in your life. However, you can control your attitude. And you can choose to rise above your circumstances and refuse to allow negative experiences to undermine who you are and what you believe. And you can be resolved to find something positive to learn in the face of tragedy.

- Life is filled with good and bad.
- Some of the good and bad I can't control – that's life.
- If I have a positive life stance the good and bad will become better.
- If I have a negative life stance the good and bad will become worse.
- Therefore I choose a positive stance.

**2. Embrace And Develop Your Creativity**

I believe that creativity begins at the end of your comfort zone. When you feel the pain of bad experiences, creativity gives you the opportunity to turn that pain into gain. The secret is doing that is to use the energy that comes from either adrenaline or anger and use it to solve and learn lessons.

When you have a bad experience, instead of letting it discourage you or make you angry, try to find a way to let it prompt your creativity.

**3. Embrace The Value Of Bad Experiences**

It's always easier to see something positive in a negative experience long after it happens. It's difficult to meet the negative experience in the moment with a positive mind-set. However, if you can do that, you will always be able to learn something from it.



Where is no struggle, there is no progress. Facing difficulties is inevitable. Learning from them is optional. Whether you learn is based on if you understand that difficulties present opportunities to learn and treat them accordingly.

#### 4. Make Good Changes After Learning From Bad Experiences

Often it takes a bad experience for us to face the changes we need to make in our lives.

A bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make a turn.

When bad experiences create strong feelings in us, we either face the feelings and try to change or we try to escape. It's the old fight-or-flight instinct. We need to train ourselves to fight for positive changes.

The next time you find yourself in the midst of a bad experience, remind yourself that you are on the cusp of an opportunity to change and grow. Whether you do will depend on how you react to your experience, and the changes you make as a result. Allow your emotions to be the catalyst for change, think through how to change to make sure you are making good choices, and then take action.

##### *Instructor notes:*

*A big mistake most people make is compounding a bad experience or event with poor actions or decisions after the fact. My Uncle on the farm would always tell me, "It's ok to make a mistake, just don't make it twice." Any experience, whether good or bad, is an opportunity to learn and grow. My Uncle would also say, "You know, your head is used more than just hanging your hat on." This told me to pay attention and learn!*

#### 5. Take Responsibility For Your Life

You must take responsibility for your life and the choices you make.

It is nearly impossible to grow in any significant way when you don't take responsibility for yourself and your life.

##### *Instructor notes:*

*What a novel concept this is. You mean the life we get and experience is 100% our responsibility? Why do so many people accept so little responsibility for how their life turns out? Do you think most people feel they have very control over what happens to them so they don't accept anything that happens in their life?*

### Page 135

No matter what you have gone through in your life – or what you are currently going through – you have the opportunity to grow from it. It's sometimes very difficult to see the opportunity in the midst of the pain, but it is there. You must be willing to not only look for it, but pursue it.



## Chapter 9 – The Law Of The Ladder

### Character Growth Determines The Height Of Your Personal Growth

#### Page 143

What quality is most admired in leaders? The answer is honesty.

#### Page 144

No one likes to work with unreliable people. If you cannot trust yourself, you won't ever be able to grow. Good character, with honesty and integrity at its core, is essential to success in any area of life. Without it, a person is building on shifting sand.

People often focus on their professional capacity without developing character, and it almost always cost them in the end. It costs them their personal relationships and often their career.

99% of leadership failures are failures of character.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*Character is developed over time by making the right choices in your life (sometimes at the most difficult times) and once you tarnish your character, you must work even harder to repair it.*

*Guard your character, strengthen it, and it will repay your efforts for a lifetime.*

Character growth determines the height of your personal growth. It's the Law of The Ladder.

#### Pages 145-152

**Here are rungs on most people's character ladder:**

#### **1. I Will Focus On Being Better On The Inside Than On The Outside – Character Matters**

What can get us in trouble is worrying more about how we look on the outside than about how we really are on the inside. Our reputation comes from what others believe about our outside. Our character represents who we are on the inside. If you focus on being better on the inside than on the outside, overtime you will also become better on the outside.

**The Inside Influences The Outside** – What we believe really matters. We reap what we sow. What we do or neglect to do in the privacy of our daily lives impacts who we are. If you neglect your heart, mind, and soul, it changes who you are on the outside as well as on the inside.

**Inside Victories Precede Outside Ones** – If you do things you need to do when you need to do them, then someday you can do the things you want to do when you want to do them. In other words, before you can do, you must be. Continual growth and lasting success are the result of aligning the inside and the outside of our lives. And getting the



inside right must come first – with solid character traits that provide the foundation for growth.

**Our Inside Development Is Totally Within Our Control** – Character is a quality that embodies many important traits such as integrity, courage, perseverance, confidence, and wisdom. Unlike your fingerprints that you were born with and can't change, character is something that you create within yourself and must take responsibility for changing.

If you want to be successful, you must prioritize building your inside ahead of your outside.

***Instructor notes:***

*I don't think the average person quite understands how the inside influences the outside and how the growing on the inside attracts what you need to succeed in life. People don't seem to give this concept much thought or weight mostly because they have a poor self-image about themselves, not to mention, the premise of growing on the inside cannot be seen which doesn't make it tangible to them. Because it's intangible, they can't put 1+1 together to equal two.*

**2. I Will Follow The Golden Rule – People Matter**

Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them.

**3. I Will Teach Only What I Believe – Passion Matters**

Borrowed beliefs have no passion, therefore no power.

**4. I Will Value Humility Above All Virtues – Perspective Matters**

While nobody plans to mess up their life, the problem is that few of us plan not to. That is, we don't put the necessary safeguards in place to ensure a happy ending.

**Ways you can ensure a happy ending:**

- Remember the big picture.
- Recognize that everyone has weaknesses.
- Be teachable.
- Be willing to serve others.
- Be grateful.

I love being around people who have a beginners mind-set. They think of themselves as apprentices instead of experts and, as a result, have a humble, teachable posture.

