

THE *WHAT YOU WILL LEARN* PODCAST



THE TOP 50

BEST BOOKS OF ALL TIME

'WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?'

We're Adam and Adam, two young Aussie blokes that love reading great books. Since June 2016, we've hosted a weekly book podcast called What You Will Learn. Every week, we share the best bits of the best books, pulling out the most important need-to-know information from the greatest authors and packaging it into a nice 20-30min episode.

Almost every day someone asks us "what's your favourite book?". That's like picking your favourite child... We've each read over 350 books now, so in 2018 we decided to compile a list of our 50 "favourite" books. This is our "Top 50 Best Books Of All Time" (that we've read... so far). We've updated it a couple of times since, and you're now holding the newest version, the February 2021 edition.

The cost of a book is about \$25 and a few hours of your time. Now imagine that book teaches you a new skill that leads to higher productivity at work, or gives you a new idea for marketing your business, or gives you an empathic view that saves a marriage. For a small initial investment, the potential return can be enormous.

In the document below, we've given a little taste of what you'll find in each of our favourite books. If you like the sound of it, you can listen to our podcast episode on it to hear more. If you REALLY like the sound of it, click the book cover and you should be linked straight through to where you can buy the book for yourself. If you have a friend that likes reading or wants to read more and learn more, forward this document on to them as a thoughtful gift from you.

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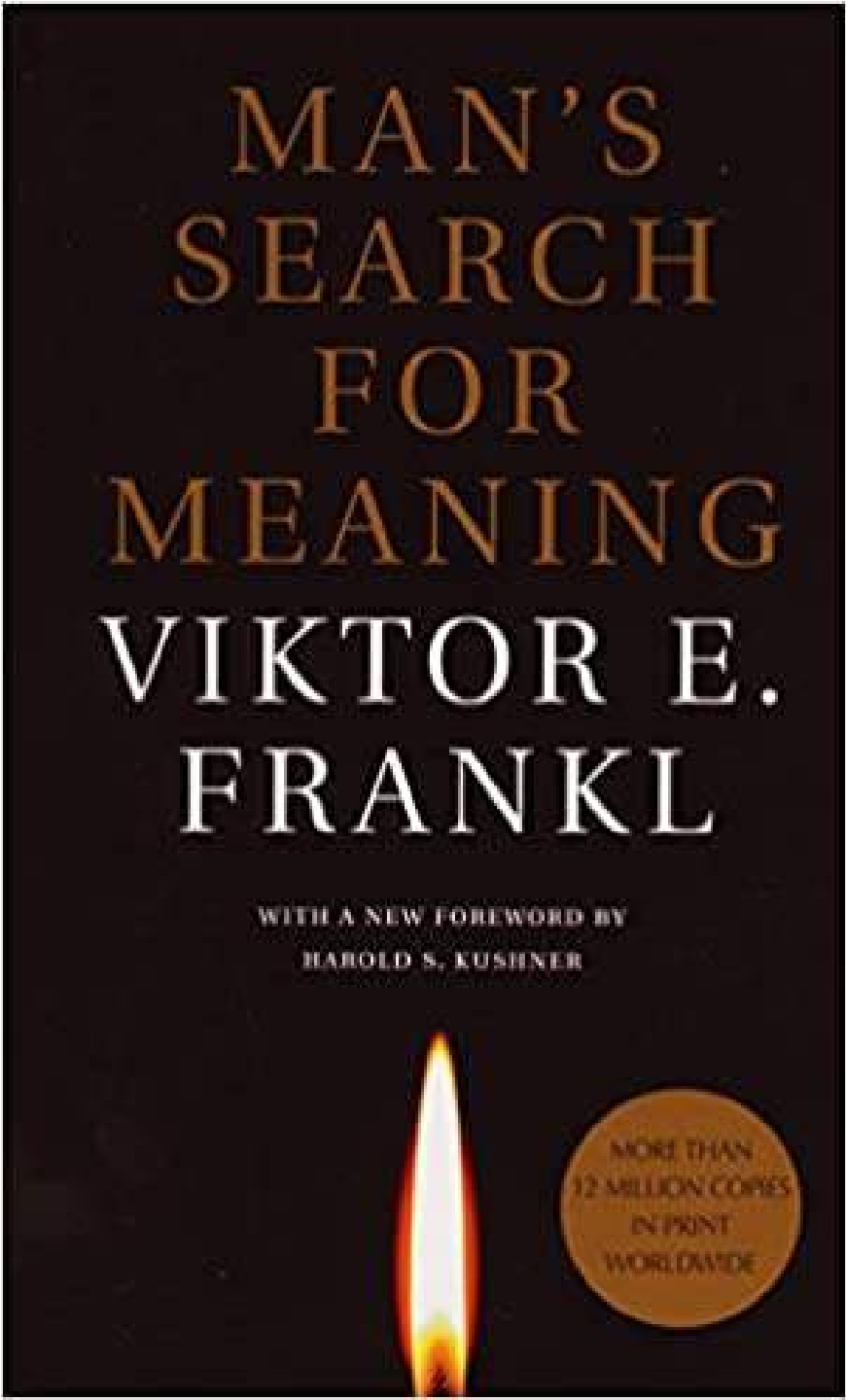
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Adam Jones
&
Adam Ashton





50. MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING - BY VIKTOR FRANKL

It goes without saying that the Nazi concentration camps of the WWII holocaust are among the most horrific atrocities of human history. Upon arrival, the guards shaved their heads, took every possession away and assigned numbers instead of names to remove their sense of self. They were forced to ration out bread crumbs, to work tirelessly in the freezing cold and they were separated from their families.

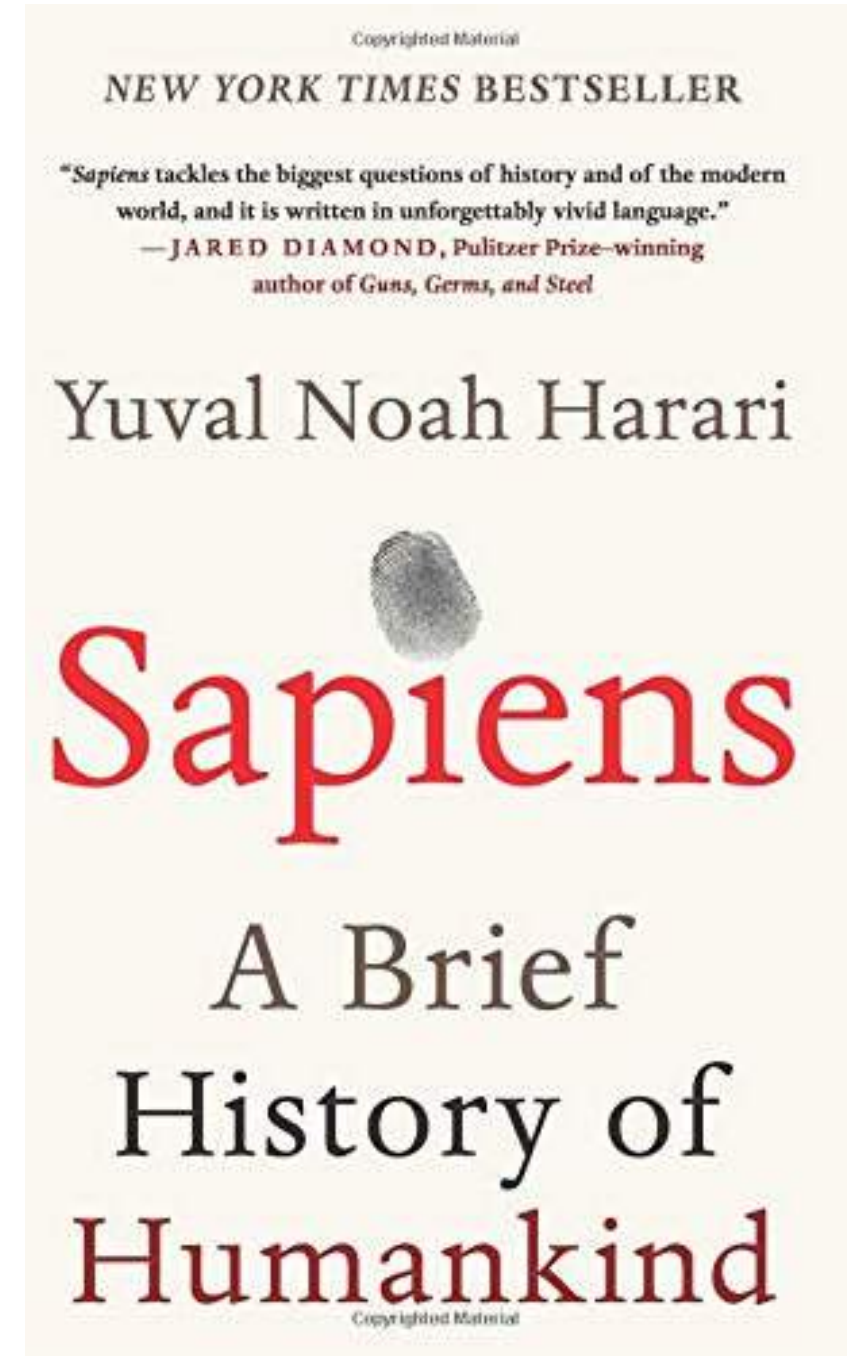
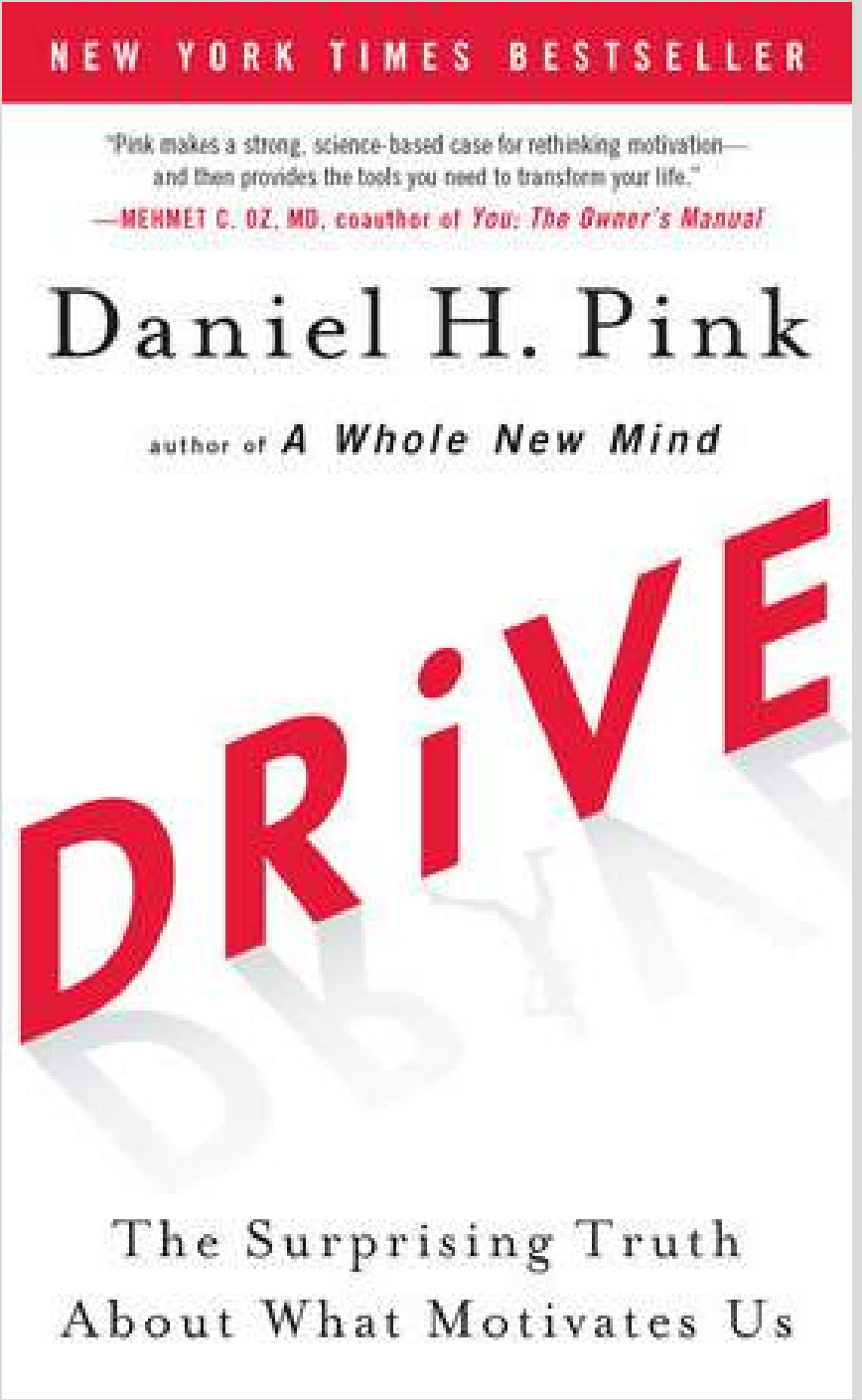
Those who could not find a 'meaning', or see a future goal, fell into deeply retrospective thoughts, closing their eyes and just thinking of the past. Their lives became meaningless. Most didn't survive. One prisoner, for example was convinced that they would be released on 'the 30th of March'. He died that night, as soon as he lost all hope.

Viktor Frankl shows us that, even in the most hopelessness of situations, we still have the ability to choose our response. He found purpose in the darkest of moments - he decided that he would live and survive long enough to one day tell his story and help everyone find meaning in their life. This book has timeless practical wisdom, showing that no matter how hard life can be, we always have the ability to choose our response and find a deeper meaning.

49. DRIVE - BY DAN PINK

Our motivations have evolved considerably from caveman times through to the modern workplace.

- Motivation 1.0 = Biological motivation: hunger, thirst, sex. As hunter-gatherers, this was all we needed in order to survive and perpetuate our species.
- Motivation 2.0 = Extrinsic Motivation: the carrot and the stick. The leaders of the industrial revolution realised they got better results if they rewarded 'good' behaviour and punished 'bad' behaviour.
- Motivation 3.0 = Intrinsic Motivation. Carrots and sticks only seem to work for repetitive manual labour – they can't improve creativity or other intellectual work of the 21st century (and sometimes have a negative impact). Instead, we need to look for the intrinsic motivation that comes from a sense of Autonomy (control over what we do and how we do it), Mastery (continuous improvement toward an asymptotic goal) and Purpose (a feeling that what we're doing actually matters).



48. SAPIENS - BY YUVAL NOAH HARARI

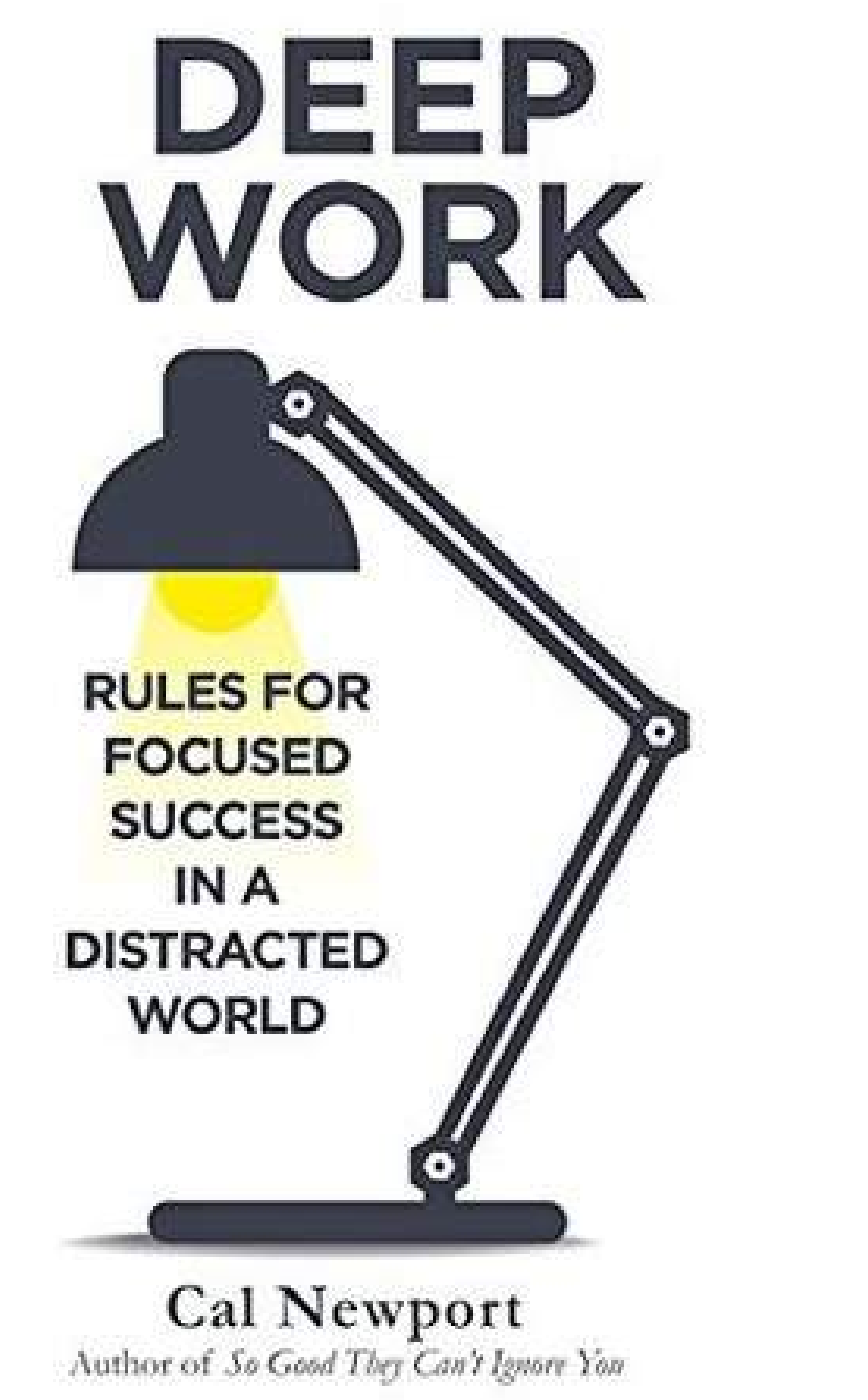
Human beings have come a long way since we were once apes. We evolved in many different directions - survival in the snowy plains of northern Europe required different traits than those needed to stay alive in Indonesia's steaming jungles. We quickly dispelled our other human brothers, such as the Neanderthals, because we were given a unique gift: the 'Tree of Life Mutation' sparked a cognitive revolution that allowed us to communicate in unique ways. We quickly jumped to the top of the food chain, and by evolutionary standards, we dominated the planet in no time. Yuval Noah Harari illustrates an exciting and educational tale as our journey continued through the agricultural, scientific and industrial revolutions.

47. DEEP WORK - BY CAL NEWPORT

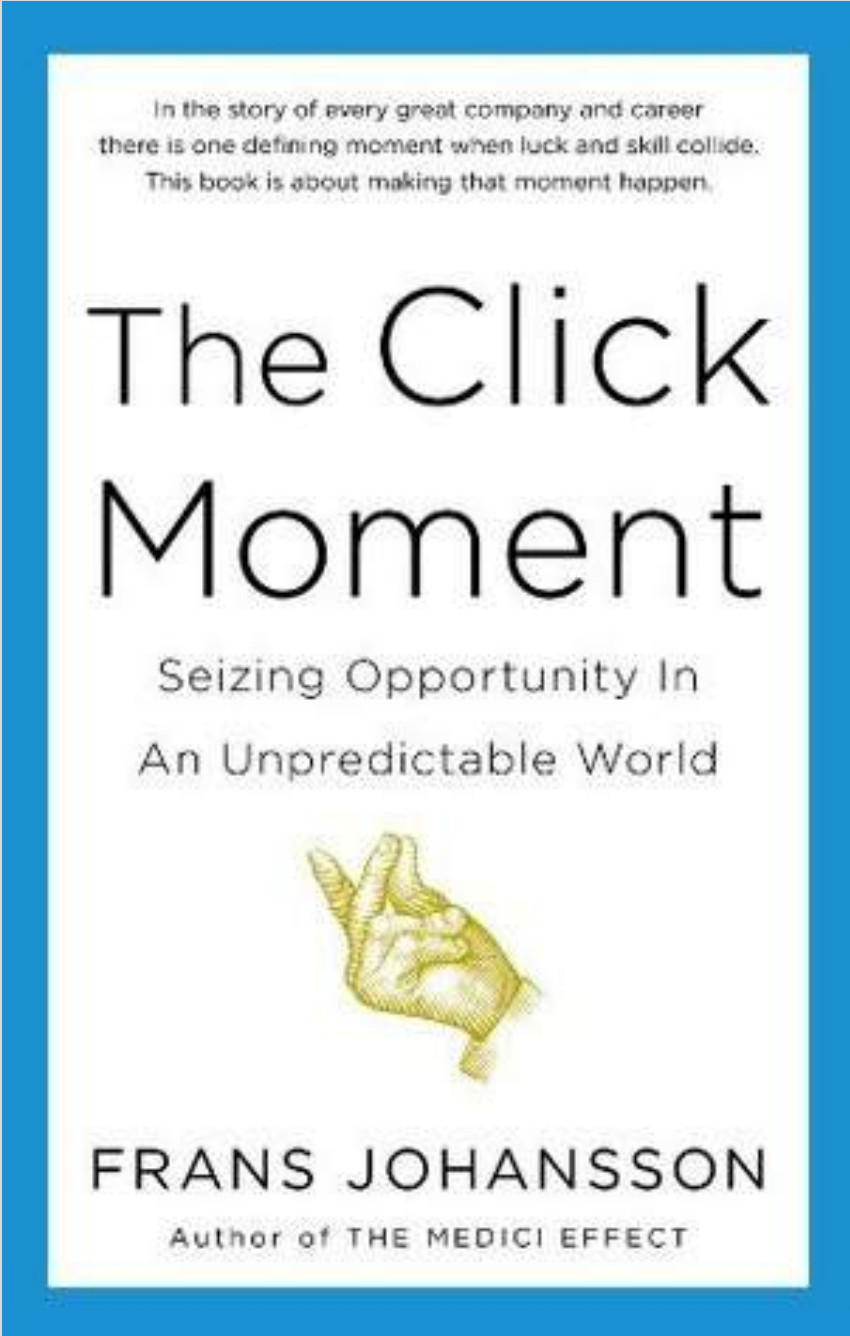
High quality work is a function of time spent and the intensity of our focus. As our time is limited, the best way to yield greater results is to increase our focus. Newport calls these periods of focus ‘Deep Work’, described as:

"Professional activities performed in a state of distraction-free concentration that push your cognitive capacities to the limit."

Deep Work is necessary to wring out every last drop of value out of your current intellectual capacity. The mental strain that accompanies Deep Work is the best bet to be the beneficiary of scarce skills that are valuable in today's economy. We are losing our familiarity with Deep Work due to new tools such as email, SMS and social media that are constantly interrupting us. Cal leads the way and gives practical advice to set yourself up for successful deeper working habits and produce high quality work.



46. THE CLICK MOMENT - BY FRANS JOHANSSON



Hypertension (high blood pressure) and angina (a symptom of ischemic heart disease) are serious medical conditions that affect a seriously enormous portion of adults. The drug company Pfizer was trying to create medicine that could effectively treat these issues. The clinical trials of 'Sildenafil' showed little impact on angina, but the pills had an unintended side-effect that kept patients coming back for more. In 1998 it was approved for sale, and Pfizer now sells almost \$2,000,000,000 (two BILLION dollars) every year of these little blue 'blood pressure' pills...

Sildenafil is more commonly known as Viagra. The pill designed for blood pressure that unexpectedly did quite a good job of giving blokes stiffies is now sold to treat 'erectile dysfunction' (an ailment created by marketing consultants, not identified doctors).

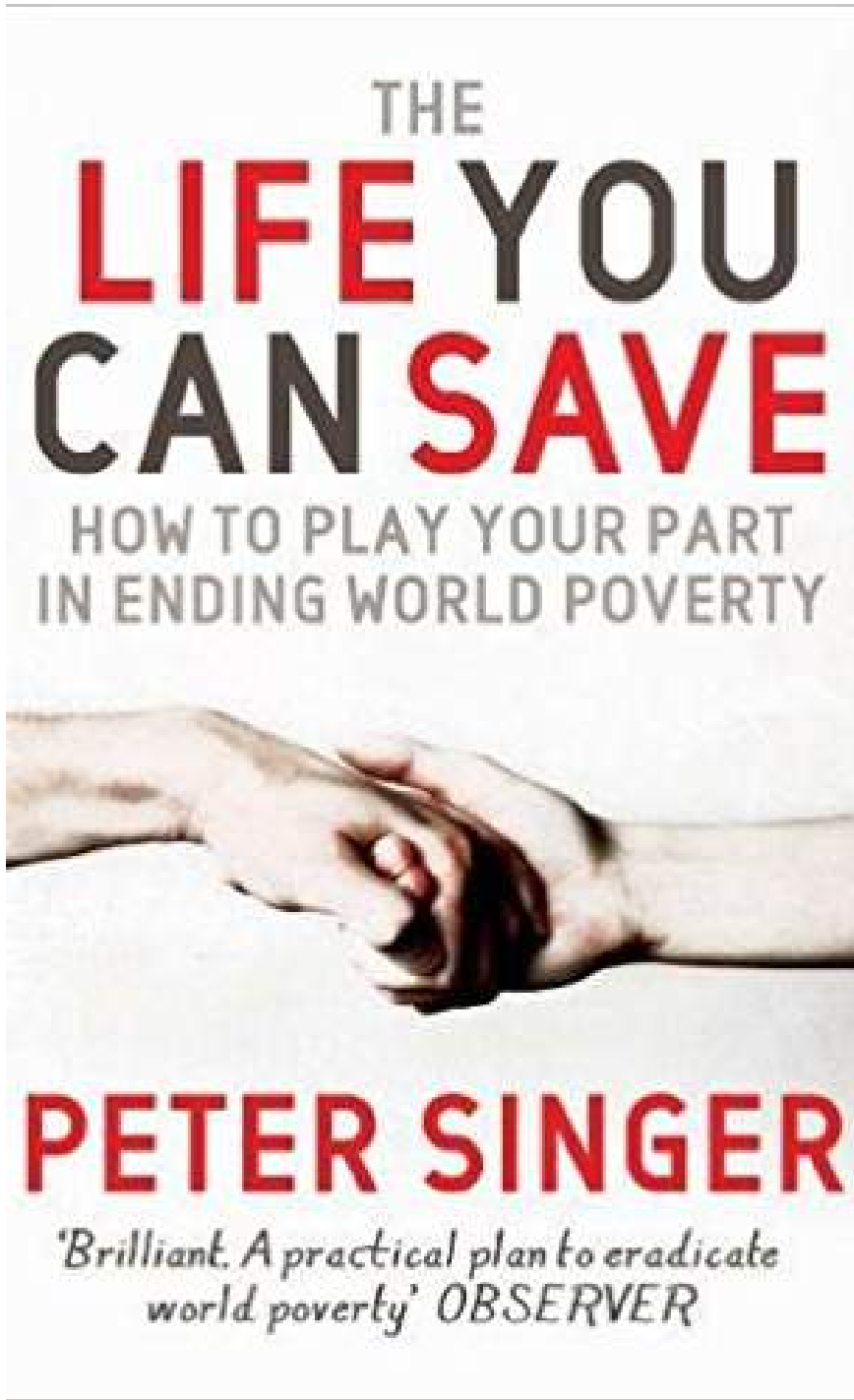
This just story goes to show that success is random. And if success is random, it should be our aim to add as much randomness into our lives and court randomness at every opportunity possible. His method involves placing Purposeful Bets, creating Click Moments, then allowing Complex Forces to take over.

