

Rise Above

A pragmatic guide to living a mega life.

Saitoti Ole Salaon

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Dedication

How great that you have this book in your hands! The book is a spark to ignite your deep desire and passion for the extraordinary. I dedicate this book to encourage you to rise above your circumstances and situations and live up to the true meaning of your potential.

I have toiled to deliver this book to your hands. On bleak nights and buoyant mornings, I wrote a word, a paragraph, or a page for close to two years. It is a proud moment.

I want to thank the great souls that helped in the production of this work. Your contribution has helped to create a beautiful book, I'm forever in debt.

From the heights of thoughts and depth of heart, I dedicate this book to you, to challenge, inspire and encourage you to chase your dreams with painstaking thoroughness.

Epigraph

I will persist until I succeed. I was not delivered into this world into defeat, nor does failure course in my veins. I am not a sheep waiting to be prodded by my shepherd. I am a lion, and I refuse to talk, walk, and sleep with the sheep. The slaughterhouse of failure is not my destiny. I will persist until I succeed.

Og Mandino

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*“You’re braver than you believe and
stronger than you seem, and smarter than you
think.” AA Mine*

CHAPTER 1

You Are Special

Life is like an echo; it gives back to you what you give to it. We are hardwired for exploits and baked for glory. Innate in us are acres of diamond that we can never exhaust. Just like there are bags and bags of grains in a grain and a forest in every seedling, we have more in us than we can even begin to imagine. We are engineered for greatness, raised for iconic, and made to be titans.

Infinite riches are all around you if you open your mental eyes and behold the treasure house of infinity within you. There is a goldmine within you from which you can extract everything you need to live life gloriously, joyously, and abundantly. Joseph Murphy, Ph.D.

We are wonderfully crafted with sophistication. We are the product of love, designed with affection. From the long vistas of time to the vastness of eternity, there is no one like you; your flaws, imperfection, and merit, and genius are rare gems endowed to the world by the creator.

The tragedy is that most of us have been socio-cultured to look down upon ourselves. We have been raised to play safe and settle for less. We have been made to believe that we are not good enough. Our consciousness has, over time, been laced with the poison of limiting belief and attitude of conformity.

Unshackle yourself from the chains of self-sabotage and break from the cocoon of limiting beliefs. It is time for a factory reset! A mega life is waiting for you to grow your wings and rise to the highest realm of your potential.

“The workings of your brain shape, reinforce, and influence your subconscious mind, and unconsciously this affects the way you approach life.”— Claudia Velandia

CHAPTER 2

Your Brain Is Your Treasure

The human race is the most physically poorly adapted creature in the universe. We cannot swim like a fish, run like a cheater, we are not as strong as an elephant, and we cannot match a lion in a battle. Yet we rule the universe; why? The answer is simple. It is our brain! Our brain is a gem! It is our strength. Now respectfully, how well have you been using this power?

Those who have utilized the power between the ears are the titans of this world. How well you use your mind determines the heights you can scale. Your mind is your greatest asset. It is a reservoir of the treasures that you desire. I want to break it to you that your dreams are not farfetched, that it is possible to live your wildest imaginations!

As Ayan Rand once observed, wealth is a product of man's ability to think. It is time to pluck and savor the ripening grapes from the vines of your mind. Why lock yourself in the scarcity amid such abundance?

A man who works with his hands is a laborer; a man who works with hands and brain is a craftsman, but a man who works with his hands and brain and heart is an artist. Louis Nizer

For the brain to deliver to you the treasures and heal you from the bruises of mediocrity, it must be in the right frame. The frame of the mind is referred to as the mindset. After working with high performers, I have realized that what separates them from the average masses is their mental spine. They have the mental toughness that you don't get on the ordinary guy in the streets. They have an uncanny ability to win the battle against their weaker self, dragging many from the road to greatness.

Verily I say this to you that you can change your house, partner, career, nationality, or even name, but unless you change the way you think, your life will remain in the vicious cycle of the same hopes, challenges, frustrations, regrets, and wishes. Picture this, your current situation and condition is one way or another a product of your mind. Unless you make a paradigm shift in both perspective and behavior you will remain the same.