Few things are better for cultivating character and developing humility than serving others. Putting others first right-sizes our egos and perspectives.

Gratitude is the acknowledging that someone did something for me that I could not do for myself. Gratitude expresses our vulnerability, our dependence on others.



A Chinese proverb says that those who drink from the water must remember who dug the well. Everything we do, every accomplishment we have, every milestone we pass has come in part because of the efforts of others.

**Instructor notes:**

*Most people take this concept for granted. They forget the hard work and sacrifices that go into the littlest things that people take for granted. Because of this mind-set, they don't understand that even the smallest of things that we take for granted, like drinking water from a faucet, actually started from a dream, a passion, hard work, creativity, failures, and setbacks until the process was perfected.*

*In order to grow we must humble ourselves and not take life for granted.*

**5. I Will Strive To Finish Well – Faithfulness Matters**

Do the right thing and you feel right. Do the wrong thing and you feel bad. If you take control of your behavior, your emotions will fall into place.

**Page 153**

If we desire to grow and reach our potential, we must pay more attention to our character than to our success. We must recognize that personal growth means more than expanding our minds and adding to our skills. It means increasing our capacity as human beings. It means maintaining core integrity, even when it hurts. It means being who we should be, not just being where we want to be. It means maturing our souls.

Some people are born mud and remain mud. Sadly, some are born marble and die mud; some are born mud and dream of marble, but remain mud. But many persons of high character have been born mud and died marble.

**Instructor notes:**

*It is sad to say, if you asked 100 people to define the word character you will be amazed at the crazy answers you will get. Most people don't really know what character is and how to build it. Plus they have no idea how character directly affects their life. Today's society is more focused on getting "theirs," no matter how they get it, rather than getting it with good character.*

*When was the last time you were taught the importance of character in formal education? The media, rather than reporting good character stories on the news, bombard us with poor character stories and we wonder why people put little stock in character.*



## Chapter 10 – The Law Of The Rubber Band

### Growth Stops When You Lose The Tension Between Where You Are And Where You Could Be

Pages 160-170

Rubber bands are useful only when they are stretched. That can also be said of us.

#### 1. Few People Want To Stretch

Most people only use a fraction of their ability and rarely strive to reach their full potential. If there is no tension in your life to grow, there is little desire to stretch.

Think about these statistics for a minute and look at your current situation honestly:

- A third of all high school graduates never read another book for the rest of their lives.
- 42% of college graduates similarly never read a book after college.
- Only 32% of the U.S. population has ever been in a bookstore.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*Here is a major problem if you wish to grow. Sadly to say, I was once in the statistic above! I very much disliked reading in high school and thought that it was due to me being poor at reading. In hindsight, I realized that I just wasn't inspired by what the formal education wanted me to read. I had no influencers to teach me the books that would help me achieve my goals and the mandatory reading in school definitely had no direct correlation to my goals in life.*

*Successful people read growth books daily. Period. So if you want to be successful, it is very difficult to do so without embracing this concept.*

Too many people are willing to settle for average in life.

Average is what the failures claim to be when their family and friends ask them why they are not more successful.

Average is the top of the bottom, the best of the worst, the bottom of the top, the worst of the best. Which of these are you?

Average means being run-of-the-mill, mediocre, insignificant, and also-ran, a nonentity.

Being average is the lazy person's cop-out; it's lacking the guts to take a stand in life; it's living by default.

Being average is to take up space for no purpose; to take a trip through life, but never pay the fare; to return no interest for God's investment in you.





Being average is to pass one's life away with time, rather than pass one's life away with life; it's to kill time, rather than to work it to death.

To be average is to be forgotten once you pass from this life. The successful are remembered for their contributions; the failures are remembered because they tried; but the average, the silent majority, is just forgotten.

To be average is to commit the greatest crime one can against one's self, humanity, and one's God. The saddest epitaph is this: "Here lies Mr. and Mrs. Average – here lies the remains of might have been, except for the belief that they were only average."

Nobody admires average. The best organizations don't pay for average. Mediocrity is not worth shooting for.

**Instructor notes:**

*Wait, doesn't everybody in elementary school get ribbons just for participating? The person who is average and the person who excels both get rewarded in the same fashion and this leads us to believe that it inspires our youth. To me, it teaches them that average is good because you get a ribbon without putting forth the effort of being the best or excellent.*

*The standard of "average" has become closer to excellent more than ever before in our society. Instead of stretching yourself to be excellent, why not settle for living an average life like everyone else? Isn't that the standard in today's society.*

## **2. Settling For The Status Quo Ultimately Leads To Dissatisfaction**

Most people are naturally tempted to settle into a comfort zone where they choose comfort over potential. They fall into familiar patterns and habits, doing the same things in the same ways with the same people at the same time and getting the same results.

If you have ever settled for status quo and then wondered why your life isn't going the way you hoped, then you need to realize that you will only reach your potential if you have the courage to push yourself outside your comfort zone and break out of a mind-set of mediocrity. You must be willing to leave behind what feels familiar, safe, and secure. You must give up excuses and push forward. You must be willing to face the tension that comes from stretching forward toward your potential.

## **3. Stretching Always Starts From The Inside Out**

Reaching your potential starts from the inside.

Most people have a dream. For some, it's on the tip of their tongue, and for others, it's buried deep in their hearts, but everyone has one. However, not many people are pursuing it.

Instead of wishing, wanting, and waiting, people need to search inside themselves for a reason to start.



It's wise to remember that our situation in life is mainly due to the choices we make and the actions we do – or fail to – take. The older we are, the more responsible we are for our situation. If you are merely average or if you are no closer to your dream this year than you were last year, you can choose to accept it, defend it, cover it up, and explain it away. Or you can choose to change it, grow from it, and forge a new path.

Find a mentor who can help you see yourself for who you could be, not who you currently are. And then use that image to inspire you to start stretching.

#### 4. **Stretching Always Requires Change**

You can't improve and avoid change at the same time. It's difficult to focus on your past and change in the present. Yesterday ended last night. To grow you must be willing to let your present and future be totally unlike your past. Your history is not your destiny.