45. THE LIFE YOU CAN SAVE - BY PETER SINGER

If you walked past a child drowning in a pond, would you jump in and save her? What if it meant getting your brand new shoes wet? What if it meant you would be late to your meeting? What if it meant you might not be able to order an extra beer with your pizza tonight?

Comparing these costs to the benefit of saving a life seems ridiculous, but Peter Singer suggests we are making similar philosophical decisions each day but we don't even realise it. Singer shows us that it can be easy and relatively cheap for us to save a life (to save MANY lives!).

Every single year, there are 18 million people dying unnecessarily. According to UNICEF, 10 million kids die under the age of 5 each year due to causes related to poverty. If those of us in the developed world siphoned off a tiny fraction of what we earn, we could solve the problems of poverty in a relatively short time frame. If you want to contribute, this book will show you the most effective ways to reduce pain and suffering. You can save a life for a lot less than you might think.



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**Efforts to deepen
your focus will
struggle if you don't
simultaneously wean
your mind from a
dependence on
distraction.**

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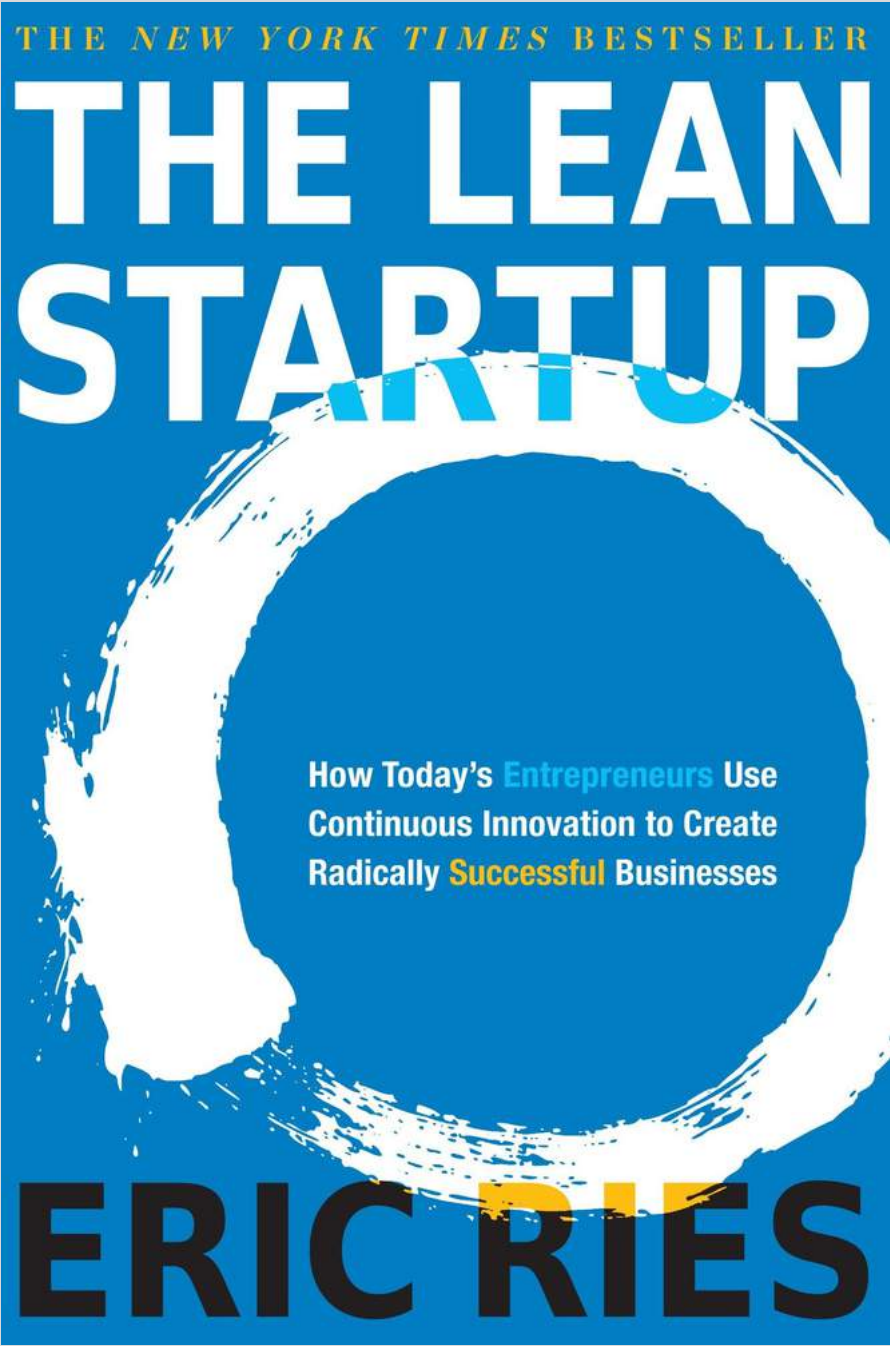
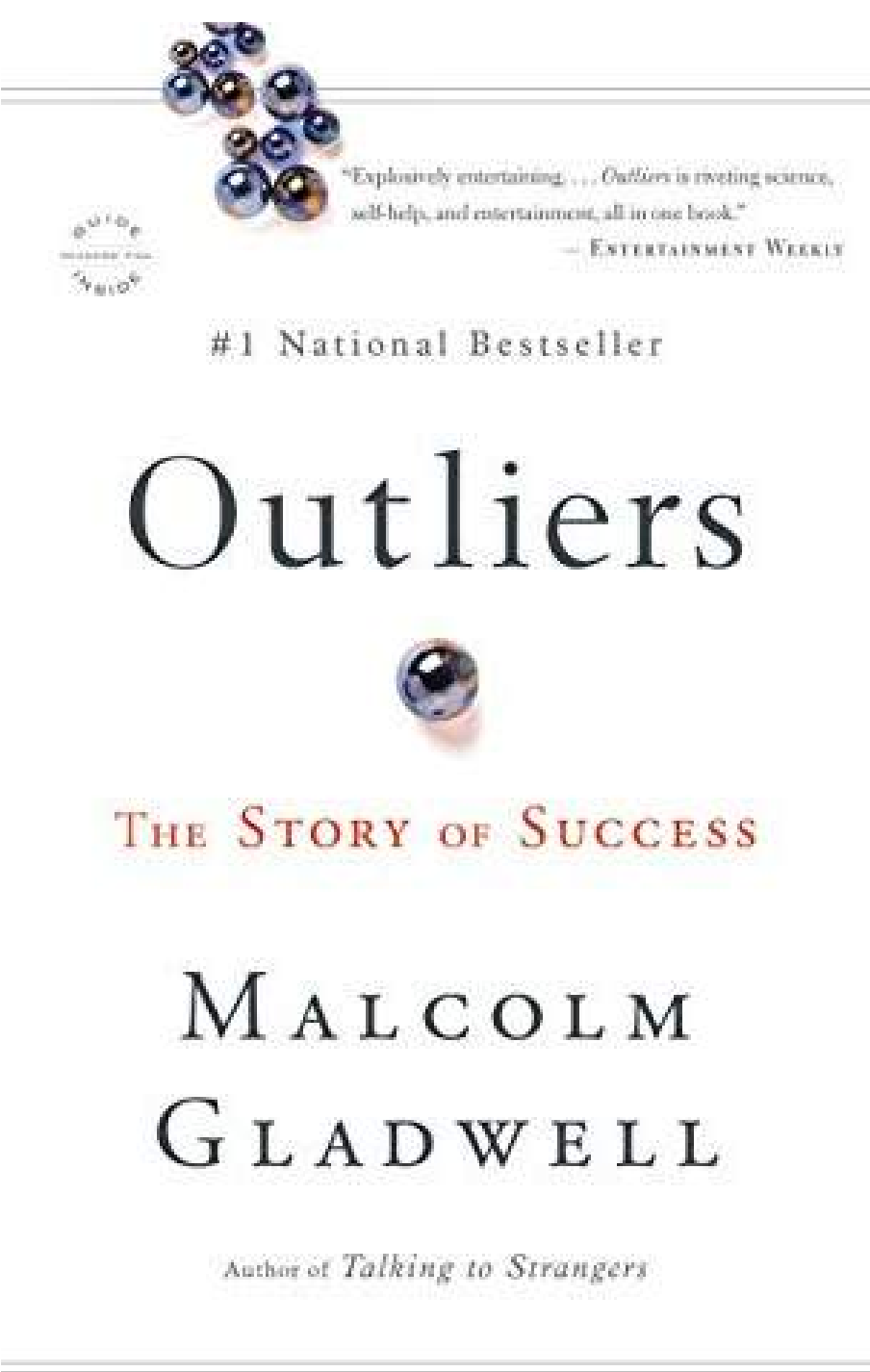
Cal
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44. OUTLIERS - BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

The book 'Outliers' looks beyond individual achievement. Gladwell is less concerned with what the people who achieve success are like, and more interested in where they come from, who their parents are, and what opportunities they are afforded.

What seemingly arbitrary fact is common amongst the top Canadian Hockey players? Why are all of today's software billionaires born between 1954-1956? Why did Jews dominate the New York legal landscape in the 1980s, when they struggled to get jobs in the prior decade? Why are Asians so good at math??

Gladwell explores all this and more in his famous storytelling style - taking seemingly unrelated anecdotes and weaving them together to find uncommon commonalities.



43. LEAN STARTUP - BY ERIC RIES

Most business cases look more like they are planning to launch a rocket ship rather than drive a car. But it doesn't have to be that way. Taichi Ohno and Shegeo Shingo of Toyota are credited with the 'lean' manufacturing model: reducing waste, shrinking batch sizes, accelerating cycle times and 'just-in-time' production (instead of 'just-in-case'). Inspired by lean manufacturing, Ries explores how you can apply this to all projects through the process of 'validated learning': build, measure, learn, repeat.

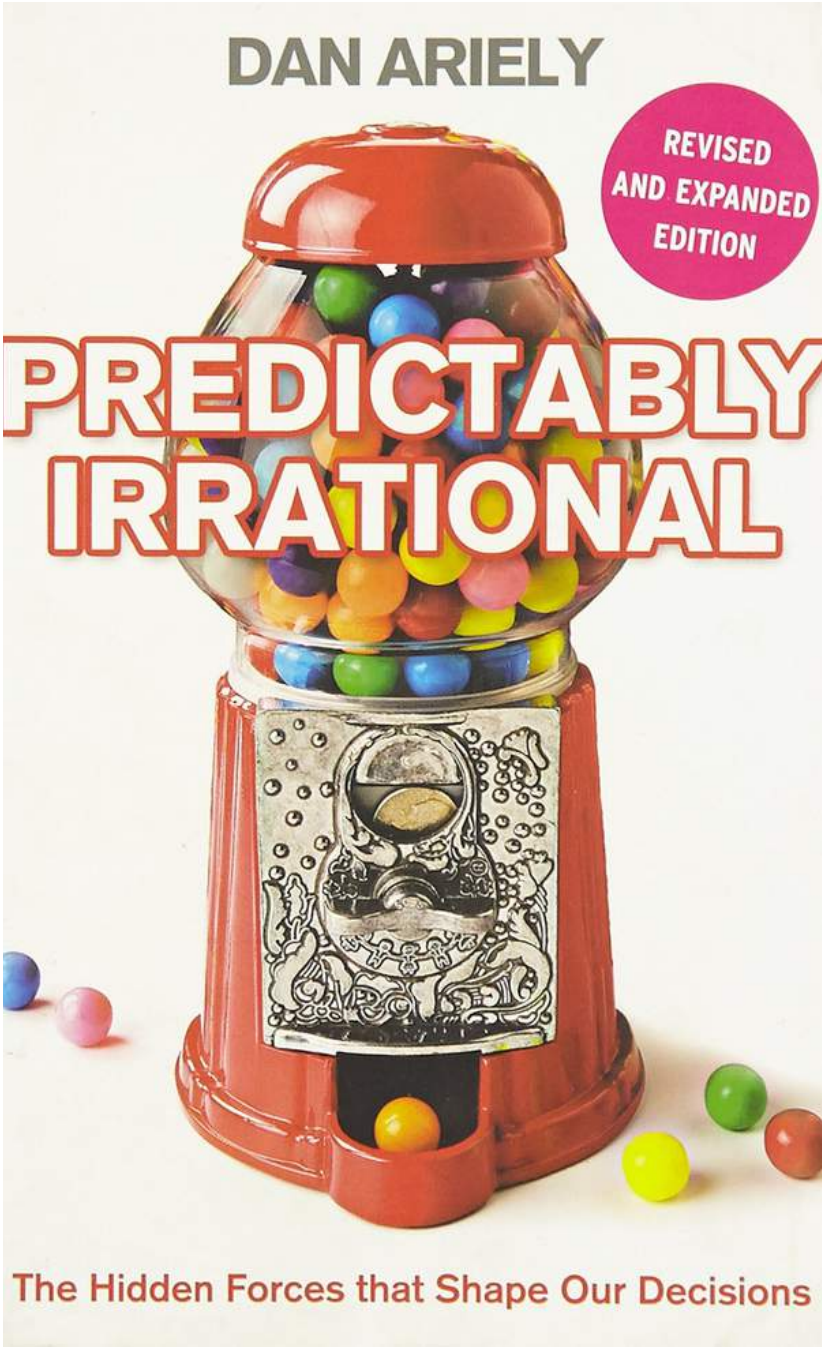
In every idea and every business case there are the 'facts' and there are the 'leap of faith assumptions'. It is important to know the difference between the two, then test your assumptions before you overcommit time, money, effort, or other finite resources. How do you test? Ries suggests you build a 'Minimum Viable Product'. An MVP is the smallest, cheapest, quickest, easiest version of a product that enables you to replicate the main feature. The reaction from the market provides valuable data, and tells you what your next move is. If it goes well: persevere. If not: pivot (lucky you didn't already spend all that time and money on something people don't want!).

42. PREDICTABLY IRRATIONAL - BY DAN ARIELY

Roy is an intelligent and accomplished student, just the kind of guy you'd like your daughter to marry. But when he was locked in a room with a laptop, moisturiser and tissues - all of a sudden he turned into a different man. Roy isn't the only one, in a state of arousal we are all capable of bizarre things. Research shows that we are more likely to have sex without protection, engage in orgies, sleep with a grandma, and be turned on by animals or 12 year old girls. These are things that our normal composed selves would never ever think of.

Dan Ariely is a behavior economist, and shows that arousal is just one of the many ways human beings can become irrational. The book has practical wisdom, showing us why we should:

- Give a gift instead of giving cash, by understanding the difference between social norms and market norms
- How we use relativity in decision making
- Reduce procrastination, by setting up the right systems; and
- Pay attention to opportunity cost, by understanding the cost of 'free'



Getting Things Done

the art of stress-free productivity

from the New York Times bestselling author

David Allen



41. GETTING THINGS DONE - BY DAVID ALLEN

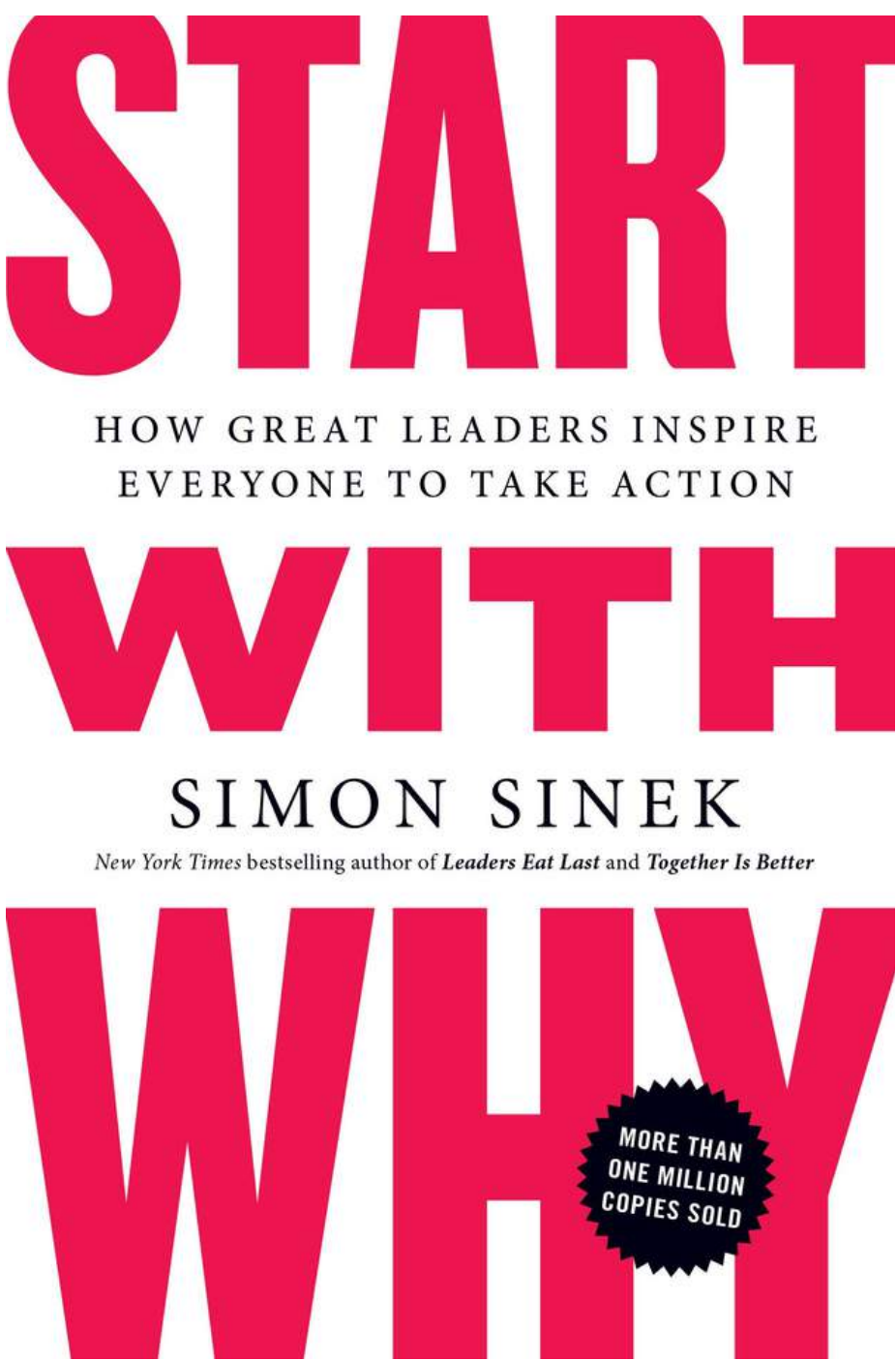
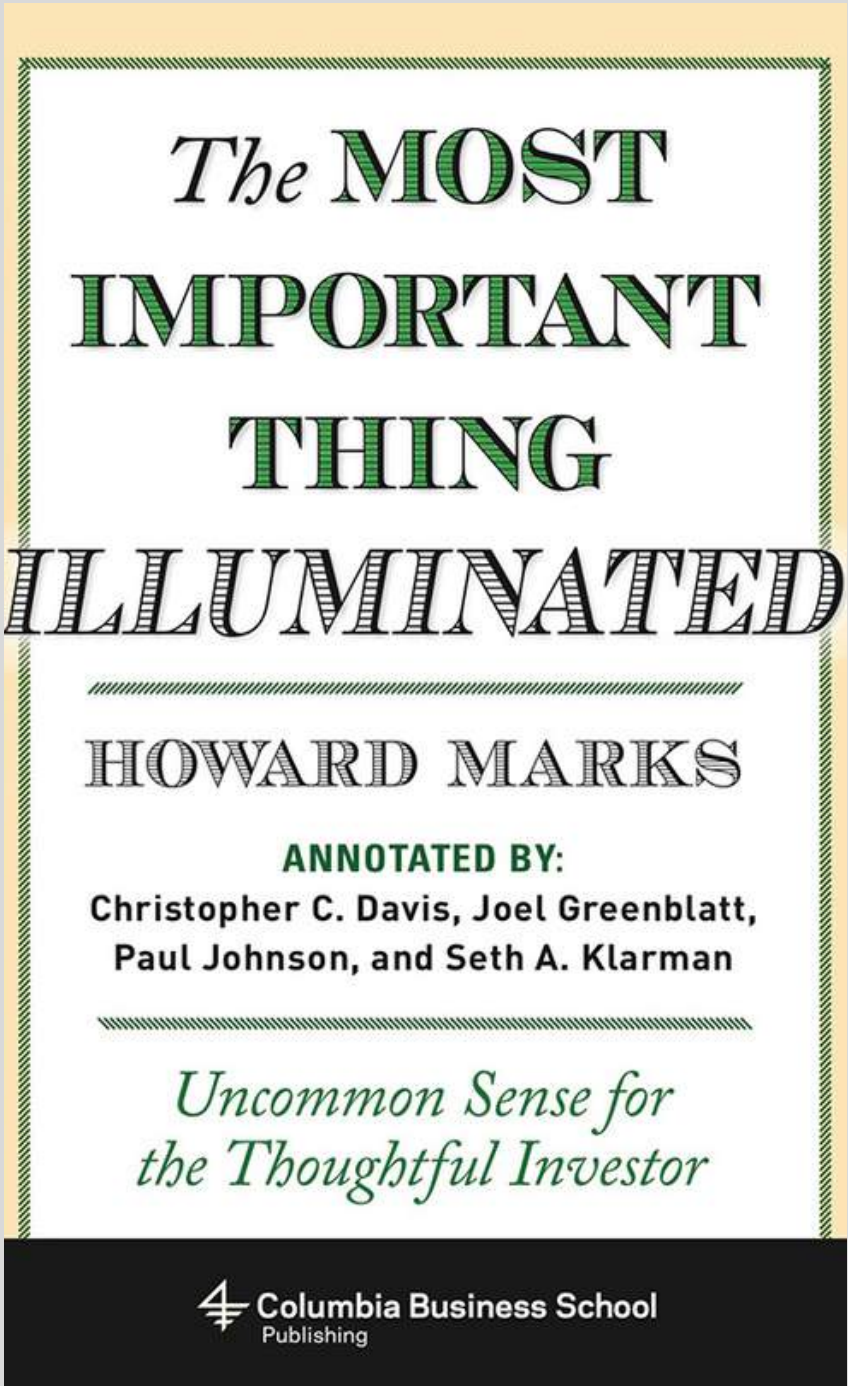
When you don't have an effective productivity system, your brain has to constantly be keeping track of your to-do list. You'll always feel like you should be doing something else. That means you aren't giving your complete focus to the important task at hand.

Allen presents a thorough practical system to boost your productivity and let you enjoy the present moment of whatever you are doing. It's all about getting everything out of your brain and capturing it in a reliable place, so you aren't wasting precious focus and energy on the wrong things. The five steps of managing workflow - capture, clarify, organise, reflect and engage - is an external system that will ensure every thought that comes into your mind will eventually get dealt with. This will leave you with the feeling of calm control in your life and allow you to enhance your productivity and get more done.

40. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING - BY HOWARD MARKS

Howard Marks is the Founder of Oaktree Capital Management, who hold US\$122 billion in assets under management. This book is a compilation of all his investment philosophies, which can be applied to help you make better decisions when investing money, time or energy. There aren't any step-by-step instructions, just advice on ways to think to avoid the many pitfalls that most investors fall in. A few of the 'Most Important Things' you will learn in the book:

- Second level thinking, a game theory approach to investing
- Understanding market efficiency
- Understanding, recognising and controlling risk
- Combating the negative influences of human nature, and
- Knowing what you don't know



39. START WITH WHY - BY SIMON SINEK

A company called 'Creative' developed a revolutionary 5GB portable MP3 player, but was never able to capture the world's attention. Apple came along almost 2 YEARS LATER and changed everything. Their product wasn't better, but Steve Jobs had a totally different message: it was a '5GB portable MP3 player', it was '1000 songs in your pocket'. Jobs chose to Start With Why.

Sinek, shows there are three elements to explaining a message:

- WHY - purpose/belief
- HOW - unique selling proposition
- WHAT - features of the product

Most messaging starts by highlighting the remarkable features (the 'what'), they talk about their processes (the 'how') and lastly close with a 'why'. But this is all wrong – we should be telling stories in the EXACT OPPOSITE direction.

"People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it".