To see the Promised Land beyond the horizons, you need to cleanse your mind from inhibitive thinking that ensnared millions that went ahead of you. As a sojourner on this planet, you don't have eternity to live your dreams. Heed this wake-up call brethren! Quit survival mentality and usher in a thriving mentality. You are more you can begin to imagine. Inside your head is a goldmine that you can never exhaust.

“ Cherish your visions.

Cherish your ideals.

Cherish the music that stirs in your heart, the beauty that forms in your mind, the loveliness that drapes your purest thoughts.

For out of them will grow all delightful conditions, all heavenly environment, of these, if you but remain true to them, your world will, at last, be built.”

— James Allen, As a Man Thinketh

The battle of life is lost or won in mind! Everything else is supplemental. In his ideology of possibility thinking, Robert sculler postulates that the moment a person changes the frame of their mind, they drastically change their fortunes. It may not be that dramatic, but it would be a cold day in hell if life changed with changing the mind.

On 17th December 1903, two bicycle mechanics, Orville Wright and Wilbur Wright, completely changed the course of history. The two brothers ushered in the epoch of human flight. The invention was a product of thought and sheer imagination; imagine what magic you have in the goldmine of your brain! The Wright brothers did the impossible in their time, a machine heavier than air using air as a medium of transport! They defied the law of gravity! You may not make an earth-shattering invention, but you can indeed reinvent a brilliant iconic you.

Orison Sweet Marsden once observed that Deep within man dwells those slumbering powers; powers that would astonish him, that he never dreamed of possessing; forces that would revolutionize his life if aroused and put into action. Hearken to this call and unleash the slumbering powers that lay dormant in you. It is time to hit the upgrade button. In the journey to personal greatness, you have to clear the hurdles and barriers you have erected on the highway of your mind.

The only way you can control your life is to control your mind. As Robin Sharma once remarked that the brain is a good servant but a terrible master.

Once you fail to master your brain, you will end up becoming its victim. Your thoughts influence your perceptions which becomes your reality. Once you have control of your mind, you can craft a life you desire, and you can mold your reality to fit into your idea of the perfect life.

In his timeless classic *As a Man Thinketh*, James Allen writes Man is made or unmade by himself. That, in the armory of thought, he forges the weapons by which he destroys himself. He also fashions the tools with which he builds for himself heavenly mansions of joy, strength, and peace. By the right choice and proper application of thought, man ascends to divine perfection. By the abuse and wrong application of thought, he descends below the level of the beast. The Elephant in the room is, in the armory of your mind, what are you doing? Seriously and honestly, are you building or wrecking your life? Now leap and stand up for your life, for your goals, and for all that you can be.

*Time is what we want most, but what
we use worst.*

William Penn

CHAPTER 3

Master your Time

Life is made up of moments, and moments are made of milliseconds and seconds. If you can take care of seconds, minutes will fall in line; if you can take care of minutes, hours will submit to you. Time is the currency of life. It does not discriminate but serves all according to their dues. You can spend one year recovering from a lost week. Let that sink! If you treat time casually, you will end up as a casualty. Time is infinite, but you are not; time is immortal while you are mortal. Anytime you waste time, you waste your allotted time, your life.

Everyone in the universe is gifted fresh 24 hours daily. Some accomplish exploits with their 24 hours that others will take years to complete. Since time is constant and cannot be added or multiplied, what we can do is maximally utilize the available time to the best of our ability. We must befriend time. It should never be our adversary but our facilitator to greatness. As the old adage goes, time waits for no one. Nobody can alter the course of time.

The situation is not entirely helpless: instead of worrying about getting more time, we should focus on generating more value in the time that we have at our disposal.

“Time is free, but it’s priceless. You can’t own it, but you can use it. You can’t keep it, but you can spend it. Once you’ve lost it, you can never get it back.”

Harvey Mackay

As Steve Covey rightly said, the secret is not spending time; it is investing it. If we keenly audit how we spend our days, weeks, months, and years, one thing is clear. We can do better with our time than we have done. The onus is on you to have a Saul on the way to Damascus kind of transformation. It is time to set a routine that will make you insanely productive in your day.