If you want to grow and change, you must take risks.

Innovation and progress are often initiated by people who push for change.

It's unfortunate that word entrepreneur has come to mean gambler to some people. But risk has advantages. People who take risks learn more and faster than those who don't. Their depth and range of experience is often greater. And they learn how to solve problems. All of those help a person grow.

The greatest stretching seasons of life come when we do what we have never done, push ourselves harder, and reach in a way that is uncomfortable to us. That takes courage. But the good news is that it causes us to grow in ways we thought were impossible.

#### 5. **Stretching Sets You Apart From Others**

Forget some of the most basic habits you learned in school. Once you are in the real world – and it doesn't matter if you're 22 or 62, starting your 1<sup>st</sup> job or your 5<sup>th</sup> – the way you get ahead is to over-deliver.

Improving yourself is the best way to help your team. Successful people set themselves apart because they initiate the improvement others need. When you get better, those around you benefit. Excellence has the potential to spread in the same way that mediocrity does. The positives or negatives of a group always begin with one. When you get better, so will others.

##### **Instructor notes:**

*Separating yourself from the pack of average people isn't that much more difficult. A large number of talented people, with much potential, settle for average because they think the gap between average and excellence is far too great to achieve.*

*I pride myself on not being average and going the extra mile to be excellent. I don't want average results, and to me, it's an insult to be labeled average. I believe I'm so much more than average. What do you pride yourself in, average or excellence? Do your daily actions reflect your thoughts?*

## 6. Stretching Can Become A Lifestyle

When we stop stretching, I believe we really stop living. We may keep on breathing. Our vital signs may be working. But we are dead on the inside and dead to our greatest possibilities.

Too many people are dead but just haven't made it official yet. If you won't be better tomorrow than you were today, then what do you need for tomorrow for?

### *Instructor notes:*

*For me, stretching has become addictive. I love the feeling of taking on a challenge and trying to figure out how to solve it. It surely doesn't happen right away but the wisdom that I gain in the process is what drives me.*

*Many people get the same feeling in life but from "vices" that can be destructive or move them further from their goal. As Tony Robbins states in his book, Awaken The Giant Within, you need to replace an old habit with a new habit (which works towards you reaching your goal) and produces the same pleasurable feeling.*

*When you adopt this philosophy in life, and really work to change your pleasure producing habits, you will be amazed at how much you can accomplish towards your goals in life.*

## 7. Stretching Gives You A Shot At Significance

Significance is birthed within each of us. If we are willing to stretch, that seed can grow until it begins to bear fruit in our lives. What's fantastic is that change within us challenges us to make changes around us, and our growth creates a belief in us that others can grow. When that happens in an environment and everybody is stretching and growing, then indifference is replaced with make-a-difference. And that's how we begin to change our world.

### *Instructor notes:*

*Do you think that you can be significant in life and stand out from the pack? Most people don't and reside to that sort of thinking at a very young age. You can be as significant as you want only if you increase your internal belief about yourself.*

*Your significance will rise and fall with your belief to in yourself.*

### **Page 171**

Growth stops when you lose the tension between where you are and where you could be. For most people, as time goes by they lose the tension that prompts growth – especially if they experience any success. But having less tension makes people less productive. And it undermines the growth toward their potential.

## Chapter 11- The Law Of Trade-Offs

### You Have To Give Up To Grow Up

#### Page 173

People will cling to an unsatisfactory way of life rather than change in order to get something better for fear of getting something worse.

When you're first starting out in your career it's not very hard to give up to grow up. In fact, you're willing to give up everything for an opportunity because your "everything" isn't much of anything. But what about when you've started to earn some things; a job you enjoy, a good salary, a home, a community you've become part of, a level of security? Are you willing to give up those things for a chance at doing something that will take you closer to your potential?

#### *Instructor notes:*

*I think because people subconsciously have a low self-image, even though they seem happy on the outside, they limit what they think they can accomplish in life. When they get to the point where they are satisfied with their income, even though they most likely complain about it, their risk versus reward thinking in their head tells them if they lose what they have, they will never get it back.*

*They then create a life around their situation and never give it a second thought that they "settled" in life. They con themselves into believing that this is actually "living the good life." I strongly disagree with that mind-set.*

*I would rather keep sacrificing until I worked to develop the life that I planned to live rather than the life that most accept.*

#### Pages 176-185

If you want to grow up to your potential, you must be willing to give up some things you value.

#### **Truths about trade-offs:**

##### **1. Trade-Offs Are Available To Us Throughout Life**

Everybody makes trades throughout life, whether they know it or not. The question is are you going to make good ones or bad ones. In general, I believe that...

- Unsuccessful people make bad trade-offs.
- Average people make few trade-offs.
- Successful people make good trade-offs.

##### **2. We Must Learn To See Trade-Offs As Opportunities For Growth**

Nothing creates a greater gap between successful and unsuccessful people than the choices we make. Too often, people make life more difficult for themselves because they make bad choices at intersections of their life or they decline to make choices because of



fear. But it's important to remember that while we don't always get what we want, we always get what we choose.

Whenever you face an opportunity for a trade-off, as yourself these two questions:

- ***What are the pluses and minuses of this trade-off?*** Anytime you react to one of life's crossroads according to fear rather than looking at its merits, you close yourself off from a potential opportunity.
- ***Will I go through this change or grow through this change?*** Positive trade-offs should be seen as opportunities for growth and seized. After all, we become better as a result of them. We grow through change, we become better. We take control of our attitude and emotions. We become positive-change agents in our own lives.

While others might see themselves as victims, I would not. While others leave their future in someone else's hands, I will not. While others simply go through life, I will grow through it. That is my choice, and I will surrender it to no one.

### 3. Trade-Offs Force Us To Make Difficult Personal Changes

Often I hear people expressing the hope that things will change. At those moments, I want to tell them that the difference between where we are and where we want to be is created by the changes we are willing to make in our lives. When you want something you have never had, you must do something you're never done to get it. Otherwise you keep getting the same results.