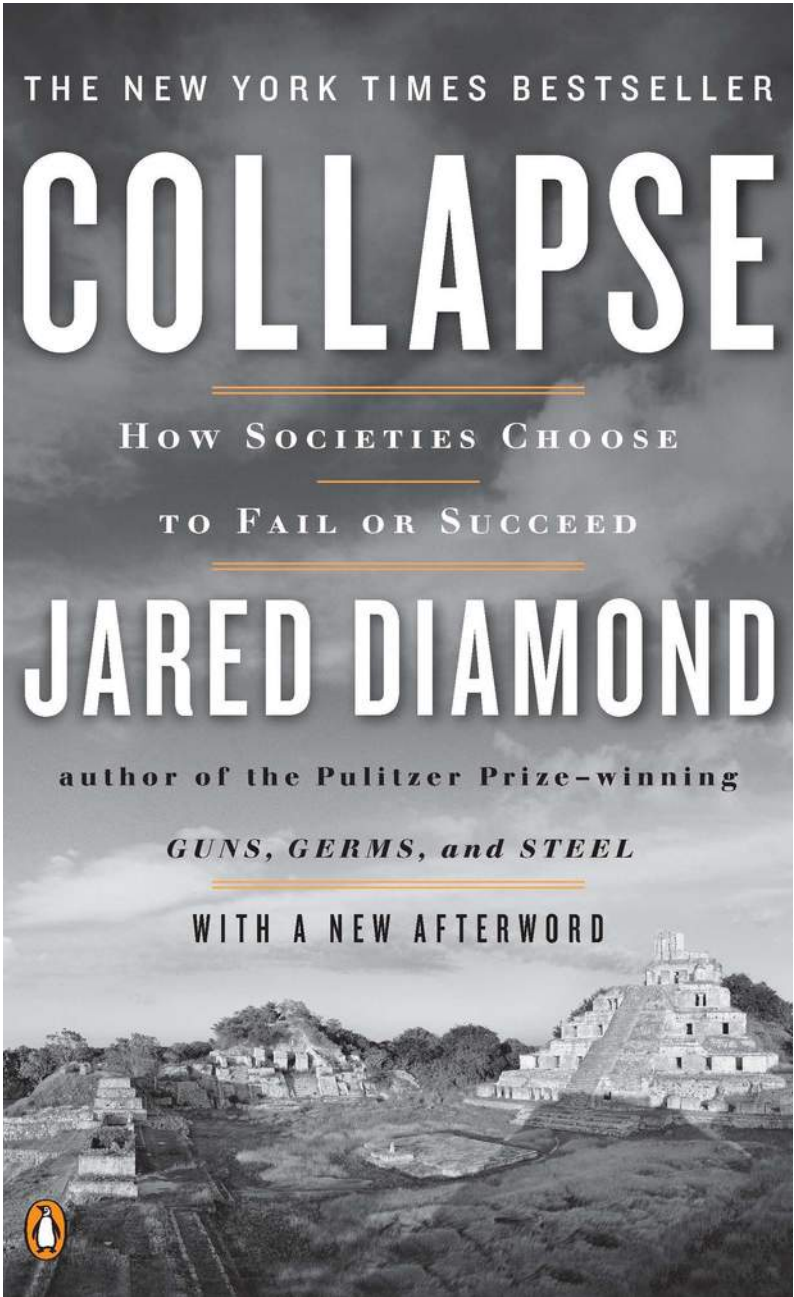
38. COLLAPSE - BY JARED DIAMOND

Lurking behind the mystery of ancient ruins is the mystery with the nagging thought: might such a fate eventually befall our own wealthy society? Will tourists someday stare mystified at the New York skyscrapers, much as we stare at the jungle overgrown ruins of Maya cities? Perhaps we can still learn from the past, but only if we think carefully about its lessons.

The book has a 5 point framework of possible contributing collapse to societies:

- 1 - Environmental damageCould be exceptional imprudence of the people and exceptionalfragility in aspects of the environment, or both.
- 2 - Climate changeToday we refer to human induced. But in the past it wasnatural climate change, including the advance and retreat of continental icesheets during ice ages from about 1400-1800 AD, or the global cooling from theenormous volcanic eruption of Indonesia's Mt Tambora in 1815
- 3 - Hostile neighboursRelationships might be intermittently or chronically hostile.A society may be able to hold off its enemies as long as it is strong, only tosuccumb in a moment of weakness. The proximate cause is the conquest, but theultimate cause that leads to the collapse is the temporary weakening
- 4 - Decreasing support by friendly neighboursEither depend on imports of essential trade goods . If yourpartner comes weak for any reason, then they no longer can supply the essentialgoods
- 5 - The response of the societyDifferent societies respond differently to similar problems.Deforestation for example has arose in many cultures - some went down, some developed sustainable management practices

In the book Jared Diamond explores the collapse of various societies including Easter Island, the Great Maya Civilisation and The Vikings, and the risk of collapse of modern-day Australia and China through the 5 point framework. By understanding the civilisations of our past, we can get a better understanding of the greatest risks today of our current society collapsing.



37. THE OBSTACLE IS THE WAY - BY RYAN HOLIDAY

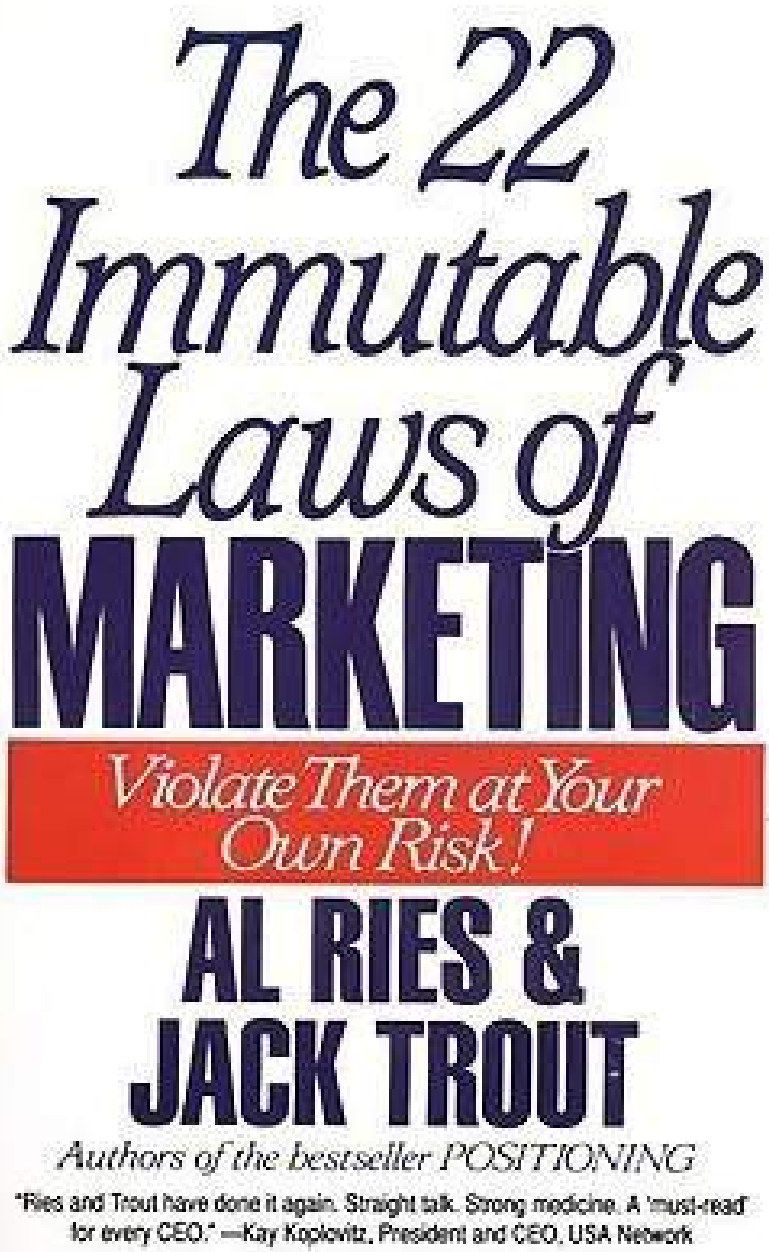
We all face obstacles. They come in many shapes and sizes. But whatever we face, we have a choice: will we be blocked by obstacles, or will we advance through them. Holiday, through the lens of stoicism, gives us a framework: perception, action and will. We can turn our greatest challenges into our greatest opportunities. And of course, every time you overcome one obstacle, there’s another one coming right around the corner...

This book is in three parts: Perceptions, Action, Will. Perceptions involve shifting your perspective from viewing obstacles as a negative to an opportunity, Action is all about taking action, and Will is about staying on the path and keeping yourself on track.

36. THE 22 IMMUTABLE LAWS OF MARKETING - BY AL RIES & JACK TROUT

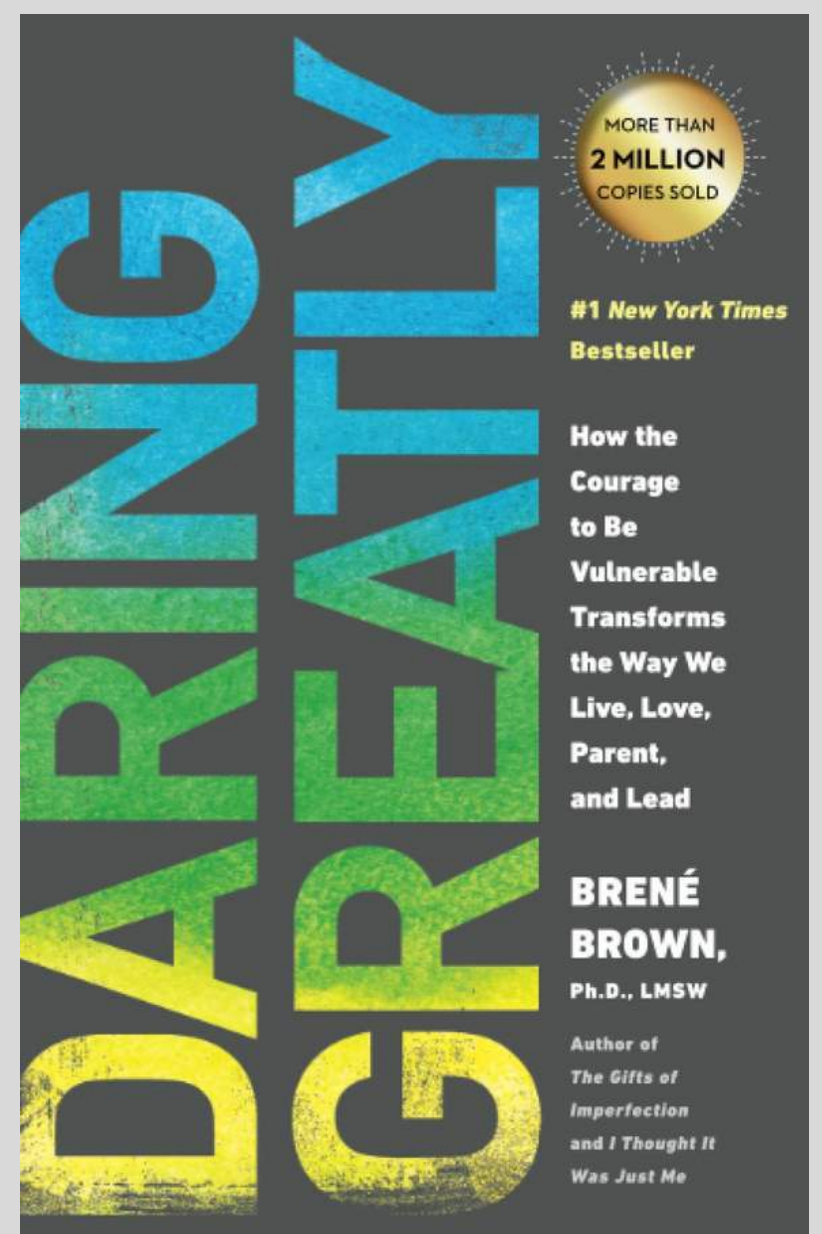
One of the biggest lessons we learned from this book is the ‘Law of Leadership’: it’s better to be first than to be better. The authors suggest that the top product in a given industry was probably also the first product to market. That said, if you’re NOT already the first to market, you still have hope. The ‘Law of the Mind’ says that some products may be first to market, but you can still be the first that comes to mind. The ‘Law of Category’ shows you that if you’re not first in your market, you can create an entirely new sub-category that you CAN be the first in.

This book presents some fundamental marketing knowledge and you should read it before launching your new idea/product/service/business.



35. DARING GREATLY - BY BRENE BROWN

“COURAGE STARTS WITH SHOWING UP AND LETTING OURSELVES BE SEEN.”



The phrase 'Daring Greatly' is taken from Theodore Roosevelt's speech "Citizenship in a Republic" or better known as "The Man in the Arena":

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again.

Because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause.

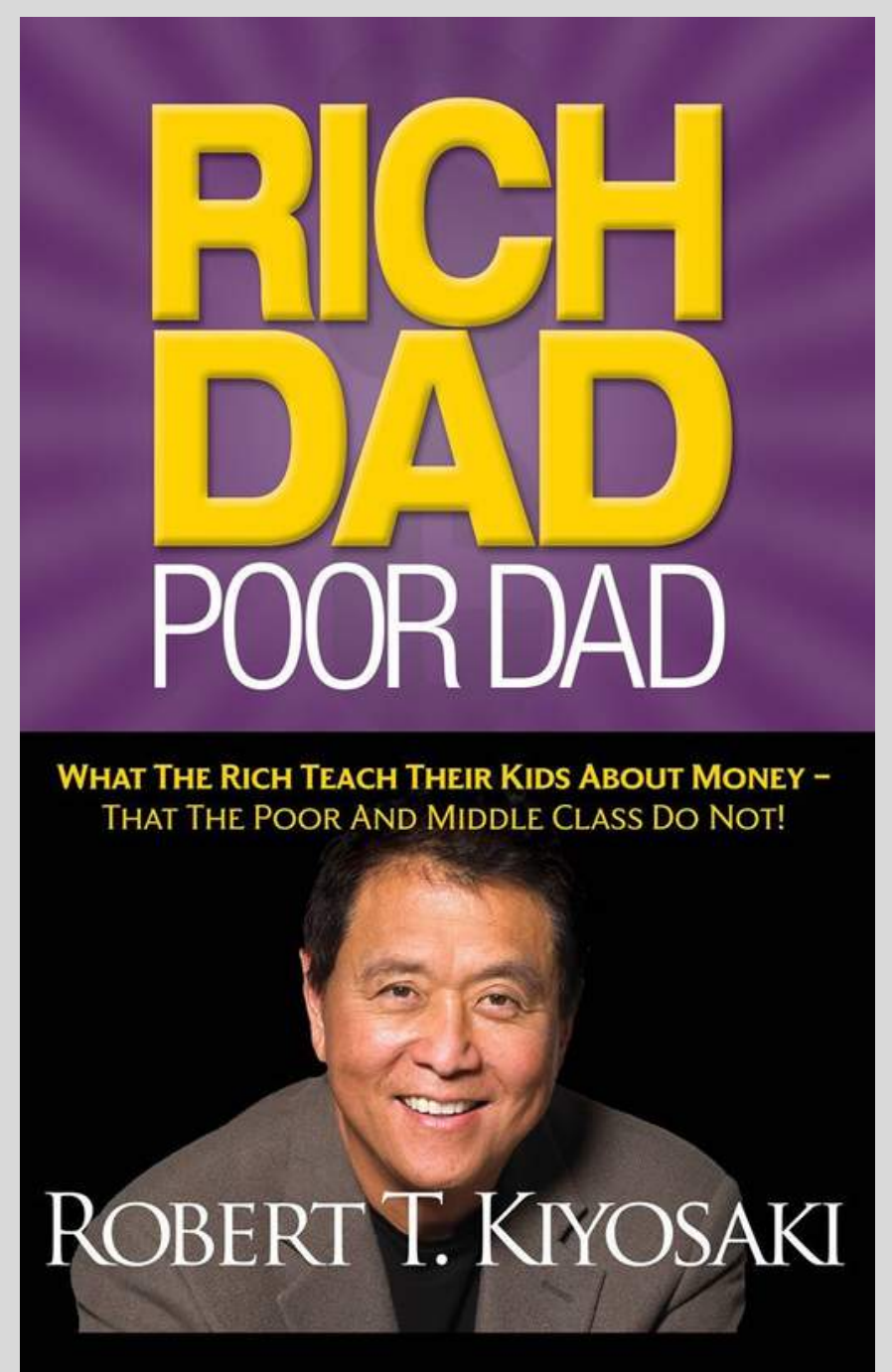
Who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, he fails daring greatly"

When we step into the arena, we expose ourselves to the risk of failure, show the world who we really are and we leave ourselves exposed to attack from those on the sidelines. Brown suggests that in order to truly dare greatly, we need to take off our armour and embrace vulnerability.

Vulnerability is not knowing victory or defeat, it's understanding the necessity of both; it's engaging, it's being 'all in'. Our willingness to emotionally expose ourselves to this vulnerability determines our true depth of courage and our clarity of purpose. The measure in which we avoid vulnerability is a measure of our fear and disconnection. When we give in to this fear, we might become perfectionists, waiting until the day that our creation is flawless before entering into the arena. But when we spend our lives waiting until we are bulletproof before we walk in, we ultimately sacrifice opportunities that may not be recoverable, we squander our precious time, and we turn back on our gifts, those contributions that only we can make. 'Perfect' and 'bulletproof' are seductive, but they don't exist in the human experience.

34. RICH DAD, POOR DAD - BY ROBERT KIOSAKI

“Winners are not afraid of losing. But losers are. Failure is part of the process of success. People who avoid failure also avoid success.”



Six financial lessons via the analogy of two dads with two different approaches to life:

Dad 1 - Highly educated, had a successful career as an academic and educator, and the philosophy to study hard so you can find a great company to work for

Dad 2 - never finished 8th grade, was an entrepreneur and studied hard to find a good company to buy

The Dad with all of the degrees and diplomas and the hot-shot job turned out to be the Poor Dad...

Where the poor dad said 'money is the root of all evil', rich dad said 'the lack of money is the root of evil'. One stated 'I can't afford it' while the other asked 'how can I afford it?'. The two dads have entirely different attitudes towards money and in turn lived their lives in very different ways.

Lesson 1 - The rich don't work for money

Robert and his friend Mike both wanted to learn how to make money, so they went to work for the rich dad. They were offered a meagrely 10c an hour under the promise that they would be taught important lessons. After only a few weeks, they went back to Rich Dad complaining about their earnings, asking for a pay rise. The Rich Dad remarked that "in less than a month you sound like most of my employees". He told them he was pushing them around deliberately, just like life will, and it is how you react in such times that will determine your wealth. He told them, "if you learn this lesson you will grow into a wise, happy wealthy man. If you don't, you will spend your life blaming a job, or blaming your boss for your problems".

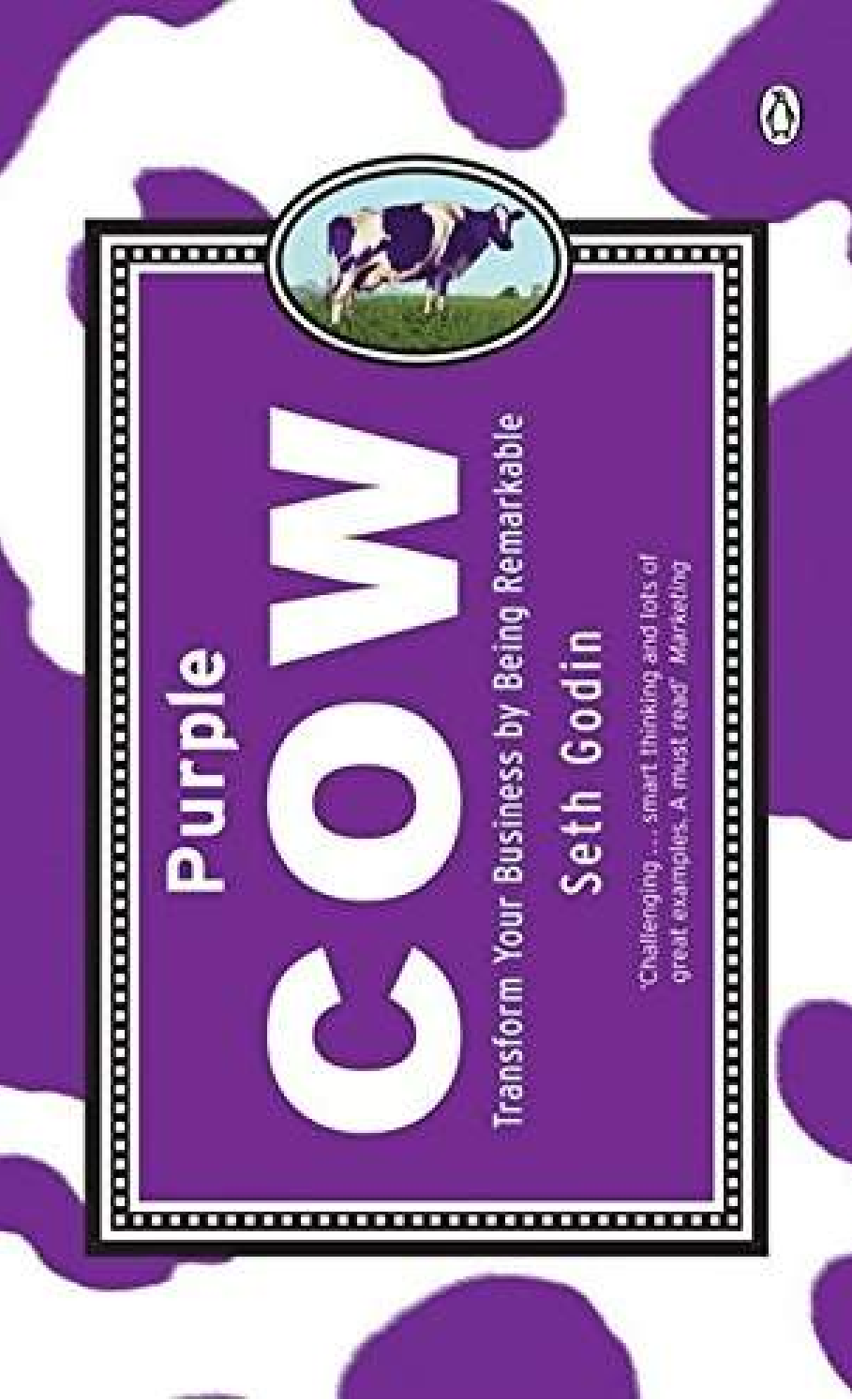
Most people will go through life playing it safe, blaming others for anything that goes wrong. For things to change, YOU need to change. Paradoxically, the sooner you forget you need the pay check, the easier money will come to you. When your brain isn't governed by the fear of the lack of money, it will show you ways of making a fortune beyond your wildest dreams. From the day you recognise your first opportunity, you will see opportunities all around you for the rest of your life.

33. PURPLE COW - BY SETH GODIN

Driving through the countryside, you might marvel at the beautiful landscape and the farm animals that seem to be everywhere. A brown cow is exciting at first, especially when you're from the city and havent seen a real cow before. But after a while, you'll be seeing more and more brown cows. You realise that brown cows are everywhere, and they're actually kind of boring.

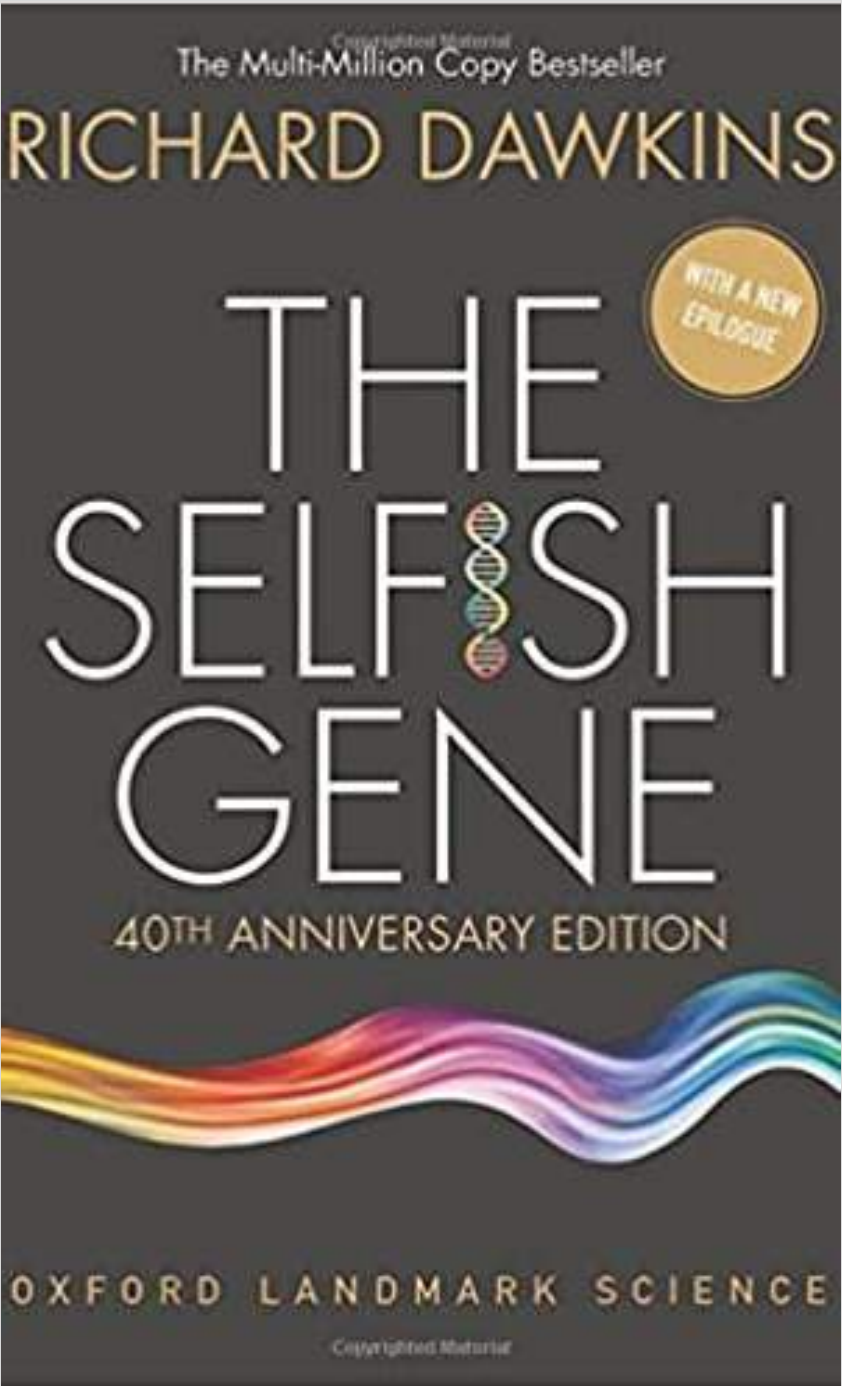
But what if you then saw a PURPLE COW? Now that would be remarkable! That's something you'll go and tell all of your friends about.

This marketing masterpiece by Seth Godin will show you how to build purple cows in your business that will take you from your initial customer through to the mainstream market. Traditional marketing (ads on mainstream media like TV and radio) doesn't work any more. Today people rely on 'word of mouth' in order to sift through the thousands of offers and advertisements we face everyday. By creating something 'remarkable', you're giving people something to talk about.



32. THE SELFISH GENE - BY RICHARD DAWKINS

We all learnt a little bit about evolution at school. However, in The Selfish Gene, Richard Dawkins takes it to the next level with brilliant metaphors that explain how things went from the ‘primordial soup’ or proteins and enzymes, ultimately to become you reading this book. He shows us that we aren’t super special. We are big lumbering robots whose purpose is to pass on genes. The gene itself sometimes generates selfish behaviour of the animal it inhabits. But it can also use altruistic behaviour, even sacrifice itself on the behalf of family who may share the same genes. In this book you’ll learn about evolution, competition, human purpose and memes.