It is impossible to fully exploit your potential if you have a flawed concept of time. If you want to profoundly change your life, master your 24 hours. Liberate yourself from the yoke of distraction which is an epidemic that ravaging this generation. We are living in an age of massive distractions. In this era, people are suffering from attention deficit. The importance of time management cannot be overstated.

Time management means allotting time to specific activities in a bid to utilize time maximally. Time management allows you to achieve more in less time. To adequately manage the time, you need to develop a plan that you will stick with and follow to the letter. Is it not said lack of a plan is a plan to fail? I bet you don't want to fail, so get a plan. There is a proven plan that has worked for many people. This plan entails planning your day ahead. Choose five important things you want to achieve every day and commit to ensuring you see them through. Ensure you major in major and minor in the minor.

One of my most outstanding mentors, Robin Sharma, writes extensively about what he calls daily rituals that can hoist you into the realm of absolute greatness. A well-planned day will lead to a well-planned week, then a well-organized month, and ultimately an effective, efficient, productive, and happy life. Don't sleepwalk through life as the multitudes do. Make a conscious, deliberate effort to live your life by design and not by default.

*The greatest tragedy in life is not death
but life without a reason. It is dangerous to be
alive and not know why you were given life*

-Myles Munroe

CHAPTER 4

Rise Above to Your Purpose

Suppose someone asked you to describe yourself in 5 minutes what will you say, well I know it will be something of this sought, I'm X, born in Y village, went to z school presently working with W company. Let me ask, is this all that you are? Deep down, you know you are a complex being, more than anyone can ever decipher. The world is full of wandering souls living empty lives without purpose or meaning. For you to thoroughly comprehend all facets of your life, you need to discover your purpose.

Simply put, purpose refers to the reason why something or someone exists. I love Myles Munroe's concept of purpose. It entails asking these questions. Who are you? where are you from? What are you here for, and where are you going. These questions can help you understand your identity and thus your purpose.

It is easy to discover your purpose. Your purpose is tied to your gifts. The bible says that your gift will make room for you. What is the one thing that you feel supremely competent to do? Find it! That

thing that you do so well with great ease. What is it that you love doing? That which makes your heart throb with passion. Once you answer these questions, you will discover your terrain, your domain, your niche, and ultimately your purpose.

Fish don't attend swimming classes, Lions don't attend hunting classes, and Monkeys don't participate in tree-climbing lessons. They were engineered and equipped by the creator to thrive in their domain. You will only succeed if you channel your energy in the area of gifting. No matter how ambitious the Fish is, it cannot outrun a cheater on land! Know what you are best suited in and spend the rest of your life pursuing it.

Everybody's a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

Albert Einstein

Once you discover what you were made for, align your effort to ensure that your life is centered on your purpose. Your purpose is divine. It should help you better your life, family, and society. We are made for a greater course than ourselves. That is the law of nature. Your presence on this planet should be a

blessing to the universe. Trees don't consume their fruits neither do rivers drink their water. You were not meant to be the sole beneficiary of your greatness. Unlock your powers and illuminate the world.

You are the one you have been waiting for. The world is longing to have you playing at levels of legendary. It will happen if you run your race the best way you know. As Apostle Paul said, do not conform to the patterns of this world. I encourage you to retain your authentic self. Do not trim yourself to earn the validation of others.

All good things which exist are the fruits of originality.

John Stuart Mill

The moment you chose to imitate others, you derail yourself from the rails of your destiny. It is impossible to live up to your purpose while living someone else life. Your purpose is tied to your authentic original self. You are not walking this earth in vain; you are here for a reason.

When I was a child, my mother said to me, 'If you become a soldier, you'll be a general. If you become a monk, you'll end up as the Pope.' Instead, I became a painter and wound up as Picasso.

Pablo Picasso

Most people sacrifice their originality on the altar of conformity. We seek to blend in and play down our uniqueness. We whittle ourselves to fit into societal definitions of what we ought to be. Choose today to step out of your way, shed the mask, and manifest your true authentic self. As John mason ably put it, imitation is a limitation.