Change may not always be easy, but it can always be done.

#### ***Instructor notes:***

*Personally, I have no problem giving up what is needed just for the opportunity to make my dreams a reality. I also understand it's not a guarantee, but then again, what in life is a guarantee?*

*If your dream really means something to you, you will find that trade-offs really aren't a big deal. You will find that the people around you who are criticizing you will make a bigger deal of your trade-offs than you because they don't understand this concept. They are too focused on the making the choices that give them instant gratification in life.*

*People tend to not give up, to go up because of their personal belief level. They think, "Why give up what I love to do because my situation isn't really going to change." They also tell themselves that they work hard, and because of that, they deserve to do what they want, when they want – even if they can't afford it!*

#### 4. The Loss Of A Trade-Off Is Usually Felt Long Before The Gain

We want change, but we don't want to wait for the result. And often we become acutely aware of what we have lost in the trade because we feel that immediately, while we often don't reap the benefit of the trade until days, weeks, months, years, or even decades later.

#### 5. Most Trade-Offs Can Be Made At Any Time

We can give up bad habits to acquire good ones anytime we have the willpower to make the decision.

After they make a bad trade-off, people often panic, feeling that they have blown it and can never recover. But seldom is that true. Most of the time, we can make choices that will help us come back. So when it comes to choices, never say never.

#### 6. A Few Trade-Offs Come Only Once

The cycle of change gives us windows of opportunity in which to make decisions. Sometimes that cycle only comes around once. Miss it and the opportunity is gone.

*Instructor notes:*

*Because the average person doesn't intentionally grow, they miss many opportunities that come their way. The problem with this is some of the opportunities will only come once in life. Many times, people don't realize this until it's too late*

*The person who intentionally grows daily will see opportunities all the time, and the person who doesn't, wonders why they can never catch a break. They just aren't capable of seeing the breaks and opportunities that come only once in their life.*

#### 7. The Higher You Climb, The Tougher The Trade-Offs

When you're starting out in life you have little to give up. But as you climb and accumulate some of the good things in life, the trade-offs demand a higher price. Each success only buys an admission ticket to a more difficult problem.

When we're at the bottom, we make trade-offs because of desperation. We are highly motivated to change. As we climb, we change because of inspiration. At this higher level we don't have to anymore. We get comfortable. As a result, we don't make the trade-offs.

One of our dangers of success is that it can make a person unteachable. Many people are tempted to use their success as permission to discontinue growth. They become convinced that they know enough to succeed and they begin to coast.

The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it. You give part of your life to receive something back. That may not be easy, but it's essential.

**Instructor notes:**

*If you keep climbing higher and closer towards your dream, isn't it worth the higher trade-offs that are needed to be made? This drives the successful person while the average person struggles to internalize the fact that they must trade-off even more to continue the journey.*

**8. Trade-Offs Never Leave Us The Same**

Don't fear failure so much that you refuse to try new things. The saddest summary of life contains three descriptions: could have, might have, and should have.

We are never the same after we make a choice.

**9. Some Trade-Offs Are Never Worth The Price**

Not everything in life is on the trading block. I'm not willing to trade my marriage for my career. I'm not willing to trade my relationship with my children or grandchildren for fame and fortune. And I'm not willing to trade away my values for anything or anyone. These kinds of trade-offs only lead to regret. And they are difficult to recover from.

I believe that most people make these kinds of devastating trade-offs and don't realize they are making them until after it's too late.

**Instructor notes:**

*I have known people who have gotten divorced, gone through personal bankruptcy, put their health in jeopardy, and even lost their home to foreclosure because they focused solely on reaching their dreams. In the process they failed to keep a balance in their life because they were so focused on the concept of being successful and what that would do for them. In most cases, when people compromise their values for success, they very rarely ever get what they expect for the trade-off and regret their actions after the fact.*

*There are definitely certain things in life that should never be compromised along the journey. You will have to determine those for yourself.*

**Pages 186-190**

**Trade-offs worth making:**

**1. I Am Willing To Give Up Financial Security Today For Potential Tomorrow**

There is no future in any job. The future lies in the person who holds the job.

I've (John Maxwell) made seven major career moves in my lifetime, and in five of them, I took a pay cut to do so. I value opportunity over security. And I knew I would work hard and be able to earn the ability to make more money in the long run.

The only job security we have is our individual commitment to personal development. That is a trade-off that always brings a payoff.

## 2. I Am Willing To Give Up Immediate Gratification For Personal Growth

There are no shortcuts to any place worth going. Instant gratification and personal growth are incompatible.

When it comes to growth and success, immediate gratification is almost always the enemy of growth. We can choose to please ourselves and plateau, or we can delay our gratification and grow. It's our choice.

### *Instructor notes:*

*In today's society, this is very difficult for people. I call it the "microwave society," people want everything right away. They are addicted to fast-food, cook pre-prepared meals in the microwave, purchase items on their credit card that they can't afford at the moment, etc.*

*Until this mind-set is changed, it's virtually impossible to reach your dreams or move forward in life.*

## 3. I Am Willing To Give Up The Fast Life For The Good Life

We live in a culture that idolizes the hopes of someday getting the chance to live the fast life it so admires and emulates. But most of that is an illusion. It's like the airbrushed image of a model on the front of a magazine. It's not real.

### *Instructor notes:*

*TV shows like Extra, Access Hollywood, TMZ, etc. glorify the fast-life of celebrities as if it's the life that people should strive to reach. In most cases these celebrities think they are living the good life but in the end it usually turns out in divorce, bankruptcy, or in some cases their lives.*

*Is this reality? Is this what we should be striving for?*

## 4. I Am Willing To Give Up Security For Significance

I don't think it's wise to measure progress according to security. I think it's wiser to measure it by significance. And that requires growth. You'll never get anywhere interesting by always doing the safe thing.

The great people of history were not great because of what they earned and owned, but rather for what they gave their lives to accomplish.