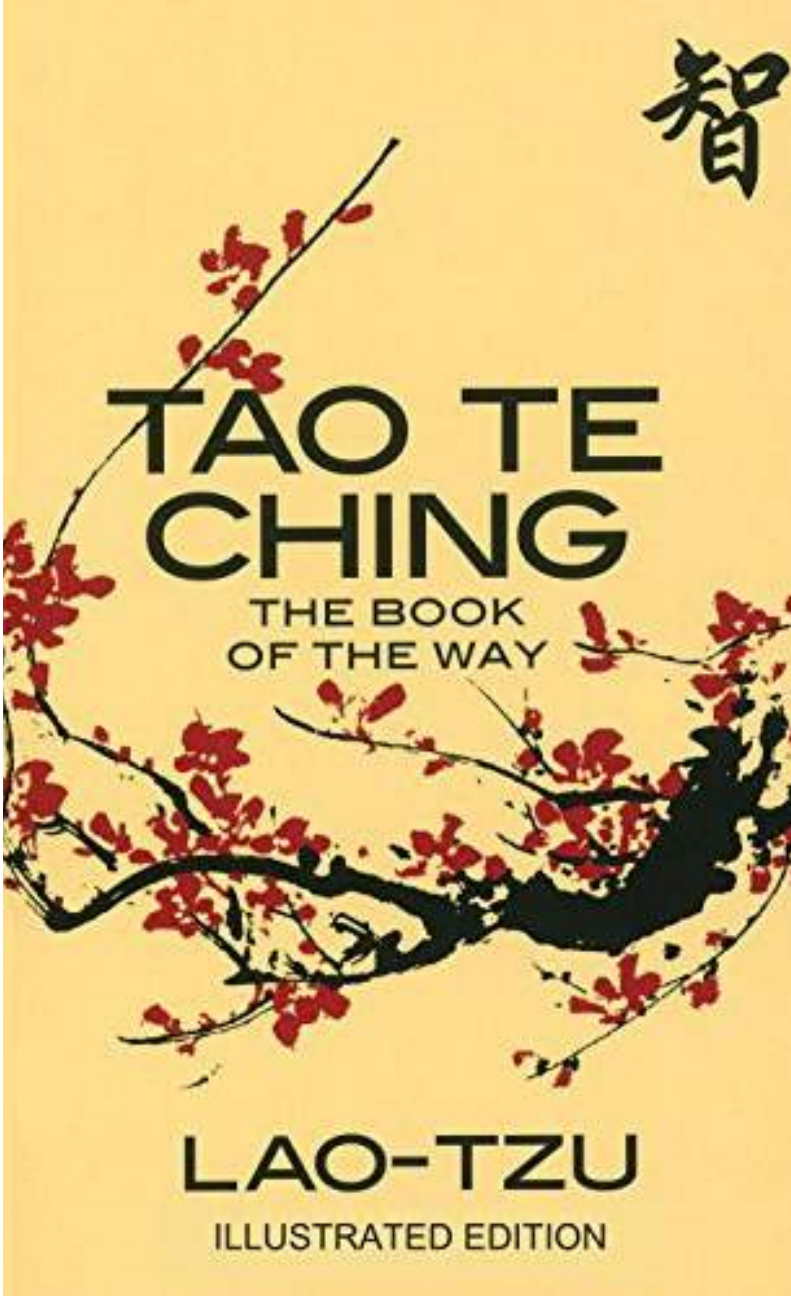
31. TAO TE CHING - BY LAO TZU

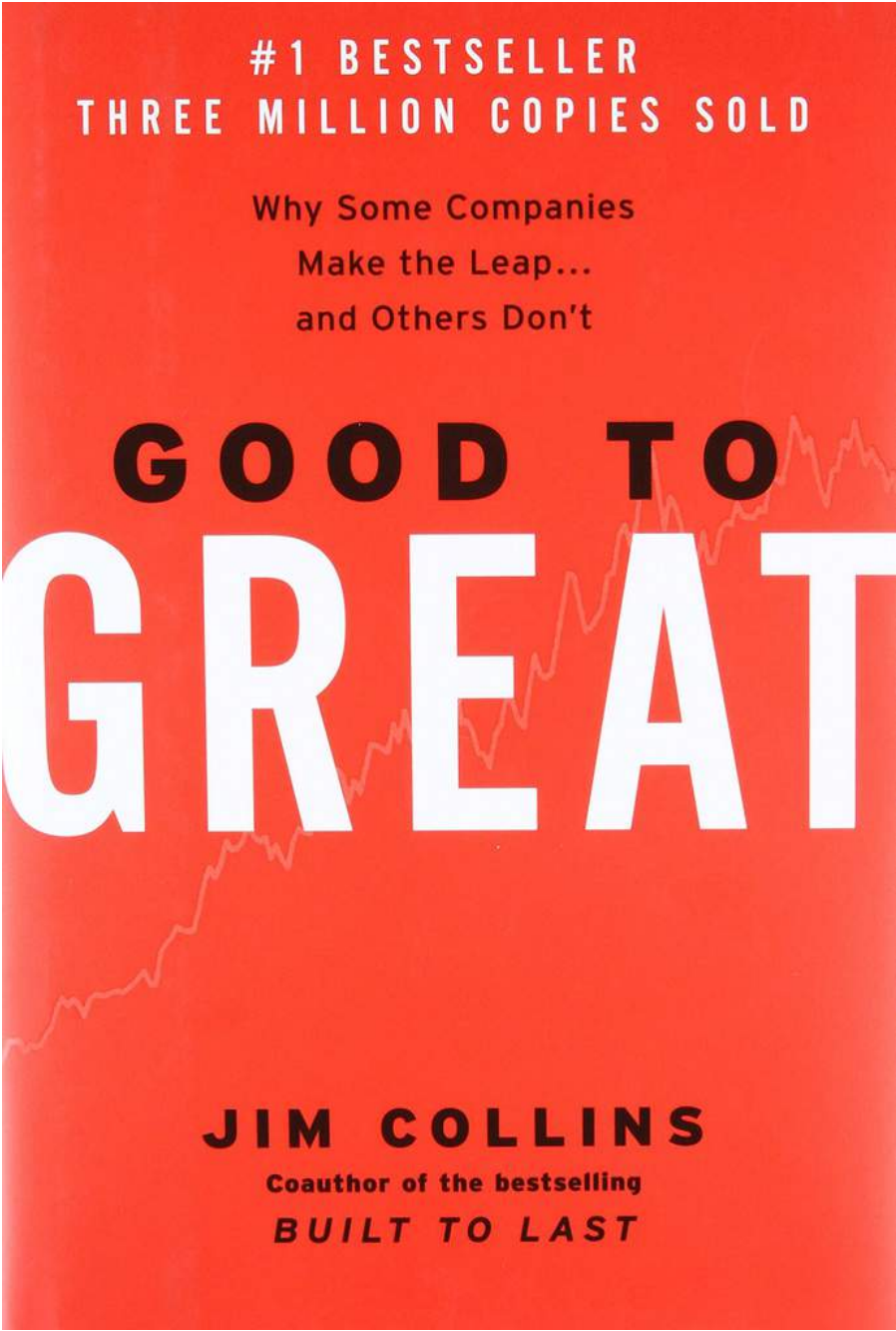
2,500 years of wisdom packed into 81 short powerpackets of knowledge. More than a few of these made us stop, put the book down, and reflect on life. Ideas around striving, leadership, listening, being open, achievement, hubris and humility abound.

‘He who rushes ahead doesn’t go far. He who tries to shine dims his own light.’

‘The Master doesn't try to be powerful; thus he is truly powerful. The ordinary man keeps reaching for power; thus he never has enough.’

‘Those who know don't talk. Those who talk don't know.’





30. GOOD TO GREAT - BY JIM COLLINS

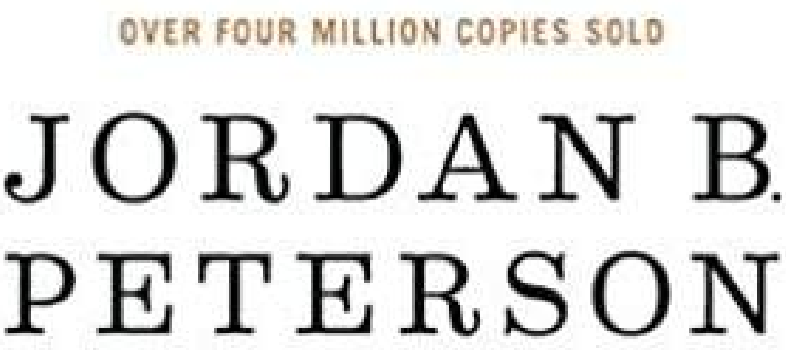
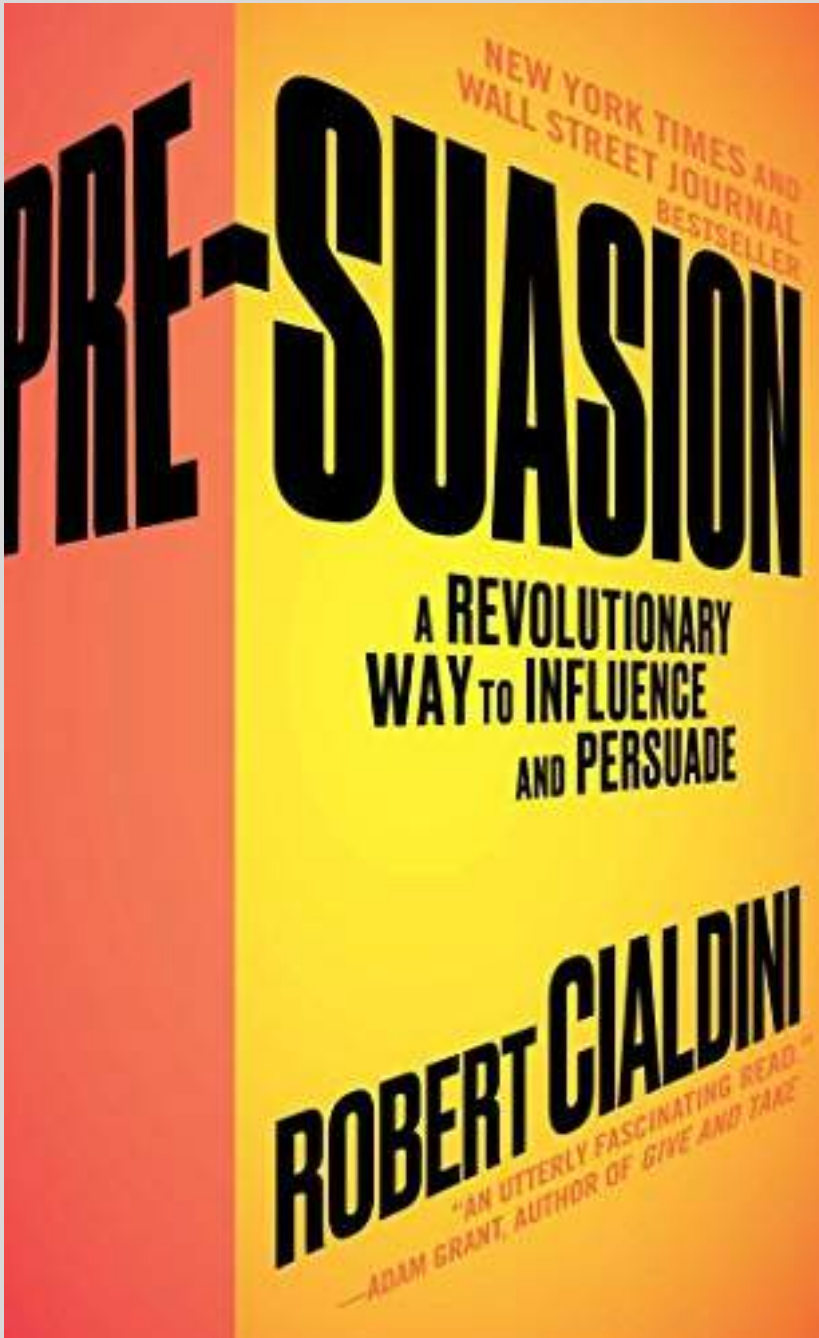
What makes a great company? Good to Great is a comprehensive study, that identifies companies that made the leap from good results to great results and sustained those results for at least 15 years. Collins identified three key areas common among the great companies: Disciplined People, Disciplined Thought, Disciplined Action.

The concept, 'First Who and Then What' is one of the underlying factors of 'Disciplined People' that allows a company to make the leap to be great. It is the ability of the humble leader to say, "I don't really know where we should take this bus. But I know if we get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and put the right people in the right seats, then we can figure out how to drive some place great".

Other surprising factors outlined in the research include the importance of purpose, the cumulative process of the small things, and focusing on one unique metric (the 'hedgehog concept').

29. PRE-SUASION - BY ROBERT CIALDINI

Cialdini's first book, Influence, was all about the CONTENT - what do you put in your message to make people more willing to take on your idea or buy your product. Pre-Suasion is all about the CONTEXT - what can you do BEFORE they even encounter your message that will make them more favourable to your suggestion. This book talks about attention and presents a range of things that can first attract attention and then magnetise that attention. Cialdini also brings together the six weapons of influence from his first book and ties them into one ultimate persuasion strategy - that single page alone is worth the \$30 to buy the book.



28. 12 RULES FOR LIFE - BY JORDAN PETERSON

Jordan Peterson has spent a lifetime studying psychology, and combines it with ancient mythology to synthesise his '12 Rules for Life'.

Peterson draws the psychological significance of stories like Hansel and Gretel, Jesus, Pinocchio and Noah's Ark to deal with 21st century problems, showing that our psychological issues apply across cultures and centuries.

The Rules will help us all on our various journeys, with practical 'antidotes to chaos':Rule 1 - Stand Up Straight (we can trick our neurochemistry into confidence and superiority)Rule 2 - Make Friends with People Who Want the Best for You (you are not morally obliged to make friends with everyone, so choose wisely)Rule 10 - Be Precise in Your Speech (everything clarified becomes visible)

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Letting the wrong people hang around is unfair to all the right people, as they inevitably find themselves compensating for the inadequacies of the wrong people. Worse, it can drive away the best people. Strong performers are intrinsically motivated by performance, and when they see their efforts impeded by carrying extra weight, they eventually become frustrated.

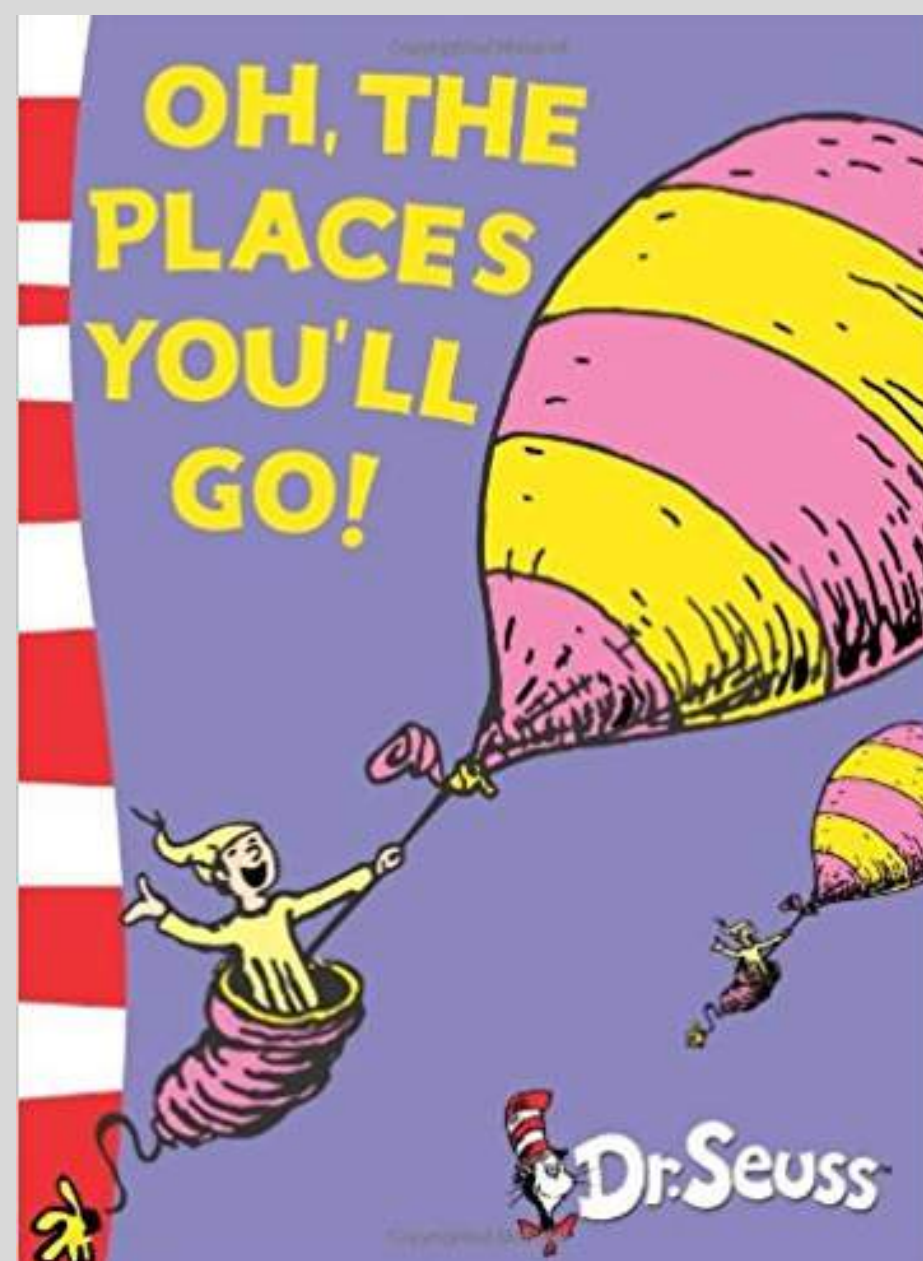
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**Jim Collins,
Good to
Great**

27. OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO! BY DR SEUSS

**“You're off to Great Places!
Today is your day!
Your mountain is waiting,
So... get on your way!”**



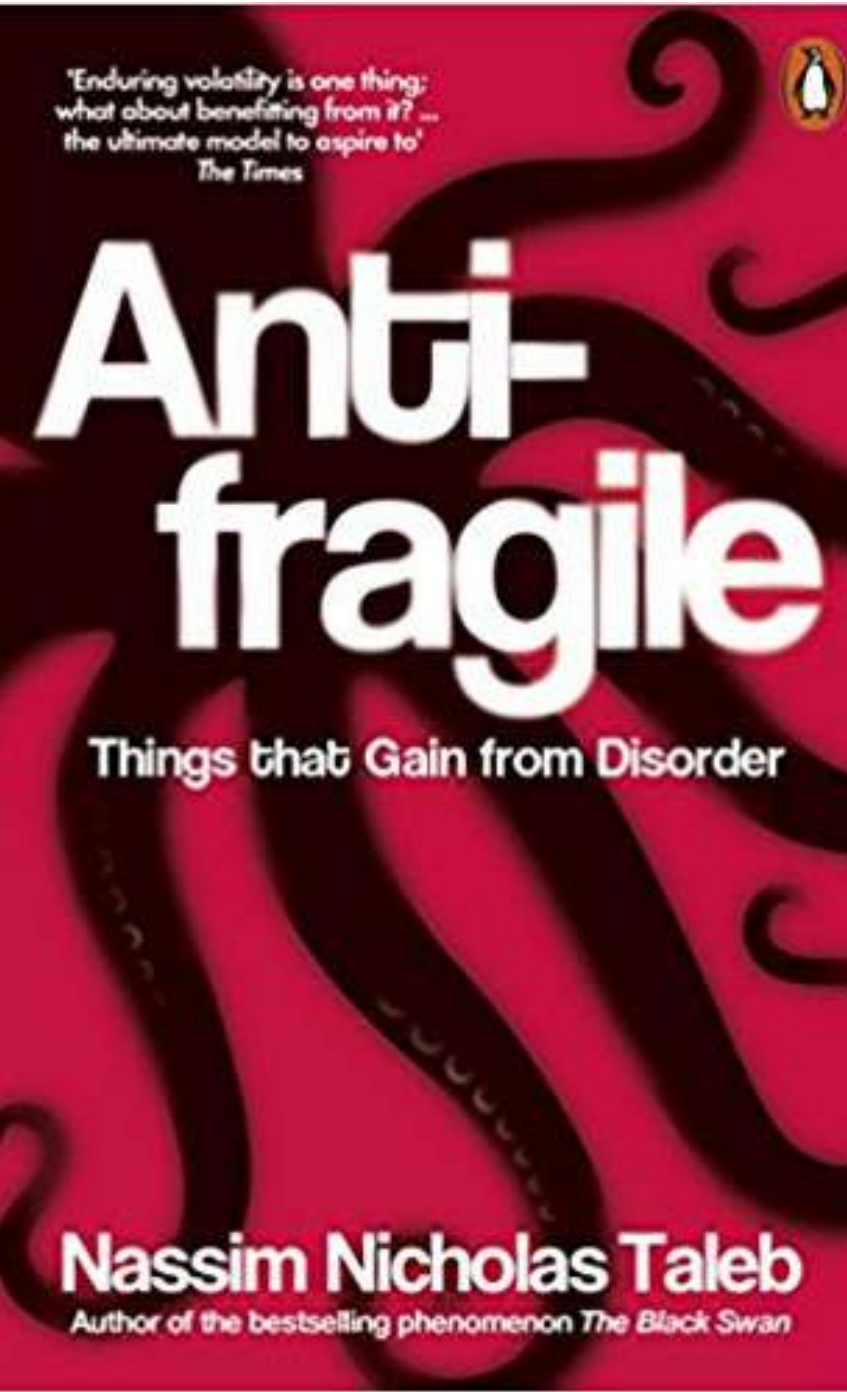
Many of the best life philosophies contained in this top 50 books, are boiled down into a short kids story by Dr Seuss:

- We're called to go on an adventure into the unknown, but the path we choose is up to us:
- It's better outside of your comfort zone: "It's opener there in the wide open air".
- Good things happen to those willing to take risks outside of their comfort zone, especially if they've developed their skills.
- Go with the flow, allow yourself to get caught up in the moment even if you're not 100% ready yet and you feel like you're biting off more than can chew: "When things start to happen, don't worry, don't stew. Just go right along – YOU'LL start happening too".
- Not everything will go your way all of the time – sometimes things just don't work out: "I'm sorry to say but, sadly, it's true that Bang Ups and Hang Ups can happen to you".
- There will be difficult and times that you can't just snap yourself out of: "When you're in a slump, you're not in for much fun. Un-Slumping yourself is not easily done".
- You will face much uncertainty along your journey: "You'll come to a place where the streets are not marked. Some windows are lighted, but mostly they're dark".
- There is a place, 'The Waiting Place', where people get trapped because they're always waiting for something and they never take any action to move forward
- You will eventually have to face your fears: "When you're alone, there's a very good chance, you'll meet things that scare you right out of your pants".
- There are many times in life where you'll feel all alone: "All Alone! Whether you like it or not, alone is something you'll be quite a lot".
- But don't let the fear and the uncertainty stop you – keep pushing on toward your goal: "On and on you will hike, and I know you'll hike far – you'll face up to your problems whatever they are"
- But give life your best shot, and you should achieve everything you want: "Will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed. (98 and $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent guaranteed)".
- You can change the world: "KID, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS".
- The best time to start was yesterday. The second best time? "You're off to Great Places! TODAY is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way!"

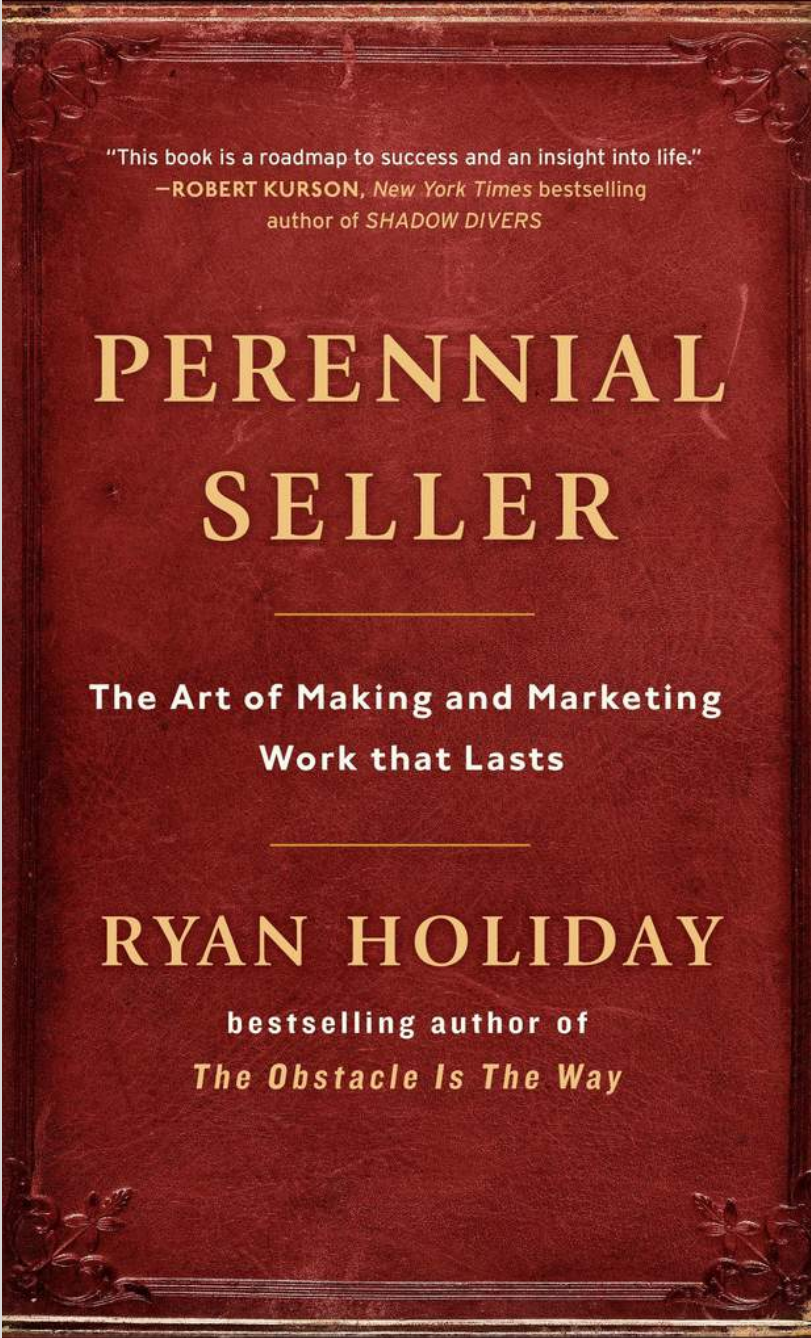
26. ANTIFRAGILE - BY NASSIM TALEB

Wind extinguishes a candle but energises fire. Likewise with randomness/uncertainty/chaos, you want to be able to use them, not to hide from them. You want to be the fire and wish for the wind. Most people think the opposite of fragile is robust, resilient or solid. But the resilient and robust are items that neither break nor improve. The opposite of fragility should be negative fragility – there is not yet a word for it, so Taleb terms it ‘Antifragility’.

The central theme of the book is antifragility, which Nassim defines as:“Some things benefit from shocks; they thrive and grow when exposed to volatility, randomness, disorder, and stressors and love adventure, risk, and uncertainty. Yet, in spite of the ubiquity of the phenomenon, there is no word for the exact opposite of fragile. Let us call it antifragile. Antifragility is beyond resilience or robustness. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better.”



25. PERENNIAL SELLER – BY RYAN HOLIDAY



Whenever we're creating something, we're walking a fine line between 'get it done' and 'get it right'. Early in your career, it may be a good strategy to 'get it done' - make a lot of stuff, make it quickly, and get it out there. But if you want something to last forever, you need to take the time to 'get it right'. You should focus on the things that will never change, make something of the absolute highest quality possible, and then do everything you can to generate word-of-mouth that will keep it moving for months, years and decades.

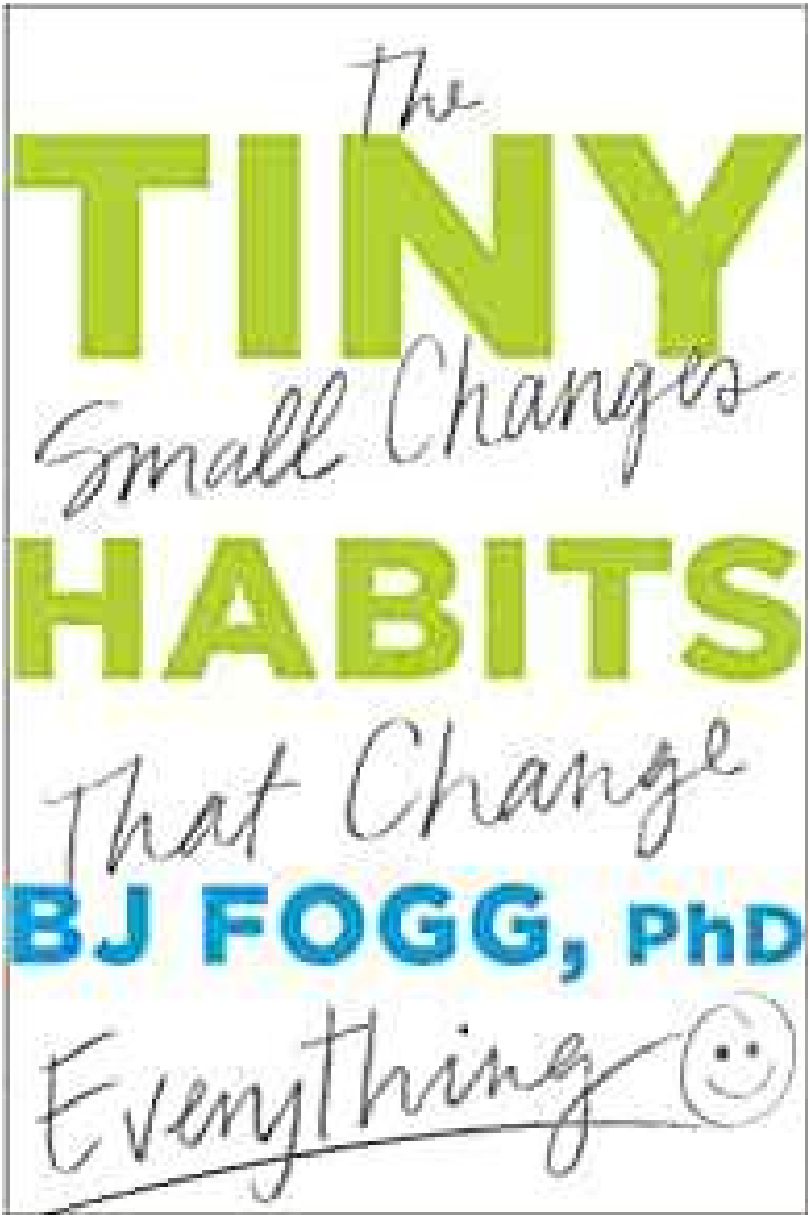
The goal of the perennial seller is to make work that lasts, but most people never give themselves a real shot at it. We focus on the immediate pay-offs and quick cash grabs instead of making something timeless. Holiday outlines the process of creating, packaging and marketing your idea in order to give it the best possible chance at becoming perennial.

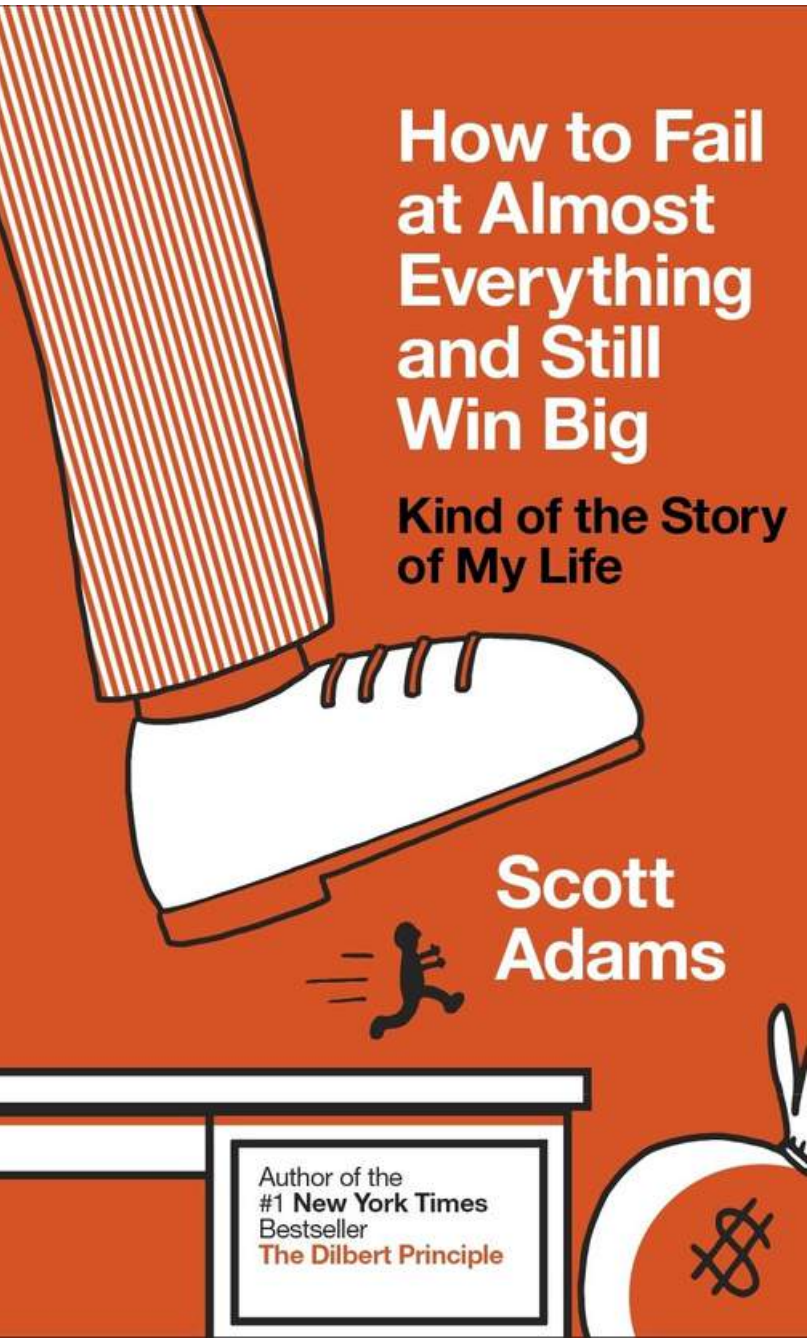
24. TINY HABITS - BY BJ FOGG

We all want some kind of change. But for most of us, there is a painful gap between what people want and what they actually do.

If you have attempted to do something different in the past and haven’t seen the results, you’ve probably figured out by now that change is hard. If you tried to put together a chest of drawers with faulty instructions and parts missing, you would feel frustrated. But you probably wouldn’t blame yourself. You would blame the manufacturer instead. Similarly, any habits you’re not happy with aren’t entirely your fault, you just haven’t yet been taught how to effectively change your behaviour.

BJ Fogg’s behaviour model boils any action down to three simple components: Motivation, Ability, Prompt. B=MAP is the combination lock to install long term habits.





23. HOW TO FAIL AT ALMOST EVERYTHING AND STILL WIN BIG - SCOTT ADAMS

Scott Adams is the creator of the ‘Dilbert’ cartoon series. Before this world-wide phenomenon though, Adams is happy to admit the looong list of things he tried (and failed at) before eventually achieving success. Each failed attempt gave him a lesson, something he could take with him and apply to the next thing he tried. Even as Dilbert was growing in success, he still worked full time for 10 years, drawing Dilbert at 5am before work.

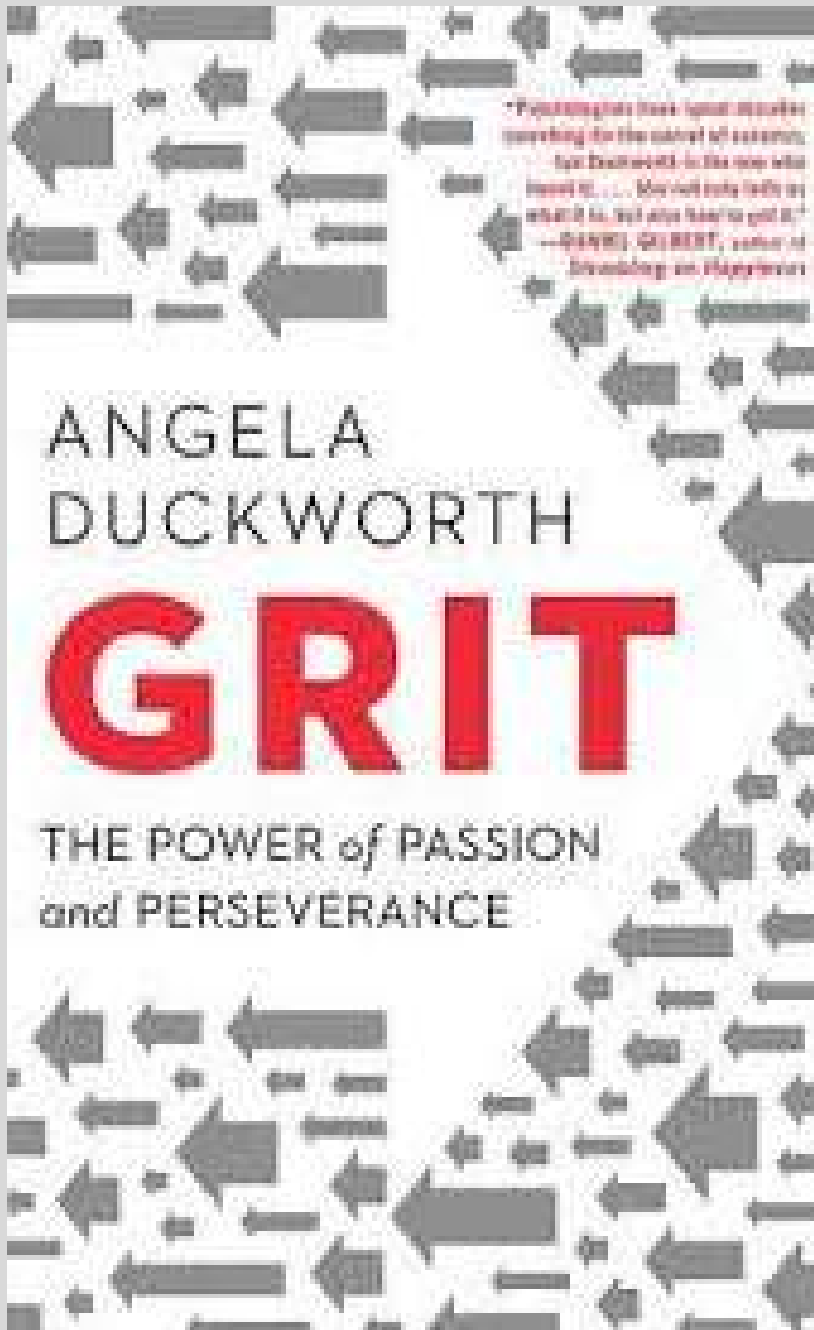
This book provides some important ideas and approaches for achieving (eventual) success. In this episode, we’ll talk about: the downside of passion, goals VS systems, managing your attitude and energy, prioritising and making decisions, and ‘skill stacking’. Check out our mini blog post for more thoughts on our five big ideas we took from this book: <https://www.whatyouwilllearn.com/book/how-to-fail-at-almost-everything-and-still-win-big/>

22. GRIT - BY ANGELA DUCKWORTH

Angela Duckworth studied successful people and found that the mega-successful weren’t the smartest, the fittest or the most talented, but the ones who had the most grit. Grit, this combination of passion and perseverance, turned out to be the strongest indicator and predicator of eventual success.

The good news? Even if you score pretty poorly on the Grit Assessment (like we both did), you can grow your Grit. Through interest, purpose, practice and hope, you can actually improve your grit score and learn to achieve more.

Take Angela Duckworth’s Grit Assessment by following the link on our blog post: <https://www.whatyouwilllearn.com/book/grit/>

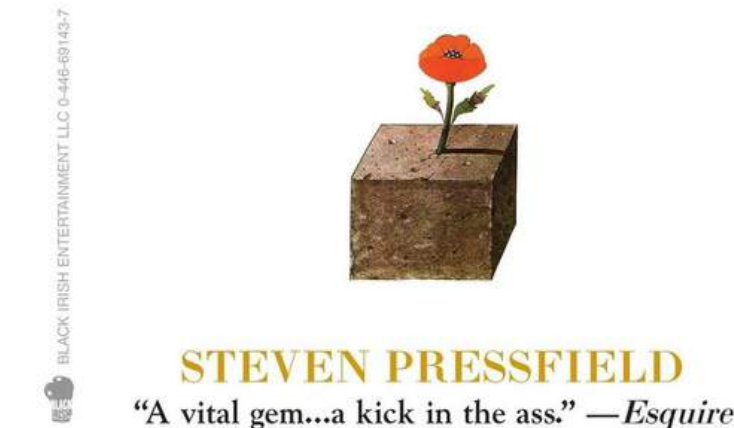


21. THE WAR OF ART – BY STEPHEN PRESSFIELD

If you're looking to achieve anything, especially something creative, you almost definitely have the skills and abilities to be able to do it. For example, if you want to be a writer, based on the fact that you're reading this, you have the ability to read and write. But being able to write isn't the be-all-and-end-all of actually writing a book.

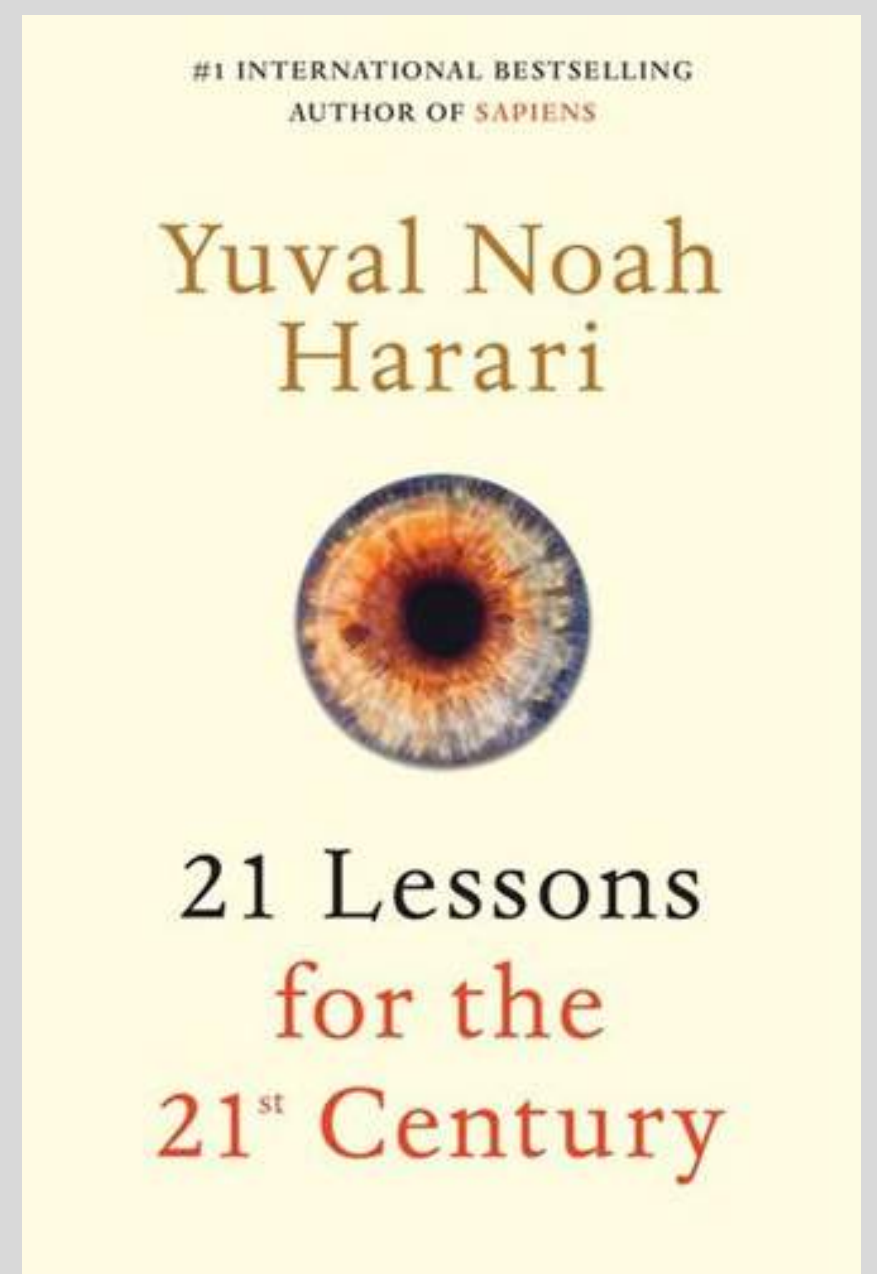
"There's a secret that real writers know that wannabe writers don't... It's not the writing part that's hard. What's hard is sitting down to write."

What keeps us from sitting down to write? The Resistance. This book is all about The Resistance, and is broken into three parts: Defining the Enemy, Combatting Resistance, The Higher Realm. For anyone who wants to pursue a creative endeavour but has never been able to actually sit down and do the work, this serves as a great kick in the arse.



20. 21 LESSONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY - BY YUVAL NOAH HARARI

“Questions you cannot answer are usually far better for you than answers you cannot question.”



This is Harari's third book; his book 'Sapiens' was about the past, 'Homo Deus' is about the future, now '21 Lessons for the 21st Century' is about our present. He asks the hard questions and gets us thinking about what our world should look like. We're at a pivotal point in history, and we've all got some important decisions to make.

DISILLUSIONMENT

Humans think in stories, rather than numbers facts or equations. In the 20th Century, we had a few major stories to choose from - the fascist, communist or liberal stories. After a bunch of wars, we were left with one - capitalism. But that system requires exponential growth on a finite planet, and with the shortcomings that came to light during the GFC, we are losing faith in this final story. Without a story that binds us together, we're left disillusioned.

WORK

"When you grow up, you might not have a job". During the Industrial Revolution, many jobs were lost to the machine. But for each one that was lost, another was created. Today, we're undergoing another revolution, but this time it's different. Our two human abilities are cognitive and physical - machines have taken over the physical tasks, and with modern AI on the verge of outperforming us in the cognitive arena, we are losing our advantage over the robots.

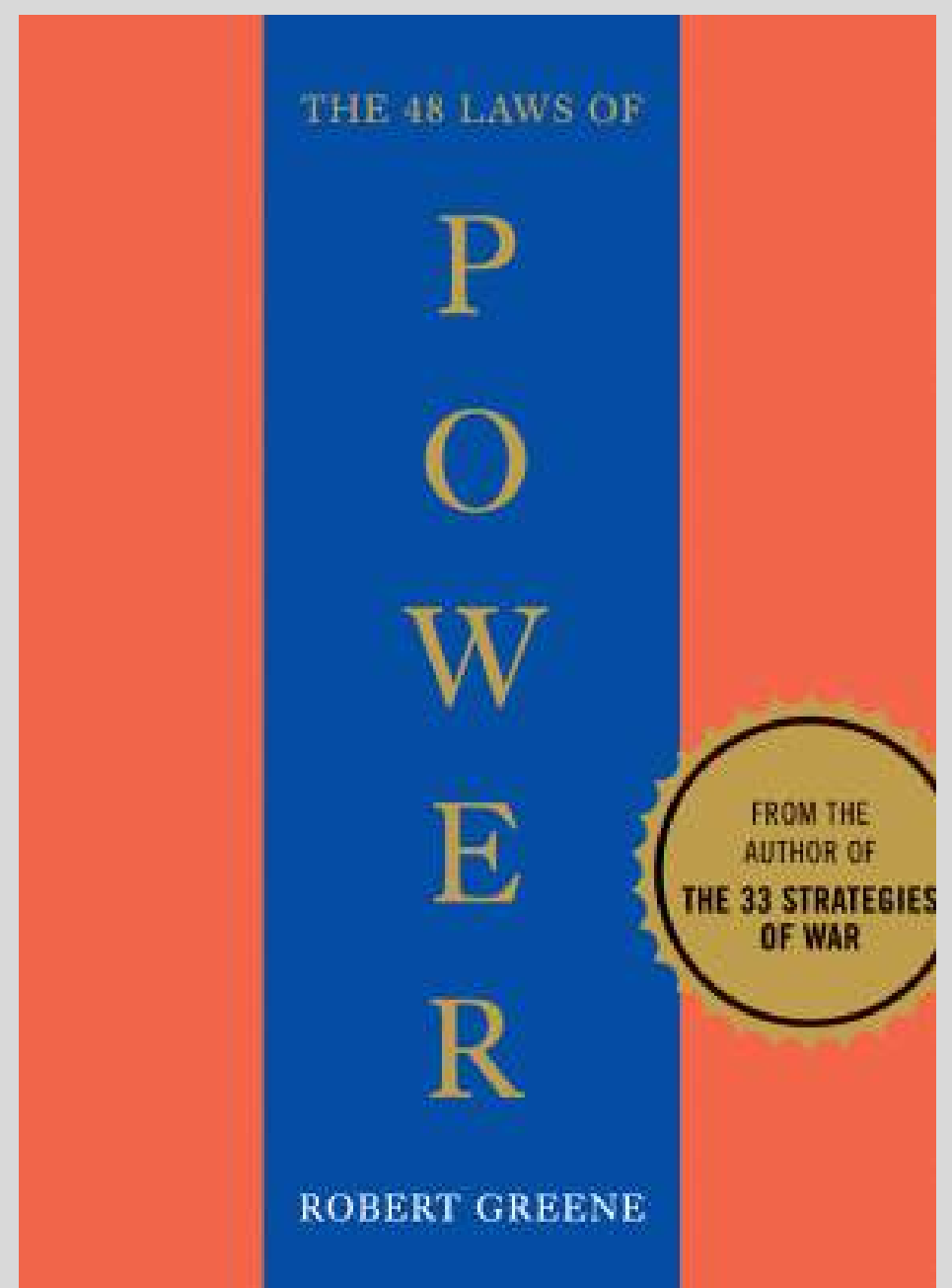
MEANING

In our search for the meaning of life, we want a story that will explain what the reality is all about, and what our particular role in the cosmic drama might be. In order to construct a viable identity, the story doesn't need to be devoid of blind spots and contradictions. It just needs to give you a role to play, and extend beyond your own horizons. Nothing much remains of your great grandmother - no cultural creation, poem, diary or even a grocery list... and it will probably be the same for you. If you cannot leave something tangible behind, then perhaps it's enough to just make the world a little better?

Yuval's ponderings and insights that could change how you see the world.

19. THE 48 LAWS OF POWER - BY ROBERT GREENE

“Do not leave your reputation to chance or gossip; it is your life's artwork, and you must craft it, hone it, and display it with the care of an artist.”



This is an absolute bible for socially and politically navigating the world of relationships. In every single interaction, one individual will have more power and more status, and the other will have less. Be that in your work, business, romance, friendships, family, or otherwise, this book will show you're the 'dos and donts'. You can read this book to best suit you: you can use it to help you in situations when you have less power, it can help you get more power, or it can help you use your power on others.

Warning: Proceed with caution. This is a powerful book with powerful laws – ignore them at your peril.

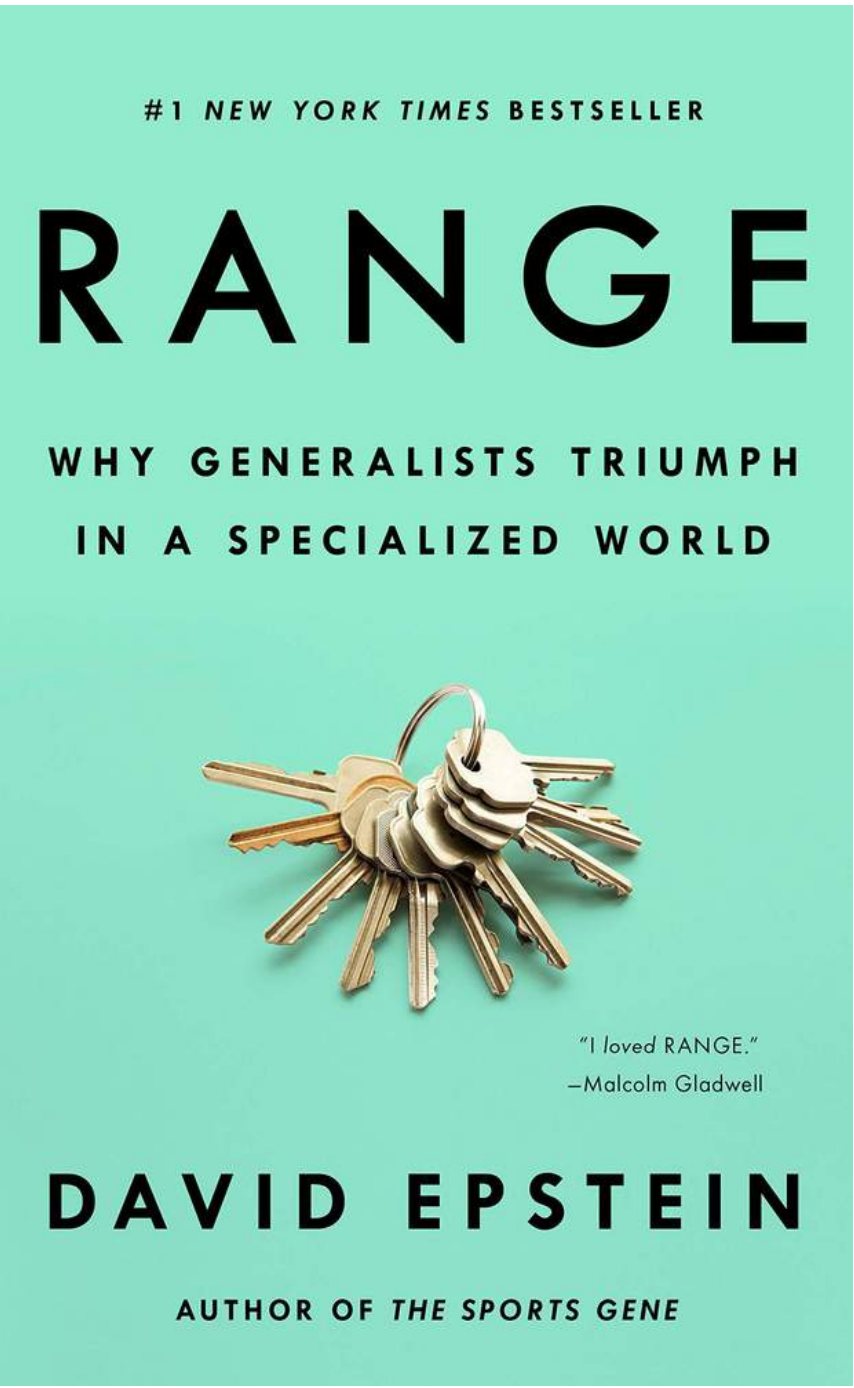
Law 1 – Never Outshine The Master. "Always make those above you feel comfortably secure. In your desire to please or impress them, do not go too far in displaying your talents or you might accomplish the opposite".