### *Instructor notes:*

*The average person has been trained by their environment to work for security because significance is an unrealistic concept for the average person to achieve.*

*They cherish security so much, and get into a complacent comfort-zone, that they can internalize giving up what they have for the chance for something better. In most cases, the term "significance" isn't even in their vocabulary.*





## 5. I Am Willing To Give Up Addition For Multiplication

Most people try to take too many things with them as they journey through life. They want to keep adding without giving anything up. It doesn't work. You can't do everything; there is only so much time in a day. At some point, you reach your limit. Besides, we need to always remember that if nothing changes, nothing changes!

Surrender one to take two; don't make two moves at one time; move up, not down; and when you reach the top, you have the freedom to move as you like. If you want to reach your potential, be ready to make trade-offs.

## Chapter 12 – The Law Curiosity

### Growth Is Stimulated By Asking Why?

#### Page 193

Curiosity is the key to being a life-long learner, and if you want to keep growing and developing, you must keep on learning. Curious people possess a thirst for knowledge. They continually ask why? People who remain curious don't need to be encouraged to ask questions or explore. They just do it – all the time. And they keep doing it. This is how they learn and grow so quickly.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*Curiosity has always driven me in life. I always asked my teachers, “why?” If something didn't make sense to me, I wanted to know why? Why am I learning this? When am I going to learn this? Why do we do this like this?*

*Some people would think I was just trying to be a pain-in-the butt, however, I was just trying to make sense of it in my mind. I think “why” helps you to learn much more quickly in life and it allows you to take a pro-active stance in life rather than a re-active one – and this makes all the difference in the world!*

#### Page 194

Curiosity helps a person to think and expand possibilities beyond the ordinary. Asking why? fires the imagination. It leads to discovery. It opens up options. All meaningful and lasting change starts first in your imagination and works its way out.

Life becomes so routine for some people that they don't mind living in a rut, doing the same things day in and day out.

#### Pages 195-203

#### **10 suggestions for cultivating curiosity:**

##### **1. Believe You Can Be Curious**

Give yourself permission to be curious. The single greatest difference between curious, growing people and those who aren't is the belief that they can learn, grow, and change.



Knowledge, understanding, and wisdom will not seek you out. You must go out and acquire it. The best way to do that is to remain curious.

## 2. Have A Beginner's Mind-set

Having a beginner's mind-set means wondering why and asking a lot of questions until you get answers. It also means being open and vulnerable. If your attitude is like that of a beginner, you have no image to uphold and your desire to learn more is stronger than the desire to look good. You aren't as influenced by preset rules or so-called acceptable thinking.

People with a beginner's mind-set approach life the way that a child does: with curiosity.

The direct opposite of people who have a beginner's mind-set are the know-it-alls. They see themselves as experts. They have a lot of knowledge, education, and experience, so instead of asking why and starting to listen, they start talking and give answers. Anytime a person is answering more than asking, you can be sure they've slowed down in their growth and have lost the fire for personal growth.

### *Instructor notes:*

*A lot of times I will play "dumb" and ask basic questions to really see if someone actually knows what they are talking about. This philosophy also allows me to open up my mind to new or different ways of doing things. No matter how much you think you know, you can always learn something to new to improve you internally.*

*I think having the beginner's mind-set also humbles you so you can look at things in an objective manner that will allow you to grow.*

## 3. Make Why Your Favorite Word

Always keep asking why.

Growing leaders focus on asking questions, not giving answers. The more questions asked, the better are the results that one gets.

A major stimulate to creative thinking is focused questions. There is nothing about a well-worded question that often penetrates to the heart of the matter and triggers new ideas and insights.

Curious people ask questions to find solutions so they can keep moving forward and making progress.

## 4. Spend Time With Other Curious People

When you think curiosity, growth, and learning, do you think formal education? I think in the early grades curiosity is encouraged, but after that, it's not. Most formal education steers people toward answers rather than questions. If you went to college, how many times did your professor ask students to hold their questions until later so they could get through their notes or complete the syllabus? The emphasis is often on information over inquiry.



To cultivate curiosity and stimulate growth you must seek out other curious people.

Being around people with great curiosity is contagious. I know of few better ways of cultivating and sustaining curiosity.

**Instructor notes:**

*This is fun! A group of curious people can accomplish so much it's crazy. Make it a point to find someone else who is just as curious, if not more curious than you, because it gives you the permission to brainstorm the "why" theory with other like-minded people. This is where much growth and action will take place for you.*

**It will become addictive!**

**5. Learn Something New Every Day**

One of the best ways to remain curious is to begin each day with a determination to learn something new, experience something different, or meet someone you don't already know.

- Wake up with an attitude of openness to something new.
- Keep your eyes open as you go through the day.
- Reflect on your new knowledge.

**6. Partake In The Fruit Of Failure**

A curious, growing person approaches failure in a way completely different from someone who isn't curious. Most people see failure, mistakes, and errors as signs of weakness. But people who grow and develop see failure as a sign of progress. Therefore, they make failure their friend.

**7. Stop Looking For The Right Answer**

There is always more than one solution to a problem. If you believe there is only a single right solution, you either get frustrated because you can't find it, or if you think you have found it, you stop searching and perhaps miss better ideas. In addition, when you land on what you consider to be the right answer, you become complacent. No idea is perfect. No matter how good it is, it can always be improved.

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it" was not coined by someone dedicated to personal growth. Instead it should be:

- If it ain't broke, how can we make it better?
- If it ain't broke, when is it likely to break in the future?
- If it ain't broke, how long will it serve as the world changes?

People with curiosity keep asking questions, and as a result, they keep learning.

## 8. Get Over Yourself

If you're going to ask question and allow yourself to fail, then you will at times look foolish. Most people don't like that. Just get over yourself!

## 9. Get Out Of The Box

As Thomas Edison said, "There ain't no rules around here! We're trying to accomplish something!"