Law 4 – Always say less than necessary. "The more you say, the more common you appear, and the less in control... Powerful people impress and intimidate by saying less".

Law 9 – Win through your actions, never through argument. "Any momentary triumph you think you have gained through argument is really a Pyrrhic victory: the resentment and ill will you stir up is stronger than any momentary change of opinion".

Law 13 – When asking for help, appeal to people's self-interest, never to their mercy or gratitude. "Uncover something in your request, or in your alliance, that will benefit them, and emphasise it out of all proportion".

Law 46 – Never appear too perfect. "Appearing better than others is always dangerous, but most dangerous of all is to appear to have no faults or weaknesses".



18. RANGE - BY DAVID EPSTEIN

There are two paths to success. One is ‘specialisation’: committing to a field early, getting a head start on your peers, rigorous deliberate practice, refining a narrow focus on specific skills.

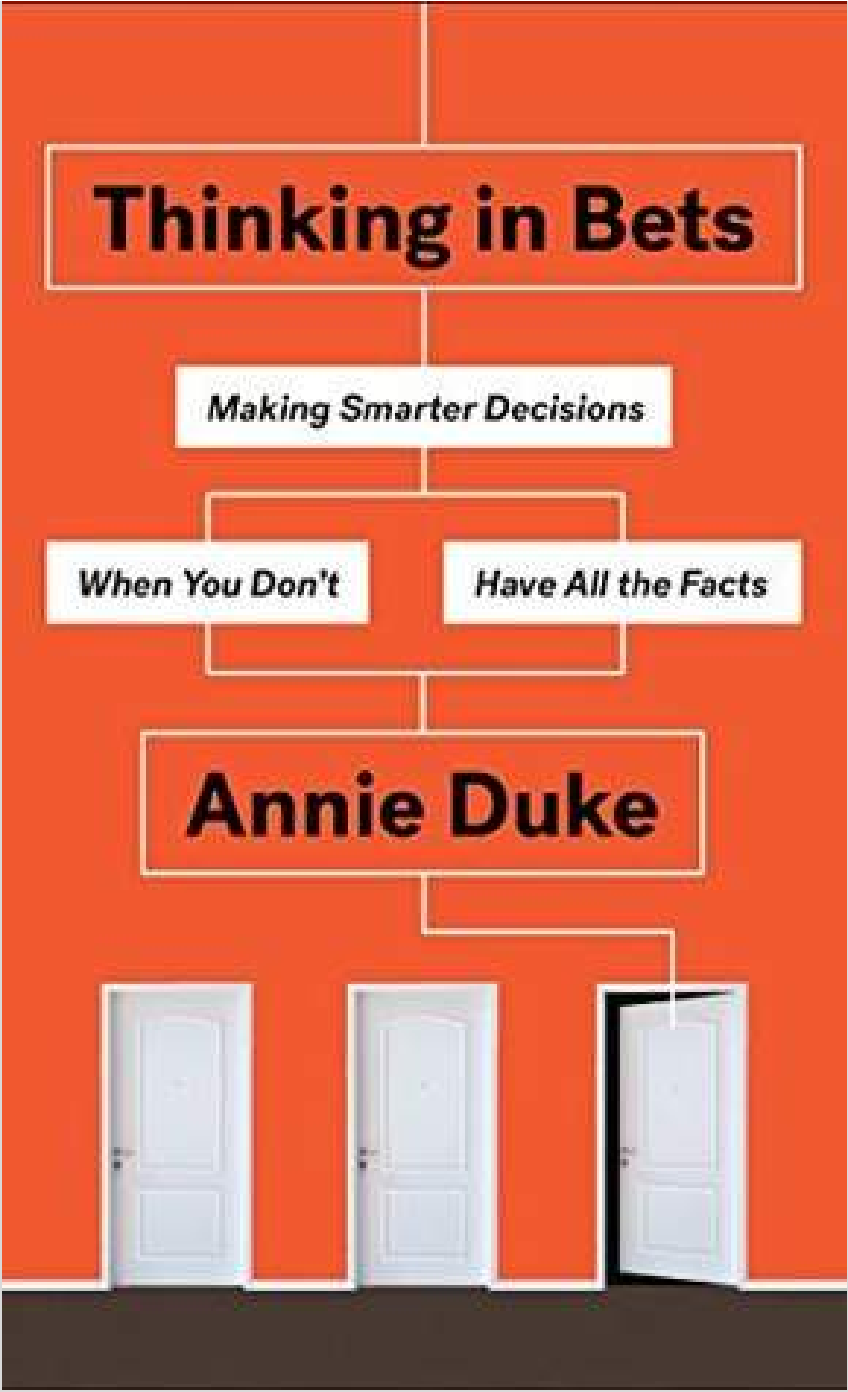
This approach is popularised in many books and many biographies. The other approach is ‘generalisation’. This means going wide not deep, going through an early ‘sampling period’ where you test a lot of different potential paths forward, then recognising that switching careers later in life isn’t career suicide but you can actually combine different ideas from different fields to get an advantage.

If you’ve been following a path of generalisation, don’t stress about being behind your specialising peers. In the long run, you can overtake them!

17. THINKING IN BETS - BY ANNIE DUKE

Overall, we’re really bad at making decisions. The worst part about that is the fact that we don’t know that we’re bad at making decisions. This book presents the idea that every decision we have to make should be framed as a ‘bet’. If we confidently made a statement and someone asked us ‘Wanna bet?’, we’d quickly search our memories for information to either support or contradict that point of view. Instead of being completely certain, now we’re maybe only 70% sure. But often, we don’t have to make a bet, so we’re confidently wrong.

In this book, former poker pro Annie Duke talks about things that are otherwise invisible to us when it comes to decision making, things like “resulting” where we judge the quality of the decision based on the quality of the outcome (but instead we should look at the decision in isolation) and “hindsight bias” where after something happens it seems like it was always inevitable (we neglect other plausible outcomes when we look back). This is a great book to understand why our decision making is flawed and provides tools for better assessing possibilities.



16. ORIGINALS - BY ADAM GRANT

There are two paths to success: be a conformist or be an original. Both can lead to eventual success, but that success is very different, takes a different amount of time and each require a different approach to life. This book is all about how everyone can be more creative and bring new ideas to the table by being an ‘original’.

The book breaks down some of history’s greatest successful ‘originals’ and talks about how they were able to achieve their big success. Surprisingly, we learnt that some of the greatest leaders weren’t the bold, courageous, confident risk-takers we’ve imagined them to be, but in fact required the coaxing or the push from others to put their butts on the line. We also learned that some of history’s greatest artists with the most famous works of art (Shakespeare, Picasso, Mozart, etc) also made a lot of crap that isn’t worth mentioning.

This book is about giving you the tools and the attitudes you need to have better ideas, and also guide you in how you should share these ideas with the skeptical masses and how you can manage your enthusiasm when things aren’t going in your favour at first.

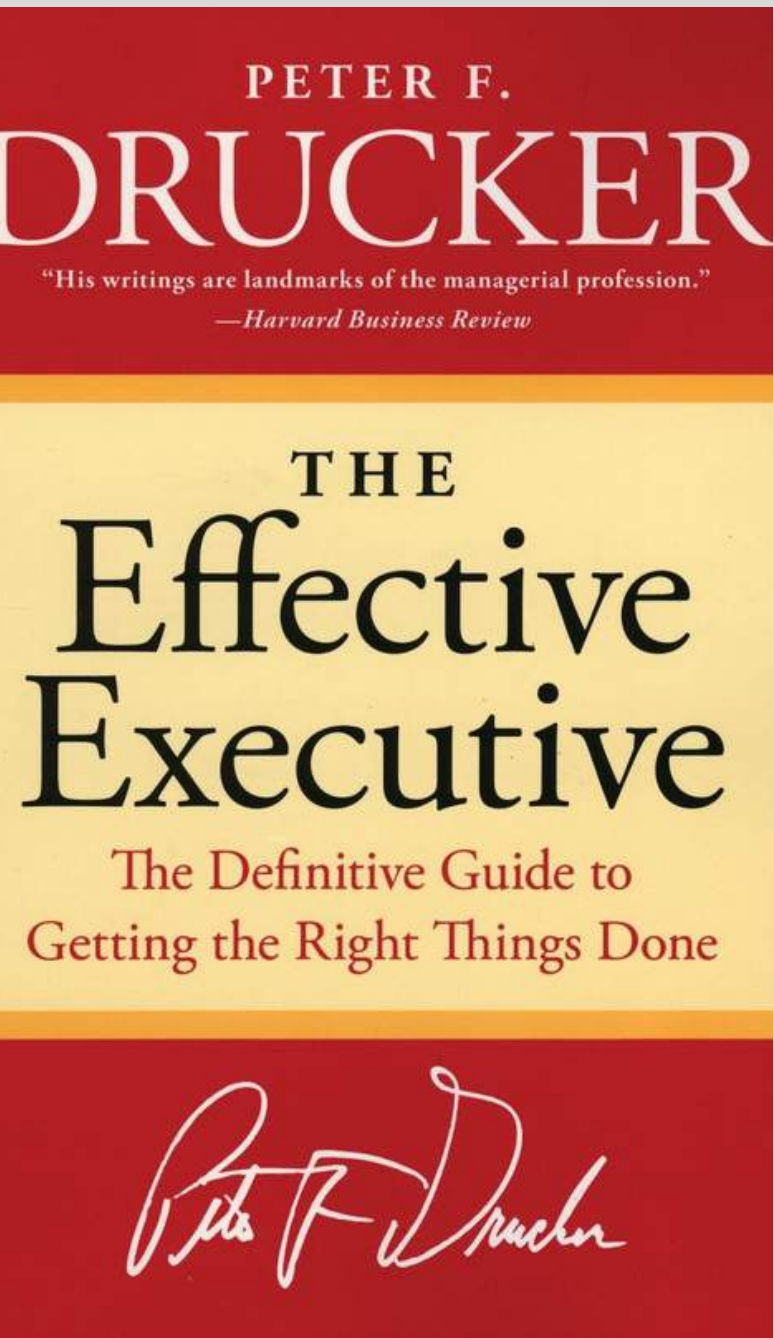
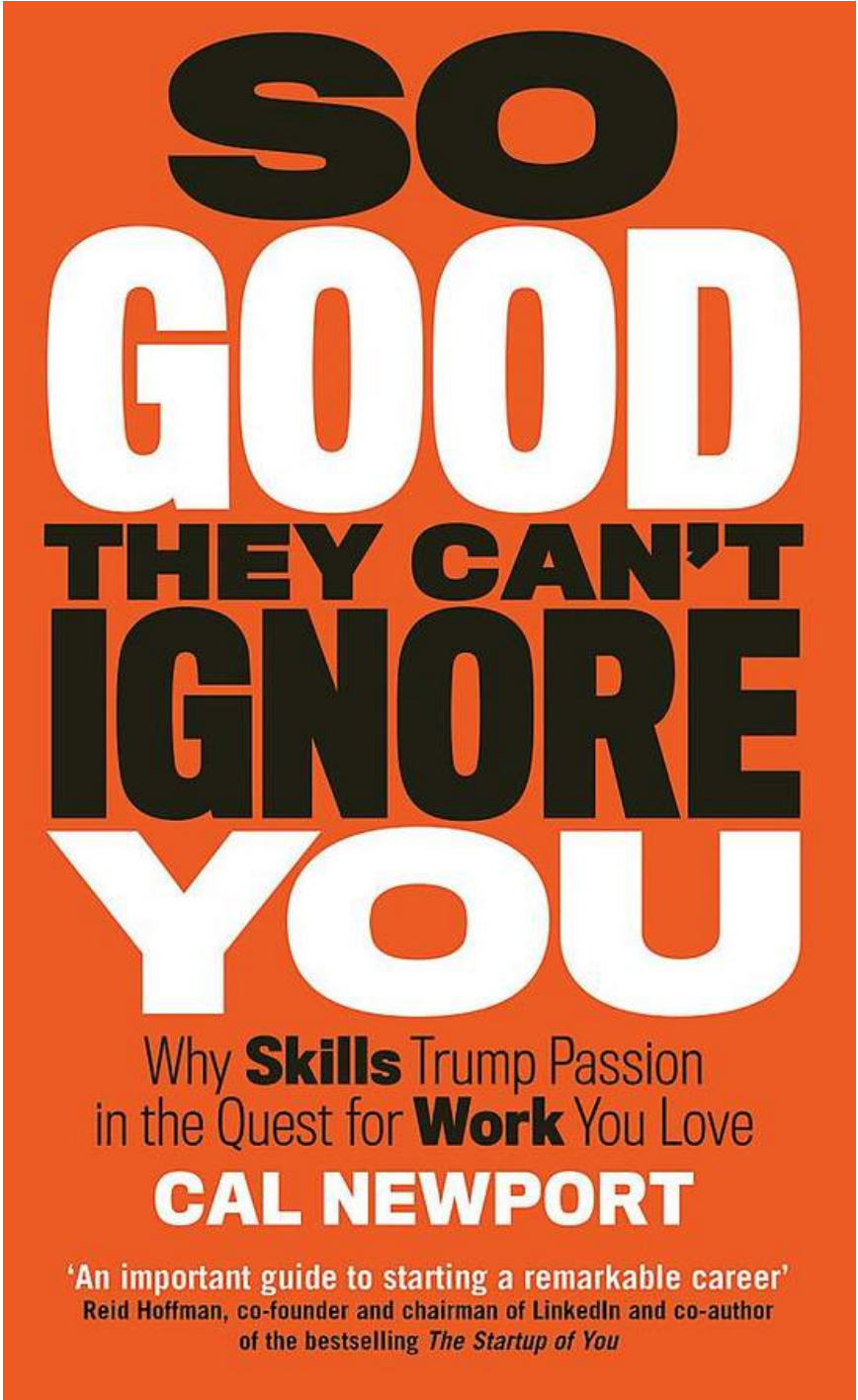
15. SO GOOD THEY CAN'T IGNORE YOU - BY CAL NEWPORT

According to Cal Newport, the common saying of 'follow your passion' and 'do what you love' is bad advice, and can even be dangerous. He tells the story of Thomas who quit his corporate job to become a Buddhist monk, or Fleur who left her job as a marketing executive to become a yoga instructor, under the guise that they were 'following their dreams'. This is a fatal mistake.

There are two possible mindsets you can adopt in your career:

Craftsmen mindset - focus on what you can offer the world
Passion mindset - focus on what the world can offer you

Adopting the passion mindset means you'll always be hyperaware of everything that's wrong with your job, but the craftsman mindset puts fate in your own hands. You need to undertake deliberate practice to continuously stretch and grow, building career capital along the way, and eventually you will 'become so good they can't ignore you'.



14. THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE - BY PETER DRUCKER

Every organisation has people who rush around in a frenzy of busyness. But there is nothing less pleasing, and less productive than engineers who rapidly turn out beautiful blueprints of the wrong product.

For manual work with clearly defined tasks, you only need efficiency to do things right. However, today it is more important for the knowledge worker to get the right things done and be effective. Intelligence, imagination and knowledge are essential resources, but it is only effectiveness that converts them into results. Knowledge work is not defined by quantity, only by results. Effectiveness is not a trait you are born with, it is something that must be learned.

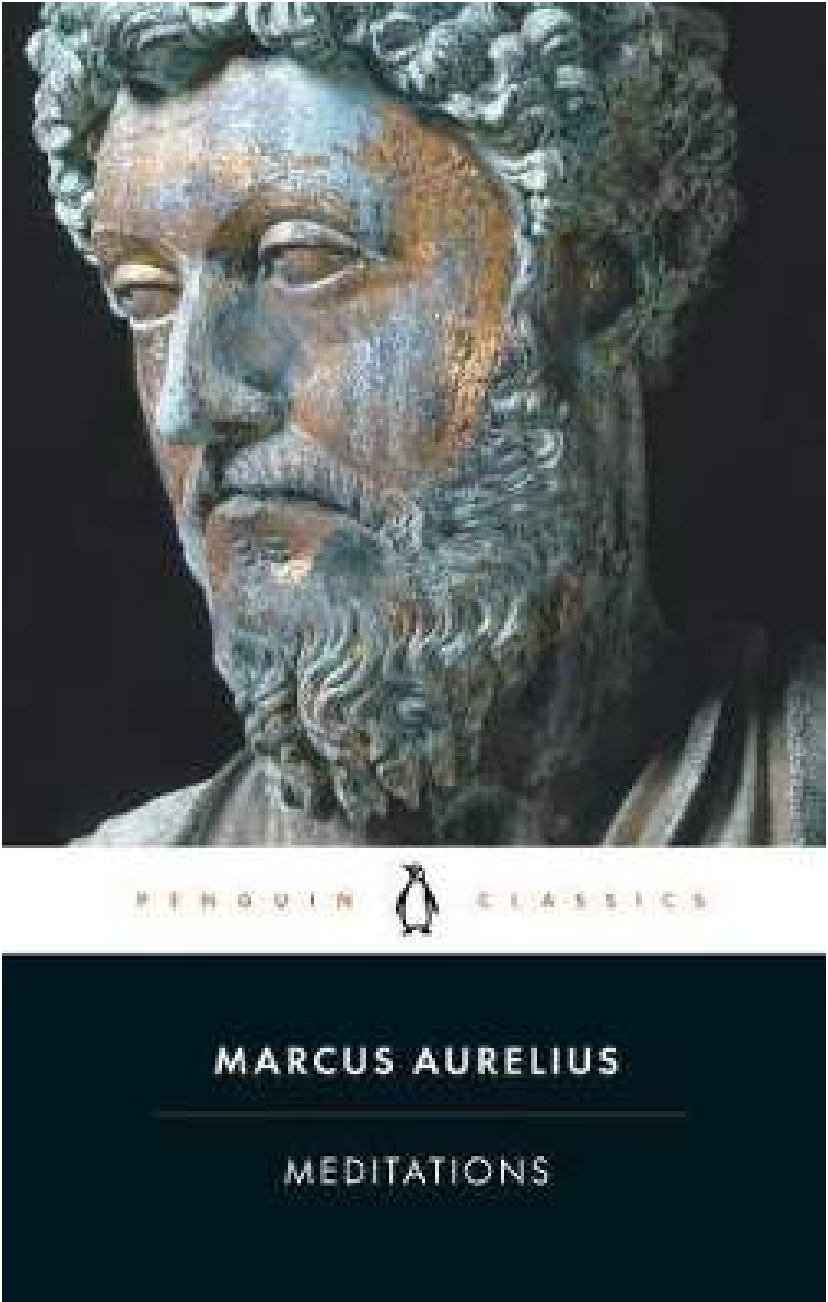
Drucker shows us a framework for becoming effective, through five essential habits: Know thy time, focus on contribution, make strength productive, put first things first and make effective decisions.

13. MEDITATIONS - BY MARCUS AURELIUS

Originally written as a diary almost 2000 years ago, the struggles people faced then are almost identical to the ones we are facing today. This is one of the core books of stoic philosophy.

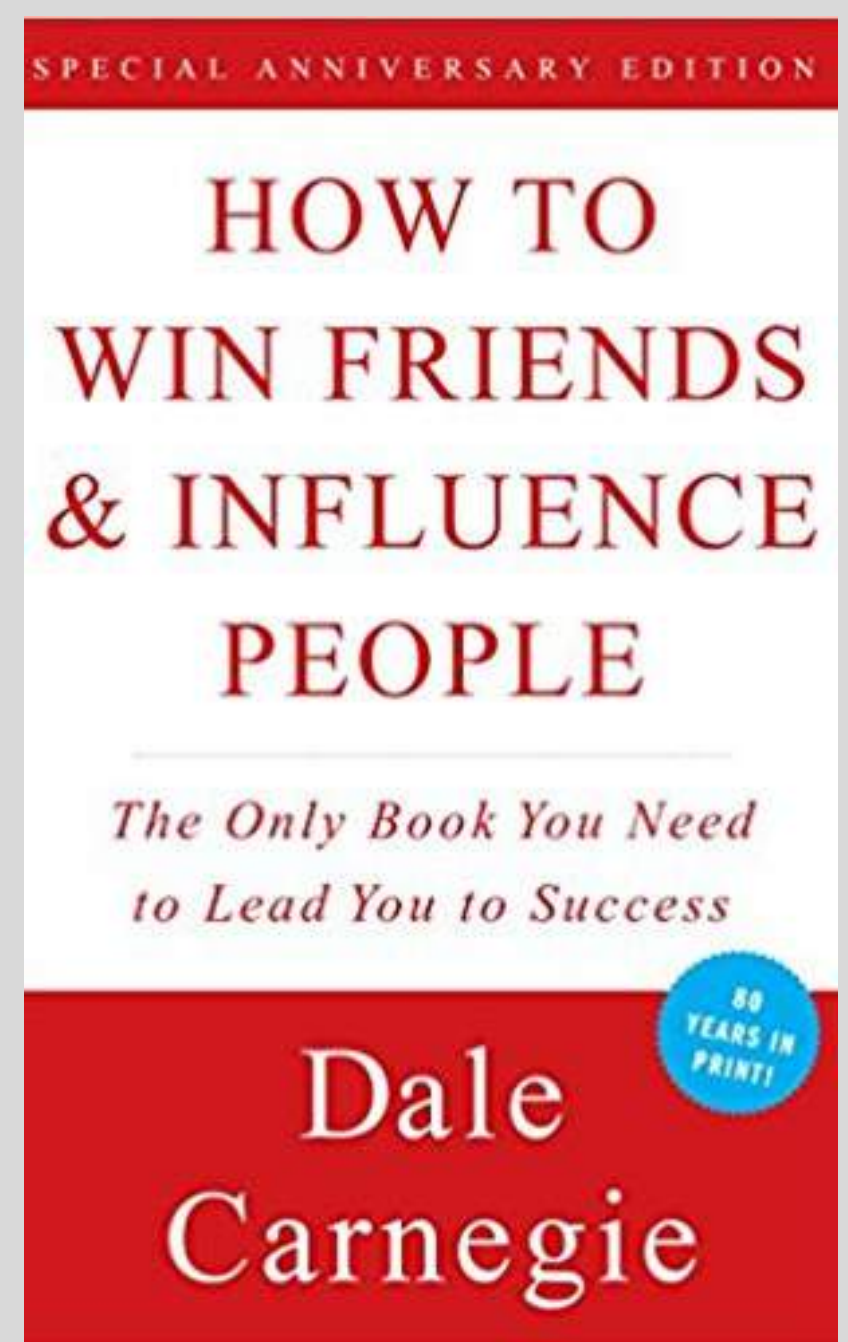
Some of the key themes include: differentiating between the things you can control and the things you can't, responsibility and taking ownership, being indifferent toward things like death and change, and living in the present instead of the past or the future.

If you want to buy this book, make sure you get the right version (Jonesy got the wrong one - some of the other translations are harder to understand). Grab the version we recommend by clicking on the book cover - this one is the best we've found that mixes the true essence of Marcus's sentiments with modern day understandable language.



12. HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE – BY DALE CARNEGIE

“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you”



"With over 30 MILLION copies sold worldwide, this is one of the best selling books of all time. And rightfully so! Written in 1934, the principles of interpersonal relationships stand the test of time.

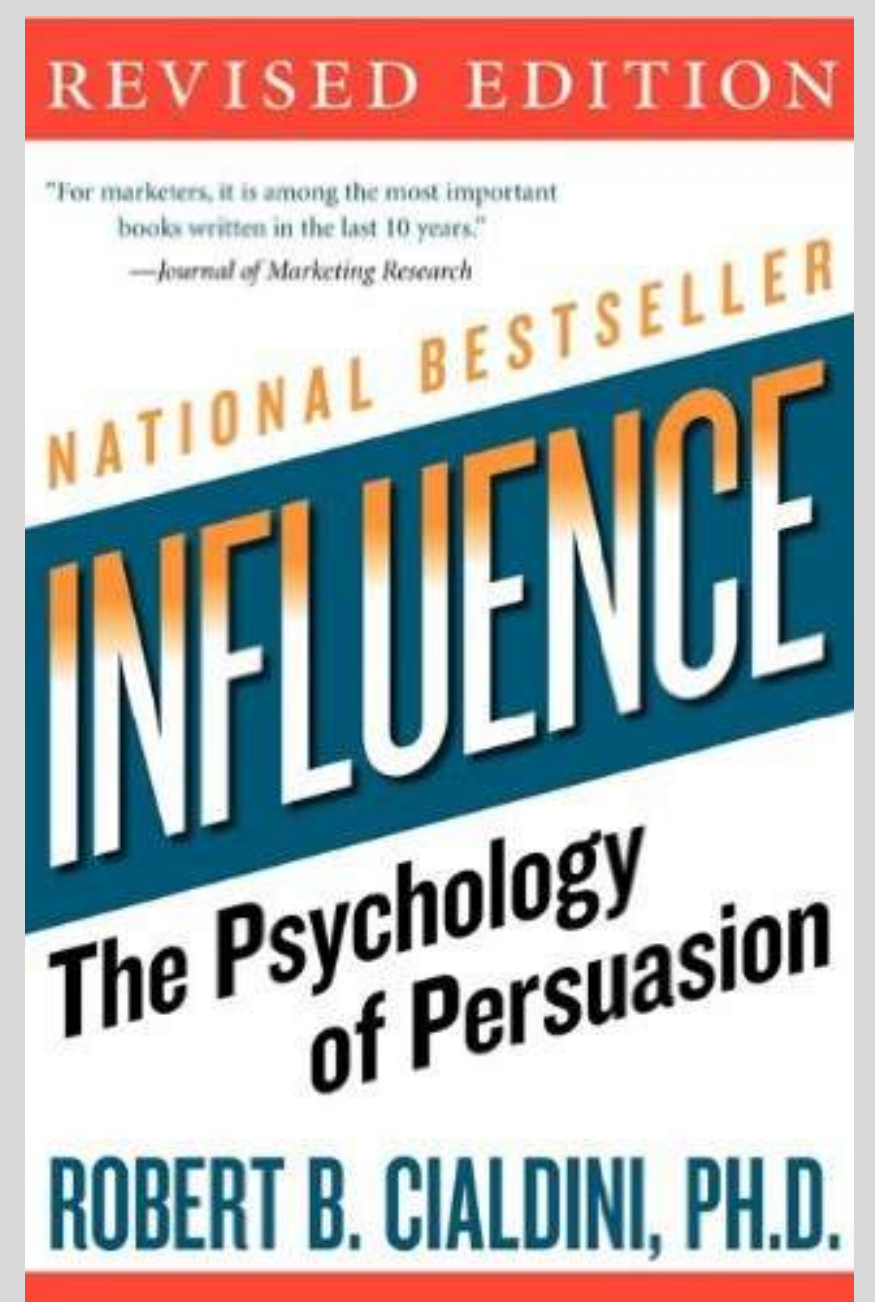
Take a look at some of our favourite sections of the table of contents:

- 1) Fundamental techniques for handling people
 - Don't criticise, condemn or complain
 - Give honest and sincere appreciation
- 2) Six ways to make people like you
 - Become genuinely interested in other people
 - Be a good listener
 - Make the other person feel important - and do it sincerely
- 3) Twelve ways to win people to your side of thinking
 - Show respect for the other person's opinion
 - If you're wrong, admit it quickly and empathetically
 - Let the other person feel the idea is theirs
 - Start with questions to which the other person will say yes
- 4) Be a leader: How to change people without arousing resentment
 - Begin with praise and honest appreciation
 - Talk about your own mistakes before criticising the other person
 - Let the other person save face
 - Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to

This is a must-read if you have any relationships at any level with any other humans. A lot of the concepts are common sense, but that's the beauty of it: we already KNOW all of these things, we just need to be reminded of the best way to bring them all together. Yes, these techniques have been adopted by con-artists and slimy salespeople, but we trust that you'll use them for good, not evil.

11. INFLUENCE – BY ROBERT CIALDINI

“We all fool ourselves from time to time in order to keep our thoughts and beliefs consistent with what we have already done or decided”



Most people believe that they are incapable of torturing another human being. But Stanley Milgram conducted an experiment at Yale that concluded that we could all perform heinous acts, under the right circumstances. Experiment subjects were found to willfully electrocute someone who made a mistake, and ramped up the power of the electric shock to dangerous levels – even whilst the victim was screaming for mercy, they kept the shock going if they were instructed to do so by a scientist in a lab coat. They were fooled by a weapon of influence and persuasion, as in Cialdini's masterpiece, Influence.

1) Reciprocity – We repay in kind any favours we receive. Whenever someone gives us a gift or does something for us, even if we didn't ask for it or want it, our brain subconsciously registers an unpaid debt.

2) Consistency & Commitment – We like to appear consistent with what we say or what we've done in the past. Once we have made some kind of visible public commitment, we feel compelled to follow through. We encounter internal pressure to justify any previous decisions we've made by being congruent.

3) Social Proof – In times of uncertainty, we generally look to what others are doing. We assume that if a large number of people are doing something, we should do it too. This is a mental shortcut – by following others, we don't need to place too much cognitive load of making a decision ourselves.

4) Liking – We do things for people we like. If we think that we like them, we seem to attribute them with many other good traits. We also tend to like people who we think are most similar to us.

5) Authority – When someone has perceived authority, we take their requests more seriously. This is inherent in family structures, stories, songs, and is carried through the education, legal, military and political systems we live within. Small things, like a lab coat or a suit and tie, give an aura of authority.

6) Scarcity – We value things that are unavailable, or that we fear may become unavailable in the near future. Much of today's advertising and sales tactics are based on creating a false sense of urgency and scarcity.

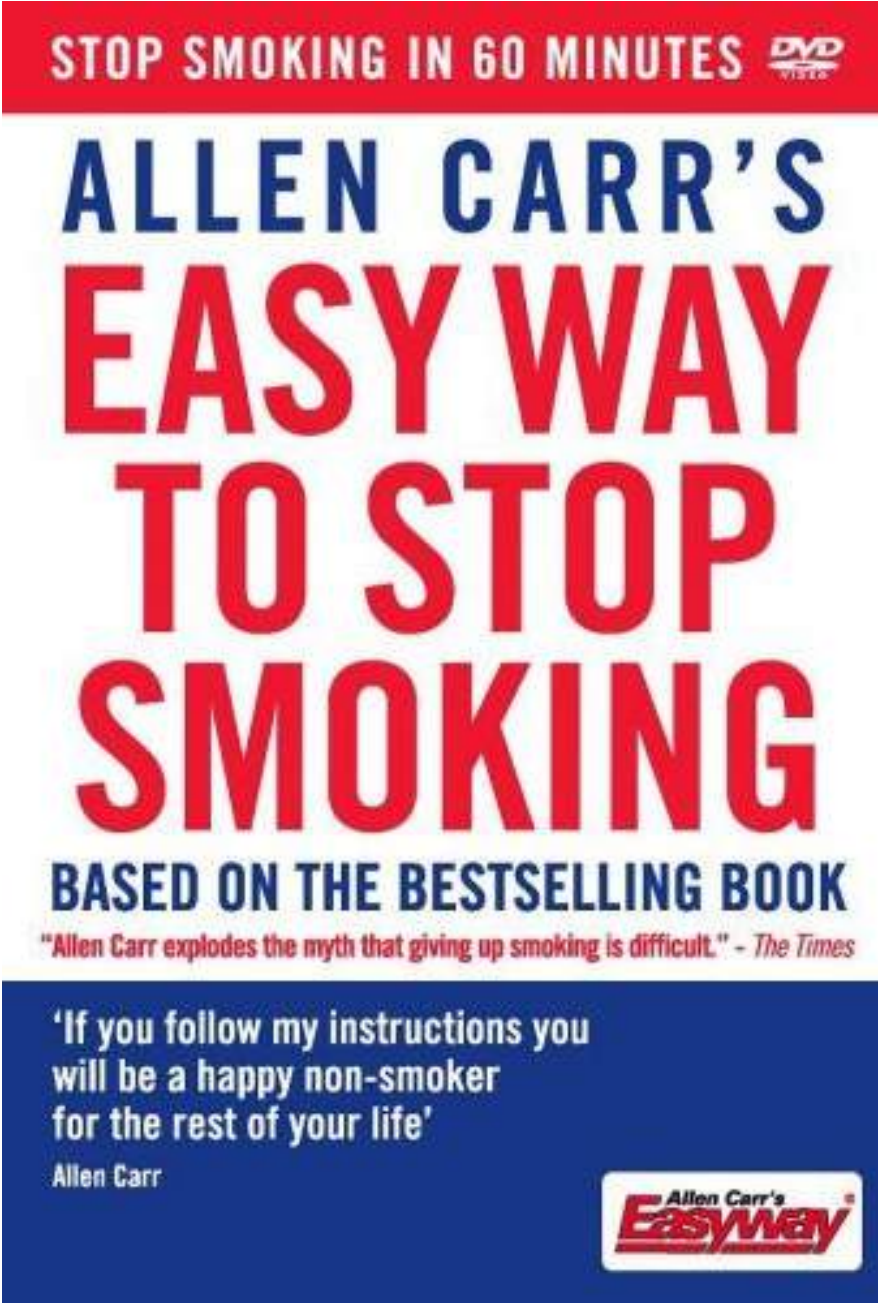
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Conditions are never perfect. "Someday" is a disease that will take your dreams to the grave with you. Pro and con lists are just as bad. If it's important to you and you want to do it "eventually," just do it and correct course along the way.

”



**Tim Ferris,
4 Hour
Work
Week**



10. THE EASY WAY TO STOP SMOKING - BY ALLEN CARR

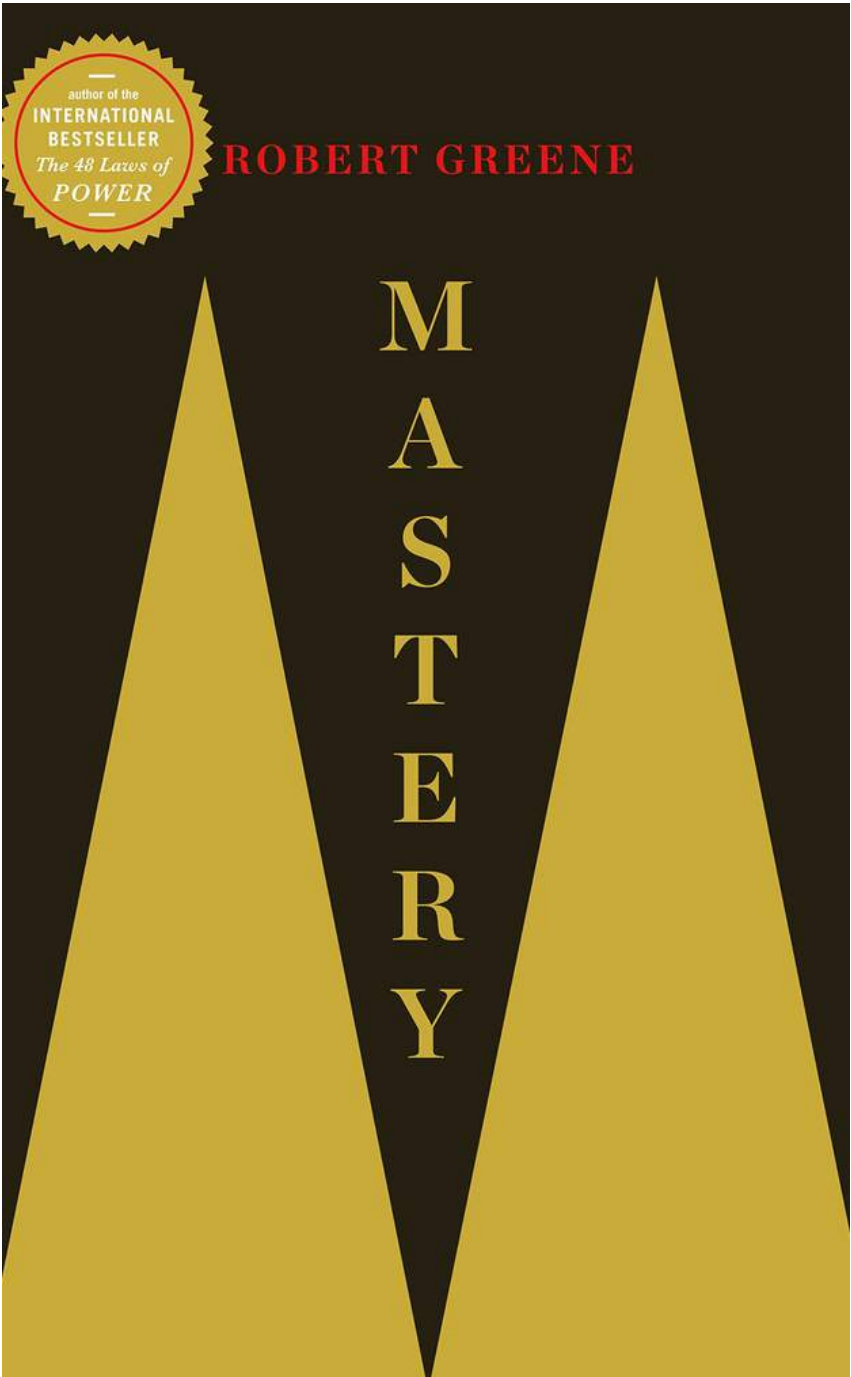
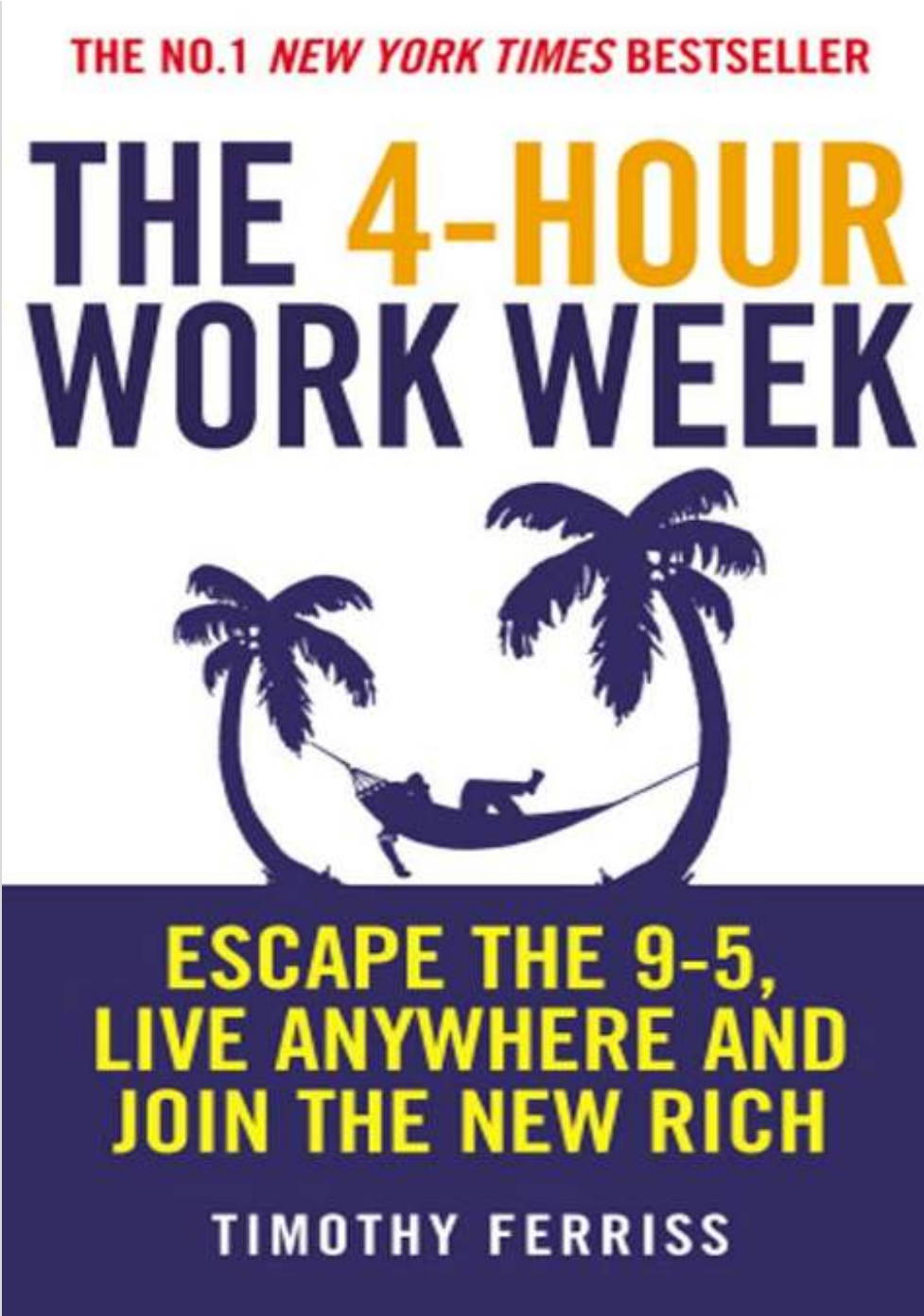
If you told a lifelong smoker that quitting was not only easy but also enjoyable, they would probably recommend you get a serious psychiatric assessment as they see it as 'impossible'. But 'The Easy Way To Stop Smoking' has an almost spooky ability to make readers become a non-smoker, and has turned millions of smokers into ex-smokers.

Most attempts to beat the nicotine trap involve 'giving up cold turkey', gradually cutting down, or replacing cigarettes with nicotine gum or patches. All of these methods have one underlying theme in common, that 'giving up' involves a genuine sacrifice. Throughout the book, Carr obliterates all of the constructed reasons and fake excuses smokers use to justify their behaviour, like 'we enjoy it', for boredom or it helps you relax. He will show that you are really 'giving up' nothing, but instead freeing yourself from lifelong slavery.

9. THE FOUR HOUR WORK WEEK - BY TIM FERRISS

The traditional path involves generally involves working hard doing something that you don't necessarily like, putting money aside every month and then finally doing what you enjoy when you retire. But why not just choose what you want to do in the first place? Then you'd never have to 'retire'.

Tim Ferriss burst onto the scene by presenting a whole new way of life – what he termed 'lifestyle design'. He says that waiting for retirement isn't wise and instead we need to become responsible our own income and enjoy our life NOW. If you really want to live in your own terms, then passive income is the goal. Ferriss gives practical advice on how to avoid the trap of trading time for money, outsourcing life to virtual assistants, setting up a business independent of you and eliminating busy work from your life. The book is a must read for anyone who is a little unsure of the traditional path.

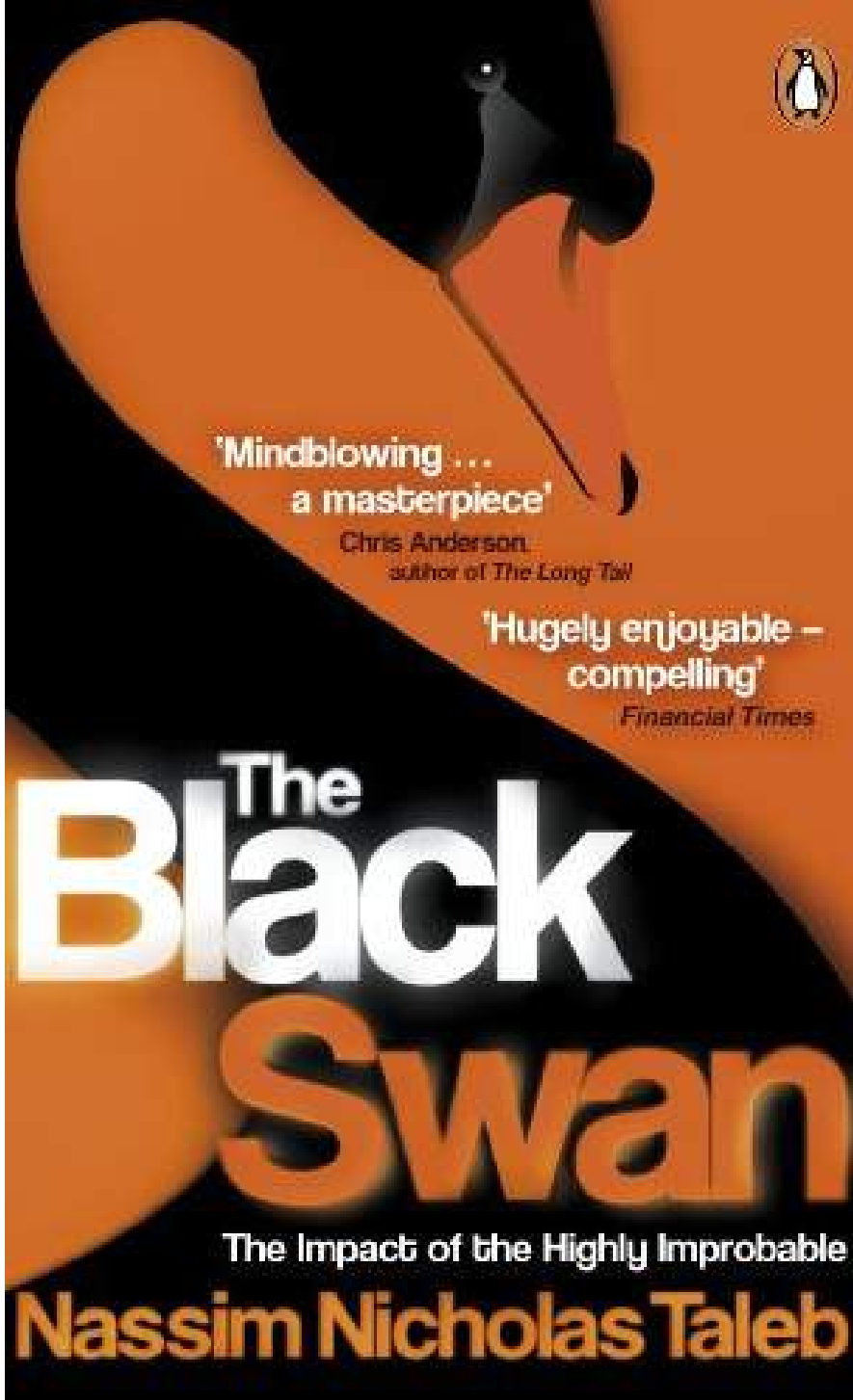


8. MASTERY - BY ROBERT GREENE

All of us are born with an essentially similar brain, with more or less the same configuration and potential for mastery. Why is it then that in history only a limited number of people seem to truly excel and realise this potential power? Think about Mozart, Elon Musk, Michael Jordan and Oprah Winfrey - what is the difference between you and them?

We are a one time phenomenon in the universe - our exact genetic makeup has never occurred before nor will it ever be repeated. At your birth a seed is planted, that is your uniqueness. In Mastery, Robert Greene shows us how to cultivate this seed and let it blossom into the greatest version of our potential. We need to be careful of the conspiring against us; such as the social pressures to conform which pose the biggest risk for our development towards Mastery.

7. THE BLACK SWAN - BY NICHOLAS NASSIM TALEB



Before the discovery of Australia, the common understanding was that 'all swans are white'. All it took was the sighting of a single swan that was black and all previously held assumptions were shattered. Taleb uses this analogy to shows us that Black Swans are everywhere - they're highly improbable, random events that can have enormous impacts.

If we asked you in 2019 what the most impactful technologies today are, you'd probably mention computers, lasers and the internet. 30 years ago, you could not have predicted these, yet they have changed the world beyond comprehension. These technologies are Black Swans. In a similar way, 30 years from now it will be Black Swans that impact the world - right now they are inconceivable, but in the future we'll look back and think it was completely obvious.

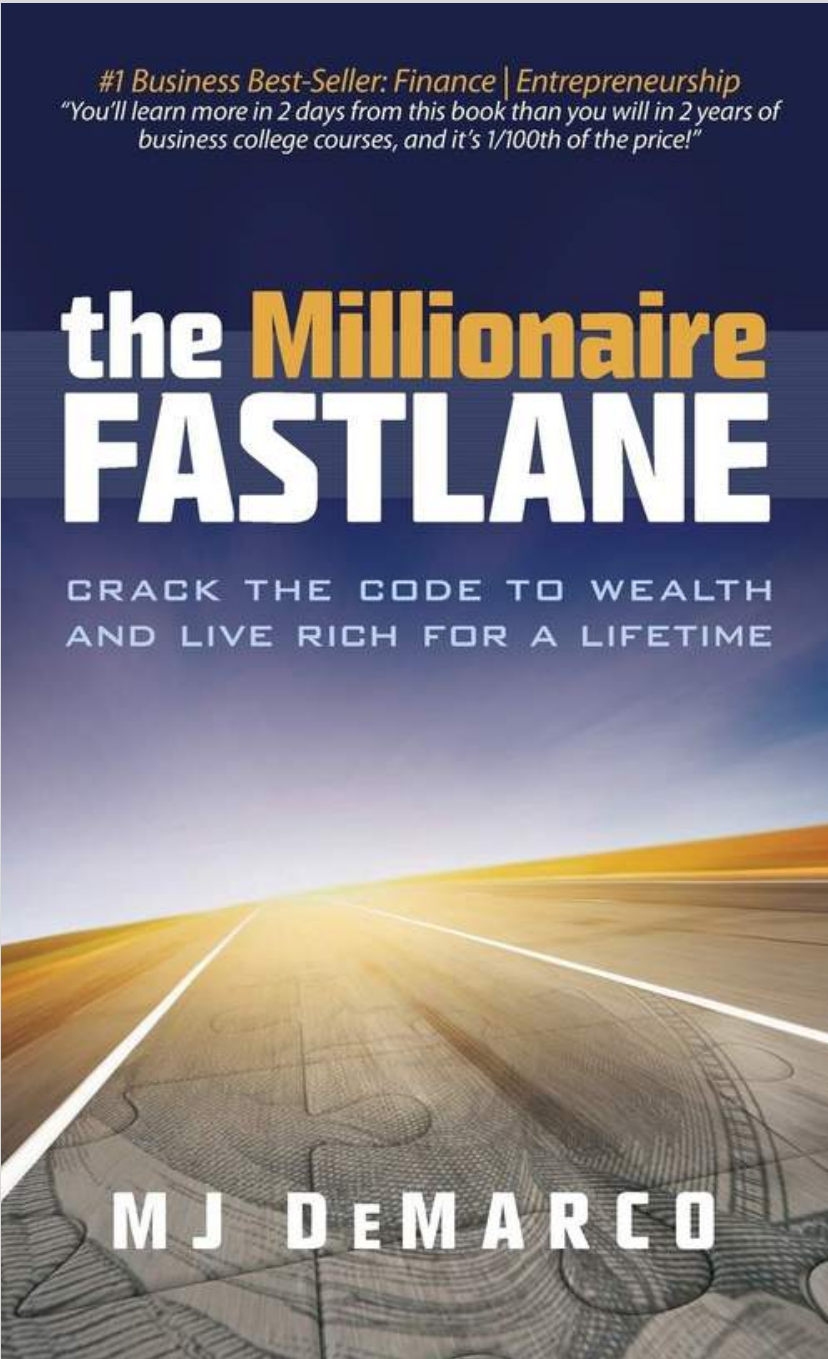
Taleb gives practical advice on how individuals can exploit this uncertainty, open themselves up to more randomness, and seek to harness more positive black swans in their lives.