Good ideas are everywhere, but it's hard to see them when you won't look outside of your box. Instead of remaining confined, people need to break down the walls of their boxes, get out, and become hunters of ideas.

Most in-the-box thinkers possess a scarcity mind-set. One of the keys to abundance is having a solution-oriented mind-set. The average person think of himself as positive, but **he's not being solutions-oriented.**

### *Instructor notes:*

*Why even live in a box? Why not give yourself permission to live with NO box at all? How does it help you to give yourself limitations? You can learn anything you want in life, and because of that fact, you should not limit what you can achieve or even think you can achieve.*

*When you allow yourself to live without limits, your personal growth will take off along with your results.*

## 10. Enjoy Your Life

Perhaps the greatest way to remain curious and keep growing is to enjoy life. When you enjoy your life, the lines between work and play begin to blur. We do what we love and love what we do. Everything becomes a learning experience.

### Page 207

When you're curious, the entire world opens up to you and there are few limits on what you can learn and how you can develop.

## Chapter 13 – The Law Of Modeling

### It's Hard To Improve When You Have No One But Yourself To Follow

#### Page 210

The most important personal-growth phrase you will ever hear a good leader say to you is "follow me."

## Page 211

It's hard to improve if you have no one but yourself to follow.

### *Instructor notes:*

*Too many people practice this method and fail miserably. To grow you must learn from people better than you. Following yourself is a sure way towards frustration and eventual plateauing of your personal growth.*

*You must be humble enough to ask for help, listen, and learn from your mentors.*

## Page 212-220

Most people who decide to grow personally find their first mentors in the pages of books. But at some point, you must find personal models too. If you follow only yourself, you will find yourself going in circles.

### *Instructor notes:*

*Daily reading is probably the number one characteristic of successful people. The average person looks at reading as useless because they are just too "busy" to have time to read. Plus, "Didn't they read enough in their formal education? Why do they need to read more uninspiring books?"*

*People are never taught strategies and skills within personal growth that make a difference in their life. In the end, they have never been bought into the concept of intentionally reading as way to get closer to their goals.*

You must be selective when it comes to choosing mentors and models. Below is a criteria that will help:

### **1. A Good Mentor Is A Worthy Example**

They must not only display professional excellence and possess skill sets from which we can learn, they must also demonstrate character worthy of emulating.

As you look for role models and mentors, scrutinize their personal lives as carefully as their public performance. Your values will be influenced by theirs, so you shouldn't be too casual who you choose to follow.

### **2. A Good Mentor Is Available**

As I grow older I pay less attention to what people say. I just watch what they do.

For us to be actively mentored, we must have time with people to ask questions and learn from their answers.

Teaching people what to do is easy. Showing them is much more difficult.

The greatest piece of advice I can give in the area of availability is that when you are looking for a mentor, don't shoot too high too soon. Spend the majority of time being



mentored by people who are available, willing, and suited for the stage of your career. And as you progress in your development, find new mentors for your new level of growth.

### 3. A Good Mentor Has Proven Experience

The farther you go in the pursuit of your potential, the more new ground you will have to break. To know the road ahead, ask those coming back.

I don't know of a successful person who hasn't learned from more experienced people. Sometimes they follow in their footsteps. Other times they use their advice to help them break new ground.

All leaders are influenced by those they admire. Reading about them and studying their traits inevitably allows an inspiring leader to develop their own leadership traits.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*Remember, a mentor is someone who HAS already accomplished what you want to accomplish in life. That's not to say you can't have other mentors in different facets of your life who are a positive effect on you, there's nothing wrong with that. However, if you want to make your dream a reality, you can't take advice from someone who you don't want to be like!*

*The next time someone gives you their negative opinion or criticizes you, determine if they are who you want to be like. If they aren't, then who cares what they have to say? You don't want to be like them anyway!*

### 4. A Good Mentor Possesses Wisdom

Mentors with wisdom often show us where to focus. Their understanding, experience, and knowledge help us to solve problems that we would have a hard time handling on our own.

Wise people often use just a few words to help us learn and develop. They open our eyes to worlds we might not have otherwise seen without their help. They help us navigate difficult situations. They help us to see opportunities we would otherwise miss. They make us wiser than our years and experience.

### 5. A Good Mentor Provides Friendship And Support

Selfish people will assist you only insofar as it advances their own agenda. Good mentors provide friendship and support, unselfishly working to help you reach your potential.

Great things happen whenever we stop seeing ourselves as God's gift to others, and begin seeing others as God's gift to us.

If the person who offers to mentor you doesn't really support you and offer you friendship, then the relationship will always fall short of your expectations. Knowledge without support is sterile. Advice without friendship feels cold. Candor without care is harsh. However, when you are being helped by someone who cares for you it is emotionally



satisfying. Growth comes from both the head and the heart. Only supportive people are willing to share both with you.

**Instructor notes:**

*Most all of my mentors started because we “saw” something in each other that drew us together. We had common attitudes, outlooks on life, desires, but realized there was a mutual benefit to work together. Over time, because you start to closely communicate, you will find some of the strongest friendship bonds will be formed from a mentor/mentoree relationship. I think a mutual respect and bond is formed during the journey that lasts a lifetime as long as party’s morals, values, and integrity are not broken.*

## **6. A Good Mentor Is A Coach Who Makes A Difference In People’s Lives**

A coach is someone who carries a valued person from where they are to where they want to be.

Coaches make a difference in other’s lives. They help them grow. They improve their potential. They increase their productivity. They are essential to helping people effect positive change.

You will never maximize your potential in any area without coaching. It is impossible. You may be good. You may even be better than everyone else. But without outside input you will never be as good as you could be. We all do better when somebody is watching and evaluating. Self-evaluation is helpful, but evaluation from someone else is essential.

### **Page 221**

The process of growing with help of a mentor usually follows this pattern: It begins with awareness. You realize that you need help and that following yourself is not a viable option for effective personal growth.

When a person comes to such realization, one of two things can happen. The first is the person’s pride can swell up and they cannot bring themselves to ask for another person’s advice. The other reaction to awareness is to humble yourself and ask for help.