6. MILLIONAIRE FASTLANE - BY MJ DE MARCO

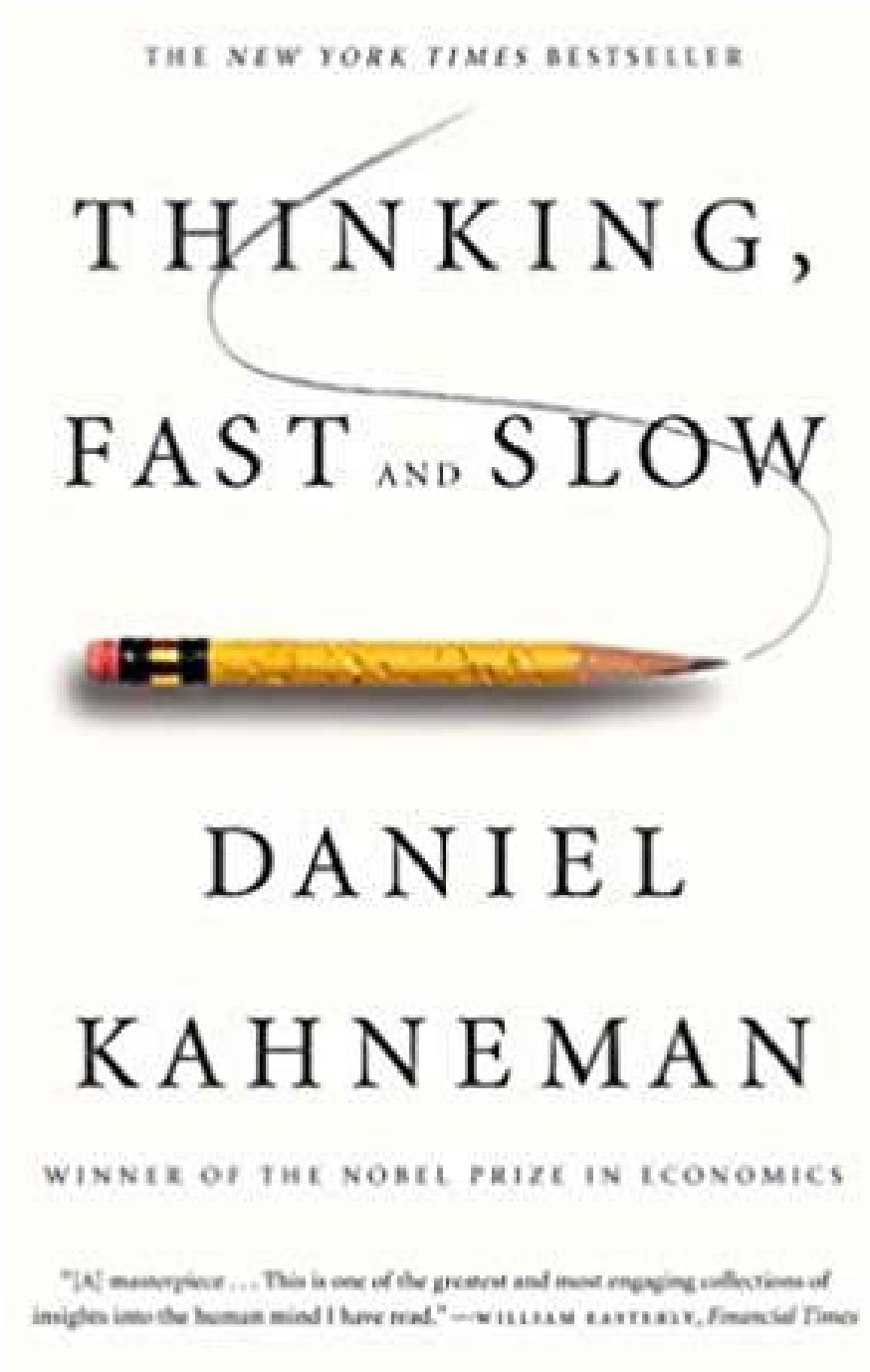
In 2007, Joshua Bell, widely regarded as one of the greatest musicians in the world, sold out a series of shows for over \$100 a ticket in Boston. A few days later, he played at the train station during the morning rush. Thousands of people walked past the world's best musician on their way to work, but even that couldn't illuminate the depths of the rate race.

Life does not have to begin on a Friday night and end on a Monday morning. MJ shows us that we have all chosen one of three possible lanes in life:

- Side walk: living paycheck-to-paycheck, spending more than you earn, fuelled by credit, satisfying your immediate needs with no concern for the future
- Slow lane: go to school, get good grades, graduate from college, get a job, save 10% of everything you earn and someday retire when you are about 65.
- Fastlane: a business system which allows you to divorce your wealth from time and make money fast (it's 'get rich quick', but it certainly isn't 'get rich easy')



5. THINKING FAST AND SLOW - BY DANIEL KAHNEMAN



Our brain fools us all the time. Thinking is hard, and Kahneman (with his late friend late friend Amos Tversky) identified two modes of thinking: System 1 ('fast' thinking) - instant, automatic, without voluntary control System 2 ('slow' thinking) - effortful, deliberate thinking, employing concentration

'Thinking, Fast and Slow' is a dense book that shows us how the two modes of thinking work together (and how we can fool ourselves). You will learn how the brain tricks you in practical ways, like why you under allocate time for new projects in the 'planning fallacy', how to negotiate for your advantage in 'anchoring' and why the news misrepresents the world in the 'availability cascade'.

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When you develop your opinions on the basis of weak evidence, you will have difficulty interpreting subsequent information that contradicts these opinions, even if this new information is obviously more accurate.

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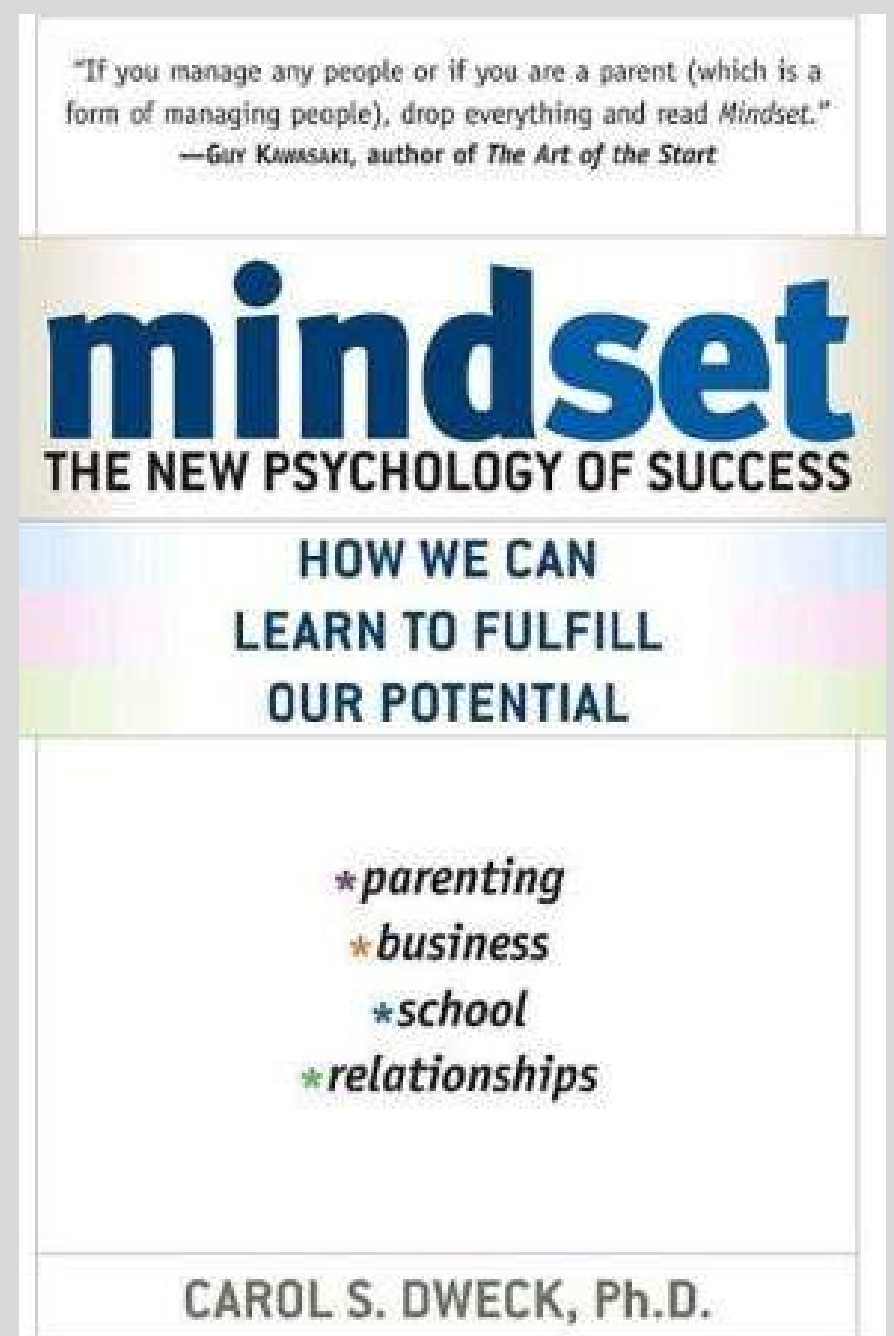


Nassim
Taleb, *The
Black Swan*

4. MINDSET

BY CAROL DWECK

“No matter what your ability is, effort is what ignites that ability and turns it into accomplishment.”



Michael Jordan was told he was too short, he didn't make his high school basketball team, and he wasn't drafted by the first two NBA clubs that had the opportunity to snap him up. He was understandably devastated, but luckily he had a mother who told him to go back, keep training, and become more disciplined. He trained at 6am every morning, constantly working on all aspects of his game, constantly striving to improve. We like to think of our champions and idols as superheroes that are naturally born and are created differently from us, but that's not the case - they just have a different mindset.

Carol Dweck says that there are two ways you can look at the world:

- 1) 'Fixed Mindset' - Our abilities are fixed, they were determined at birth, there is little we can do to change or improve, we just aren't good at certain things
- 2) 'Growth Mindset' - Every skill is learnable, through effort and practice and persistence we can grow and improve, the things we aren't good yet at are the things we haven't worked on

Obviously, the Growth Mindset is what we want to foster. It gives us the belief that all human qualities can be cultivated through effort. With the growth mindset, it is not possible to desire improvement in some area of your life but also think that there is nothing you can do about it. The fixed mindset, on the other hand, is the belief that your qualities are carved in stone. Thinking in this way means there are limits to your potential achievement, which makes effort disagreeable.

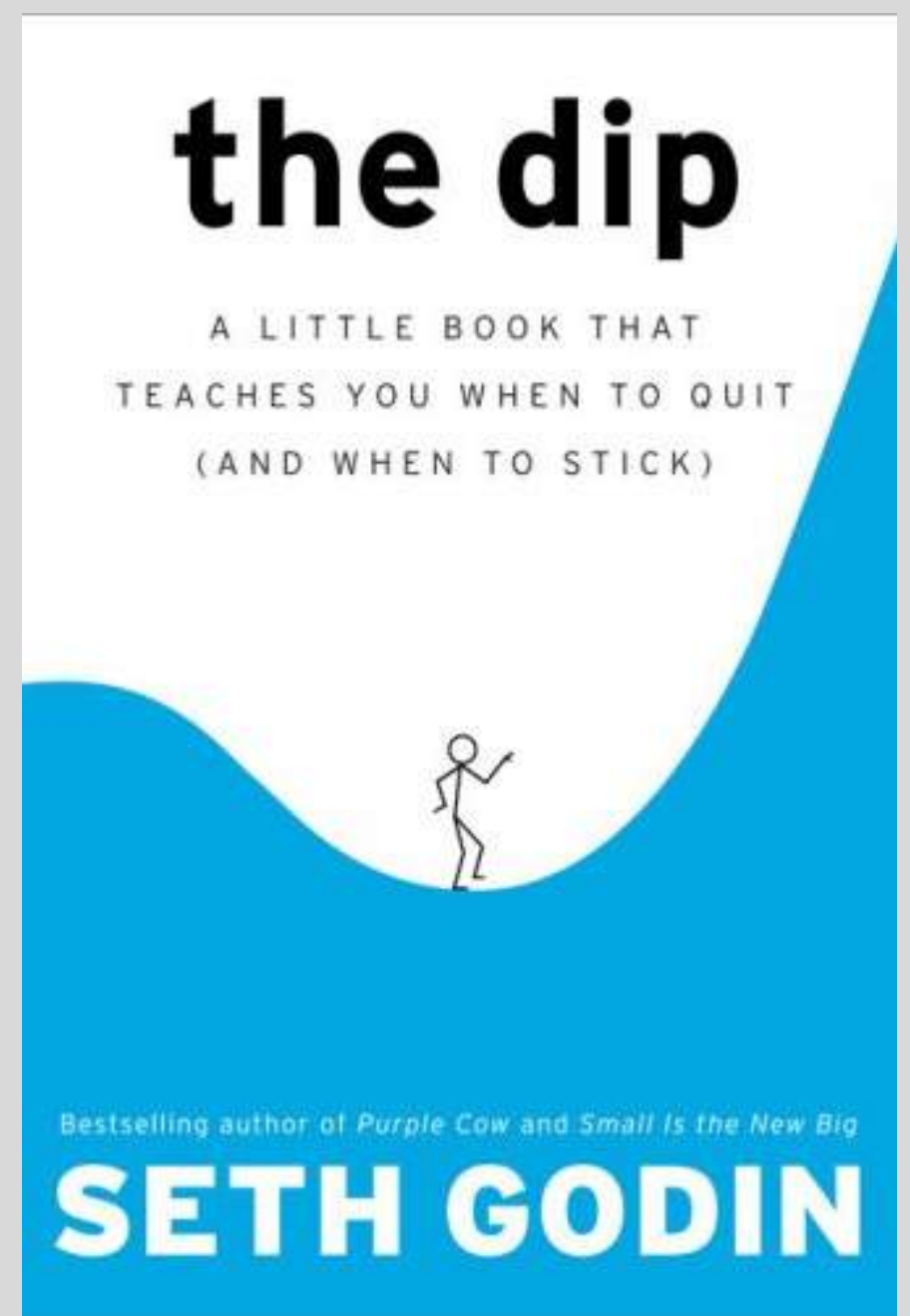
The attitudes appear in all areas of life and dramatically influence the path you follow in life.

- At school/university: The fixed mindset means you try to rote learn (and you quickly forget the material), but with the growth mindset, the student will look for underlying themes and principles, going over mistakes until it is truly understood. They study to learn, not just to try to pass the test.
- In business: Many employers today are looking to fill their stocks with extraordinary talent. By focusing on fixed ability rather than potential, new employees may be afraid to show their weakness, which in turn discourages the failure that is inherently required for innovation. Real self-confidence, Dweck argues, is not in pretending to be perfect. It is by revealing your ignorance and opening up yourself to growth.

3. THE DIP

BY SETH GODIN

"Quit the wrong stuff.
Stick with the right stuff. Have
the guts to do one or the
other"



'Quitters never win and winners never quit' is actually bad advice. Winners quit all the time - they just quit the right stuff at the right time. Most people quit unsuccessfully, and we need to recognise the tricks and traps that society has set up to make us quit.

CURVE 1: The Cul-de-sac.

For some projects, no matter how long you work on it, you don't really go anywhere. It doesn't get better or worse, it just is. The shape of the cul-de-sac is just flat – increased effort has no impact on results. This is the classic dead end job. Every day you are on this curve, is another day of learning something that isn't useful.

CURVE 2: The Cliff.

For some activities you may make little improvements, it may be enjoyable at the time, but sooner or later you will encounter a big drop. Smoking is an example of a cliff. Avoid cliffs at all costs.

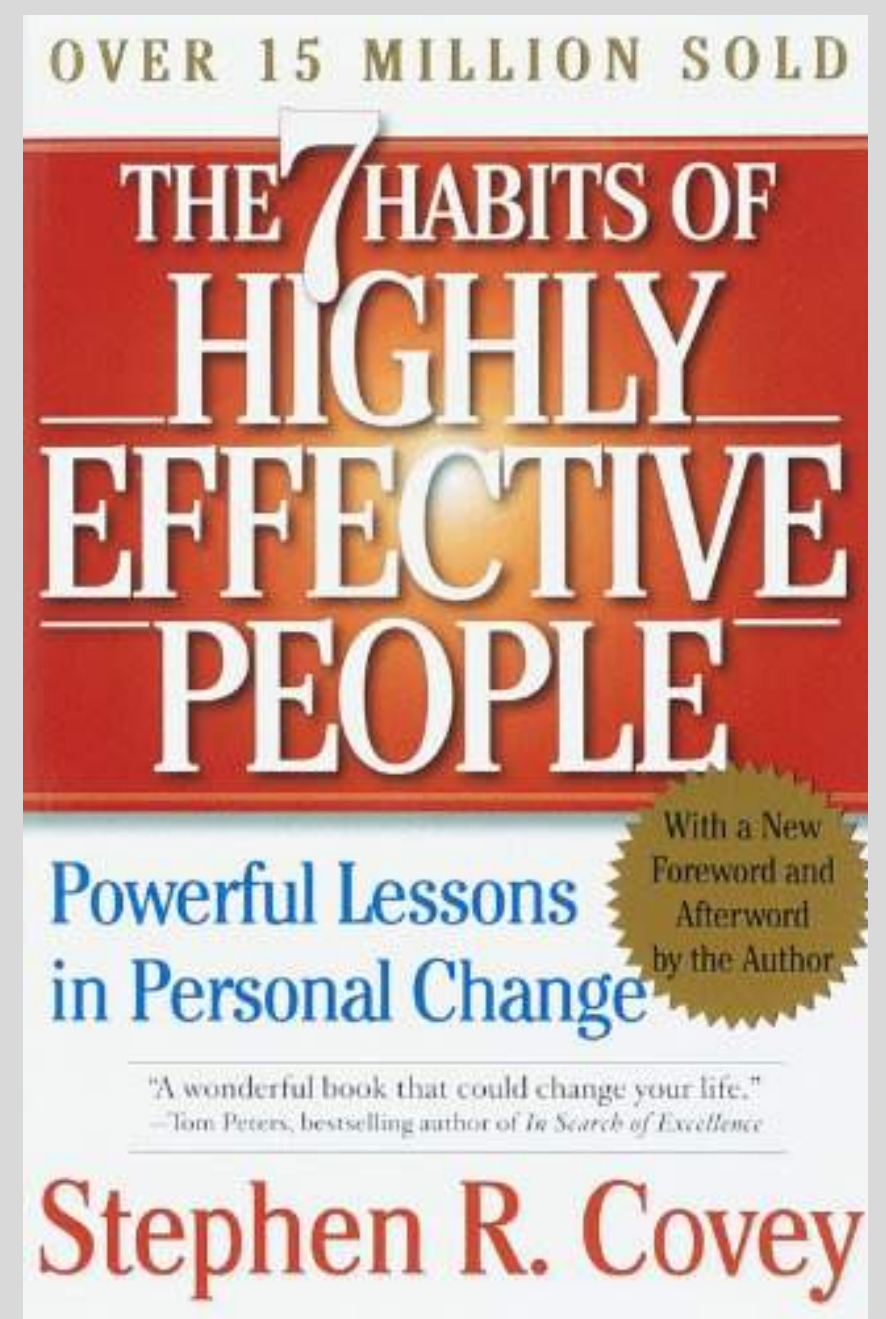
CURVE 3: The Dip.

At the beginning of any new project, it is fun and very engaging. You will have some early wins – you'll see rapid improvement, people will give you a pat on the back, you might make your first sale. But whenever you work on something worthwhile, you will hit The Dip. The Dip is the long, hard slog between beginning and mastery, the point where extra effort doesn't lead to an instant tangible improvement in results. The Dip is where most people quit. Because it's hard and because most people quit, it becomes scarce. The dip creates scarcity, and scarcity creates value. Quitting in the middle of The Dip is the worst thing you can do, because you wasted all of that time and energy and never achieved the results. You have to recognise the dip, know that it's coming, and then decide BEFORE you start: are you committed to pushing through the dip all the way to the end? If not, it's better to quit before you start.

In the free market, we disproportionately reward the exceptional. Zipf's Law tells us that #1 in the world gets more than ten times the rewards of #10. In order to be successful, you must become the Best in the World (the subjective 'best' at what you do in your immediate 'world' of people you care about). The 'entrepreneur' on his 12th project is constantly seeking but, because he's a serial quitter, he will never really get anywhere. The only way to is find the right Dip and commit to getting through it.

2. THE SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE – BY STEPHEN COVEY

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit"



A paradigm shift occurs when you get quit hacking at the leaves of your behaviours and get to work on the roots of your attitudes. Covey offers a way to transform our lives, firstly by achieving Private Victory (habits 1-3), then Public Victory (habits 4-6), then bringing it all together and constantly improving yourself.

Habit 1: Be Proactive.

Humans the unique ability of self-awareness – there is a gap between stimulus and response. That means we have time to think before we act and therefore we are fully responsible for our own lives.

Habit 2: Begin With The End In Mind.

Getting caught up in the activity trap and the 'busy-ness' of life can lead us to keep climbing the ladder, only find it is leaning against the wrong wall. To begin with the end in mind is to know where you're going, so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.

Habit 3: Put First Things First.

The Eisenhower Matrix distributes our activities across two variables: Importance and Urgency. We need to train ourselves to stop doing the things that are unimportant, and spend time on 'Quadrant 2' activities that aren't urgently tugging at us to act immediately but are important long-term, high-leverage, high-impact opportunities.

Habit 4: Think 'Win/Win'.

This is a frame of mind that constantly seeks benefit for all parties in interactions. Sport usually dictates 'win/lose' attitudes, and some people approach their work or relationships as 'lose/win' (they don't mind losing as long as their partner feels good about winning). To be co-operative rather than competitive, we must look for mutually beneficial arrangements where all parties 'win'.

Habit 5: Seek First To Understand, Then To Be Understood.

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand, they listen with the intent to reply. They're just thinking about what they want to say next rather than actually listening.

Habit 6: Synergize.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. When someone has a different perspective, there is a lot of value to be gained. To synergize is to value differences, build on strengths and compensate for weaknesses.

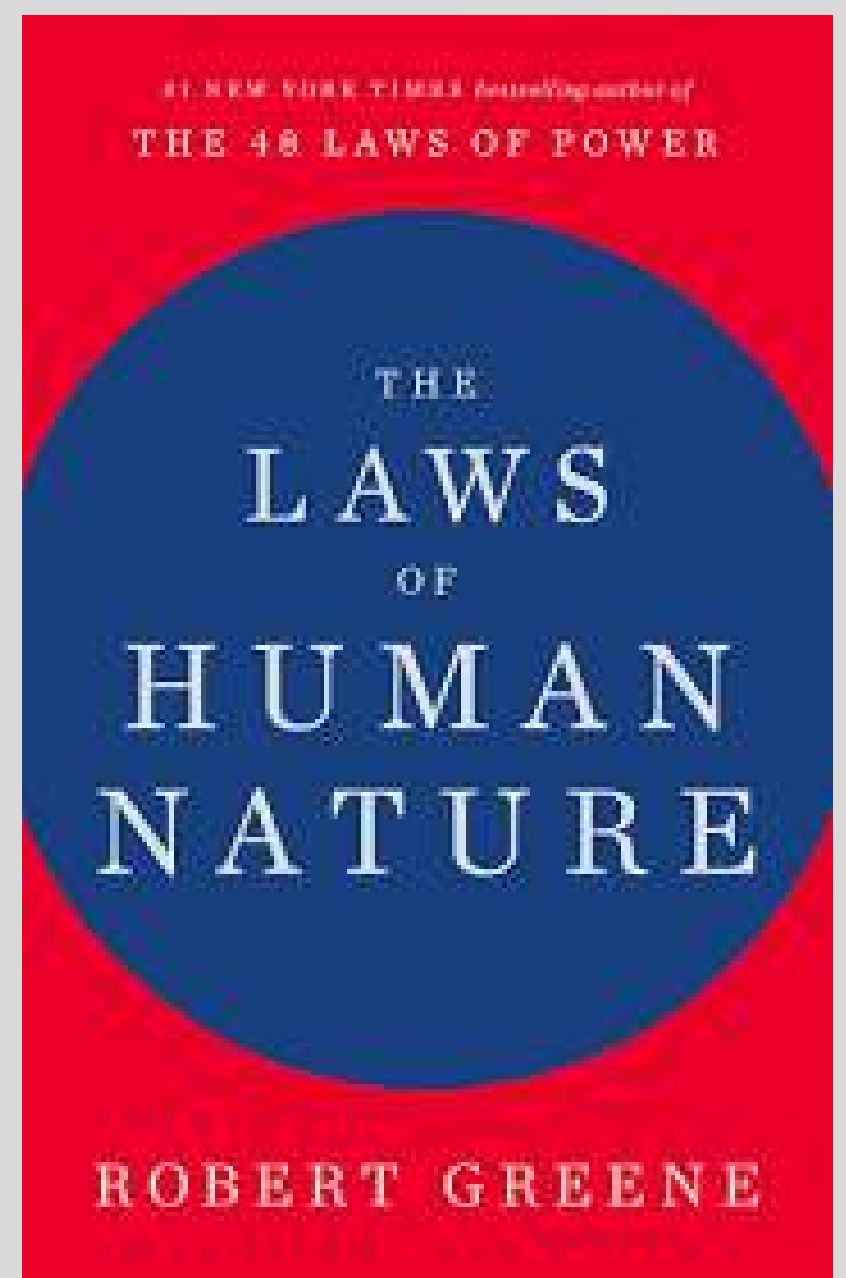
Habit 7: Sharpen The Saw.

The single best powerful investment we can ever make in life is an investment in ourselves. We need to replenish ourselves where possible to deal with life and continue to contribute.

1. THE LAWS OF HUMAN NATURE

BY ROBERT GREENE

“We tend to think of our behaviour as largely conscious and willed. To imagine that we are not always in control of what we do is a frightening thought, but in fact it is the reality.”



Human Nature is the forces that push and pull us from deep within, it stems from the particular wiring of our brains, the configuration of the nervous system, and the way we process our emotions - all of which developed and emerged through our evolution. Greene exposes the best and the worst of human nature. This book firstly makes you conscious of the 18 traits within you, which then allows you to make conscious changes to your behaviour, and it lets you begin to see the human nature shine through in others around you too.

The Law of Defensiveness [Soften People's Resistance by Confirming Their Self-Opinion]

From early on in life we develop a defensive and self protective side to our personality. As we grow older, we build a perception of ourselves: our self opinion. It's how we judge our own character and worthiness. If you violate someone's self-opinion, they will instantly close themselves off to you. Instead, you must first confirm their self-opinion to get them on your side. Whilst we have our own unique self opinions, there are three specific attributes that we all share: (1) 'I am acting of my own free will', (2) 'I am intelligent', and (3) 'I am a good person'.

The Law of Repression [Confront Your Darkside]

You have created a public persona that accentuates your strengths and conceals your weaknesses. You have repressed the less socially acceptable traits, and have become terribly nice and pleasant. You have a dark side or a 'shadow' that you loath to admit to and examine. In the course of our lives we meet people who appear especially comfortable at themselves, and have an integrated shadow self (Steve Jobs, for example), but also those who have suppressed it. You can reclaim your authenticity and assertiveness by seeing, embracing, exploring and showing your shadow.

The Law of Envy [Beware the Fragile Ego]

We compare ourselves to one another, continually measuring our status against others. Envy, one of the most painful emotions, arises when we have to admit that someone else is superior to us in some way. We turn it quickly into hostility and attempt to right the supposed unfairness, but we should instead seek to transmute this into something positive - move closer to what you envy in order to mimic their efforts and achievements, learning to admire human greatness along the way.