### **Page 222**

The people you follow, the models you emulate, the mentors you take advice from help to shape you. If you spend your time with people who subtract from you, belittle you or undervalue you, then every step forward that you attempt to take will be difficult. But if you find wise leaders, good role models, and positive friends, you will find that they speed you on your journey.

**Instructor notes:**

*Remember, the people who you habitually spend time with are 95% of the reason you will have success or failure in life. They will either raise you up to become better or tear you down to remain average.*

*I feel this is the number one factor that people need to be focused on when talking about factors “outside” of you.*

## Chapter 14 – The Law Of Expansion

### Growth Always Increases Your Capacity

#### Page 226

If you're still breathing and you are sound of mind, then you have the potential to keep increasing your capacity.

When someone is pursuing their dream, they'll go far beyond what seems to be their limitations. The potential that exists within us is limitless and largely untapped...when you think of limits, you create them.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*I think when it comes to your dream, or something that your 100% passionate about, I don't think you even think about your limitations. Because you're so engrossed with the situation, just moving forward keeps you hyper focused on the big picture and not what you're personally limited to achieve. I think we "just find a way" to overcome any setback or as some would like to call them, self-limitations. I know when I go after a dream, I only think about achieving the dream not my limitations. I have the mentality that I can get better from day-to-day so my limitations I may have now can be overcome tomorrow.*

#### Pages 227-232

The only way to increase your capacity intentionally is to change the way you approach personal growth. Learning more information isn't enough. You must change how you think and you must change your actions.

Most experts believe people typically use only 10% of their true potential. So how do we tap into the unused 90%? The answer is found in changing how we think and what we do.

#### **How you need to think to increase your capacity:**

##### **1. Stop Thinking More Work And Start Thinking What Works?**

Ask most people how they can increase their capacity and they'll tell you by working more. There's a problem with that solution. More work will not necessarily increase your capacity. More of the same usually results in more of the same, when what we actually want is better than what we have.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*Don't fall into the trap of valuing effort over effectiveness.*

##### **2. Stop Thinking Can I? And Start Thinking How Can I?**

Can I? is a question filled with hesitation and doubt. It is a question that imposes limitations. If that is the question you regularly ask yourself, you're undermining your efforts before you even begin.





When you ask yourself “How Can I?” you give yourself a fighting chance to achieve something. The most common reason people don’t overcome the odds is that they don’t challenge them enough. They don’t test their limits. They don’t push their capacity. How Can I? assumes there is a way. You just need to find it.

**Instructor notes:**

*I can’t stress how true this concept is and how great it works. I always have a “How can I?” mindset because it starts to open the doors you need to move forward and make progress. It’s amazing how this slight shift in attitude can make all the difference. I used to think “Can I?” and as you shift to “How can I?” it’s really important to have a mentor or supportive accountability partner who can help expand your current thinking.*

To tap into that unused 90%, ask “How Can I?” Do that and greater achievement becomes a matter of when and how, not if.

God has put in every person the potential to grow, expand, and achieve. The first step in doing that is believing that you can. The second is perseverance.

### 3. **Stop Thinking One Door And Start Thinking Many Doors**

When it comes to growth, you don’t want to stake your future on one “door.” It may not be open! It’s much better to consider many possibilities and look for multiple answers to all your questions. Think in terms of options.

- There is more than one way to do something successfully.
- The odds of arriving anywhere increase with creativity and adaptability.
- Movement with intentionality creates possibilities.
- Failures and setbacks can be great tools for learning.
- Knowing the future is difficult; controlling the future is impossible.
- Knowing today is essential; controlling today is possible.
- Success is a result of continued action filled with continual adjustments.

**Instructor notes:**

*Never think there is only one way of doing something or that way you are doing it is the best, even if you are succeeding. The saying, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it,” is a terrible way to approach things because it breeds complacency. I think it should be re-worded to say, “If it ain’t broke, figure out a better way of doing it”.*

The greatest challenge you will ever face is that of expanding your mind. It’s like crossing the great frontier. You must be willing to be a pioneer, to enter uncharted territory, to face the unknown, to conquer your own doubts and fears. But here’s the good news. If you can change your thinking, you can change your life.

A man’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions. If you want to expand your capacity, the first place to start is always in your own mind.

Pages 232-236

If you change only your thinking and you neglect to change your actions, you will fall short of your potential. To start expanding your capacity, take the following three steps:

**1. Stop Doing Only Those Things You Have Done Before And Start Doing Those Things You Could And Should Do**

Doing new things leads to innovation and new discoveries, and among those discoveries is the realization of things you should do on a consistent basis. If you do those, you will continue to grow and expand your potential. If you don't, you will plateau.

A master didn't become a master overnight. There is a process. First, one must become an apprentice, then a journeyman, and finally a master.

- Apprentice means learner. They learn from a local master.
- As the apprentice embarks on his journey, he often travels long distances for the privilege of working under the master who could best help him further his craft.
- Over time, the journeyman becomes a master himself – and in a position to start the cycle all over again.

**Instructor notes:**

*It takes time to become a master and the bottom line is this – masters make the money! There is no timeline that it takes to become a master in your field so the question is this, “Are you willing to work for as long as it takes until you become a master?” Many will quit too soon, many will quit because of what others think, and a small percentage will have a big enough dream to keep going until they succeed.*

The process of expanding one's potential is ongoing. It ebbs and flows. Opportunities come and go. The standards we must set for ourselves are constantly changing. What we could do changes as we develop. What we should do also evolves. We must leave behind some old things to take on new ones. It can be difficult work, but if we are willing, our lives are changed.

**2. Stop Doing What Is Expected And Start Doing More Than Is Expected**

We live in a culture that awards trophies to people for simply showing up, regardless of their contribution. Because of that, many people think they are doing well if they just do what is expected of them. I don't believe that helps people reach their potential or expand their capacity. To do that, a person has to do more.

To distinguish yourself, get noticed, and advance your career, you need to do and be more. You have to rise above average. You can do this by asking more of yourself than others ask, expecting more from yourself than others expect, believing more in yourself than others believe, doing more than others think you should have to do, giving more than others think you should give, and helping more than others think you should help.

**Instructor notes:**

*In a lazy society, this is a tough concept to understand. Are you willing to give more even if you might not get compensated for it? Are you willing to follow that approach every day? Is it worth it to you to separate yourself from others? Only you can answer that.*

Excellence means doing your very best. In everything. In every way.

**3. Stop Doing Important Things Occasionally And Start Doing Important Things Daily.**

I believe advancing confidently in the direction of one's dreams means doing what is important every day. To do what's not important every day does nothing for you. It merely uses up your time. To do the right thing only occasionally does not lead to consistent growth and the expansion of your life. Both components are necessary. Daily growth leads to personal expansion.

**Page 239**

Growth always increases your capacity.

**Page 240**

You have the potential to keep making progress until the day you die – if you have the right attitude about your growth.

## **Chapter 15 – The Law Of Contribution**

### **Growing Yourself Enables You To Grow Others**

**Page 243**

If you're not doing something with your life, it doesn't matter how long it is.

Progress in personal growth also opens the doors for others. It makes it possible for you to contribute to them.

**Page 244**

If you have worked to learn or earn something, you have the ability to pass it on to others. If you live by the Law of Contribution, you will have much to give other people, because growing yourself enables you to grow others.

**Page 246**

Think of yourself as a river instead of a reservoir. Most people who do make personal growth part of their lives do it to add value to themselves. They are like reservoirs that continually take in water but only to fill themselves up. In contrast, a river flows. Whatever water it receives, it gives away. That's the way we should be as we learn and grow. That requires an abundance mind-set –



a belief that we will keep receiving. But as long as you are dedicated to personal growth, you will never experience scarcity and will always have much to give.

### **Page 247**

Giving of your time, expertise, and resources without expecting anything in return is an unselfish act that makes the world a better place. We need more givers. I can't explain why it works this way, but when you focus more on the wants and needs of others, more of your own wants and needs are met. In contrast, when you choose to hoard what you have, rather than give, you become the center of your own lonely universe and you become less content, not more. As a result, you repel both people and potential blessings.

### **Pages 248-255**

**Here are some suggestions to help you cultivate an attitude of contribution:**

#### **1. Be Grateful**

People who aren't grateful are not givers. They rarely think about others; they think only of themselves. Their day consists of looking for others to help them, give to them, serve them. And whenever others don't fulfill those expectations, they wonder why. Their selfishness keeps from sowing and their ingratitude makes them wonder why they don't reap the harvest.

No one succeeds alone.

There is no success without sacrifice. If we succeed without sacrifice, then it is because someone who went before us made the sacrifice. If you sacrifice and don't see success, then someone who follows will reap success from your sacrifice.

#### **2. Put People First**

Your career, hobbies, and other interests will die with you. People continue on. What you give to help others builds them up enough that they are able to give to others. It's a cycle that can continue on long after you're dead and gone.

Treating others well not only benefits you people, it also helps us navigate life better and puts us in a place where we can learn from others.

If you are a leader, putting people first is even more important, because your actions impact so many other people.

People especially want to know that they matter in someone leading them and their leader can be trusted. Once people are satisfied that your motives are right and that you will put them ahead of your own selfish interests, then they are willing to become partners with you in the journey.

The measure of success is not the number of people who serve you, but the number of people you serve. When people are number one in your life, adding value to them becomes natural. You do it as a matter of lifestyle. You add value to people because you value people and you believe that they have value.

### 3. Don't Let Stuff Own You

People can be divided into three groups: haves, have-nots, and have not paid for what they have. Unfortunately more and more people are being added to the third group every day. People are becoming enslaved to the desire to acquire.

Owning things doesn't bring real satisfaction. In general, if you try to feed emotional or spiritual needs with material things, all it does is make you hungrier for more things. It doesn't satisfy. However, if you meet those needs appropriately, then you can be content with or without a lot of possessions.

No one should ever become a slave to their stuff.

#### *Instructor notes:*

*It's amazing how our society has become a gatherer of "stuff" and how we determine people's success upon the amount of "stuff" they have accumulated. The unfortunate thing is that so many people buy "stuff" that they just can't afford. They max out their credit cards, live paycheck to paycheck, and are just one bad decision away from financial ruins.*

The life of a wealthy person should have two periods: a time of acquiring wealth and a time of redistributing it. The only way to maintain an attitude of generosity is to make it your habit to give – your time, attention, money, and resources.

If you want to be in charge of your heart, don't allow possessions to take charge of you.

### 4. Don't Let People Own You

#### 5. Define Success As Sowing, Not Reaping

I consider the success of my day based on the seeds I sow, not the harvest I reap. That should be a way we judge not only our days, but our entire lives. Unfortunately most people sow little and expect to reap a lot. Their focus is on payday.

If you are sowing only for quick returns in life, then you will usually be unhappy with the outcome and unable to keep giving and living while waiting. On the other hand, if you sow continually and abundantly, you can be sure that in due season there will be a harvest. Successful people know this and focus on sowing, knowing that reaping will eventually come. The process is automatic. If you live life with intention of making a difference in other's lives, your life will be full, not empty.

#### 6. Focus On Self-Development, Not Self-Fulfillment

Never focus your life on self-fulfillment.

- Self-fulfillment thinks of how something serves me.
- Self-Development thinks of how something helps me to serve others.
- With self-fulfillment, feeling is the product.
- With self-development, feeling good is the by-product.
-



## **7. Keep Growing To Keep Giving**

Whenever people stop actively learning and growing, the clock has started ticking down to a time when they will no longer have anything left to give. If you want to keep giving, you have to keep growing.

### **Page 257**

The greatest gift you can give someone is your own personal development.

### **Page 258**

If you want to make your life burn brightly for others and future generations, keep growing.