Today, pick one strength and one weakness and hammer away at them with intense focus. Today, tomorrow, and the day after. Rise bit-by-bit - but rise! TJay Taylor

CHAPTER 5

Rise Above Limits

My life has been a roller-coaster. I have been to hell and back; I have suffered hunger, deprivation, and mistreatment. I undoubtedly suffered at the hands of poverty. Poverty passionately dogged my life such that I spent 23 years to complete the 8:4:4 curriculum, which ordinarily takes 16 years! I did all manner of things, working on people's farms, being a milkman, to logging in Mau Forest. The detailed story is documented in my first book beyond limits. While growing up, I never imagined that I could get anywhere close to where I am today. In my view were mountains of limits that appeared unclimbable. I can confidently tell you that none of the said mountains exist today because they never existed in the first place!

What limits have you erected on your road to greatness? What is stopping you in your pursuit of the legendary? Is it real or imagined? We naturally tend to magnify our limitations while underrating our abilities. Before 1954 the common assumption was that human beings could not run a mile in less than 4 minutes. A British athletic legend Roger Bannister decided to

challenge the so-called limits. He clocked 3:59.4, and the limit notion was eroded. Over 2500 athletes have since broken it. Closer home, I was inspired by Eliud Kipchoge when he became the first human being to run a 42-kilometer marathon in under 2 hours! Indeed, no human is limited!

It is time to leave the safe harbor of your comfort zone, swim through the perilous waters of life, and emerge on the port of greatness. As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, you will never grow unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered. It is time to stretch yourself beyond your elastic limit. That is how winning is done in life. When delivering your golden potential, you must be ready to endure the labor pains. Embrace the pain and watch the perceived limits melt beyond your very own eyes. Therefore, I beseech you to craft the glorious life that you desire, but it is all up to you. It is in your hand.

There is little that can withstand a man who can conquer himself.

Louis xiv

Stop talking yourself down and start building yourself up. The only limits that exist are the

ones that you erect in your minds; demolish them. Do you know the far you can go if you stop limiting yourself? Do you know how awesome your life can be? You can illuminate our world with the magnificence of your remarkable capabilities. Think about a poor boy from Madeira Portugal, Cristiano Ronaldo, who rose to become one of greatest footballers of all time. Do you know the world's most renowned genius Albert Einstein did speak in his first three years? He went forth and developed the theory of relativity! Think of a South African-born richest man on the planet Elon Musk, a man who wants to make human beings multi-planetary! What are your limits again?

According to Alexandre Dumas, a person who doubts himself is like a man who enlists in his enemy's ranks and bears arms against himself. That is how dangerous a man can be to himself. You are limitless as long as you don't limit yourself. Joe Allen says that you are a handicap you must face. You are your doctor when it comes to curing cold feet, a hothead, and a stuffy attitude concluded John Mason

Once you get rid of the said limits, you will unlock the power to transform you into a glorious performer in your field. You can change your life

into an exhilarating fairy-tale. We create layers of skepticism and self-doubt planted the society. Robin Sharma writes that limitation is a mentality that most people practice daily until it becomes their reality.

Do not deny the existence of limits but defy them! Mountains are there to be climbed, valleys to be crossed, and oceans to be navigated through. Embrace the odds and rise above them. Your glorious greatness is waiting for you to level up. Take the quantum leap and operate in the new realm of your true potential. This realm is the place of liberty and sheer bliss. It is where the finest of planet operate from. It is where the heart, the mind, and the body are in sync.

“The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials.”-
Chinese Proverb

CHAPTER 6

Rise above adversity

In the voyage of life, challenges and adversity will be your constant companion. Learn to overcome them and keep your eyes on the ball. To live like the hero, you need to recalibrate your mentality, use your adversity as a launching pad to heights of accomplishment. I grew up in an absolute mess of poverty, neglect, and identity crises. However, rather than coiling in some pity pit, I used the hardship to fortify my willpower and forge an unbelievable resilience that transformed me into an incredible human being.

Les brown postulates that there is nothing like a problem-free life. You are either in a problem, coming from a problem, or getting to one. You must learn to thrive regardless of the seasons. Don't be the light that only shines in the darkness, and be the light that can shine in the light also. Take the case of one of America's greatest and longest-serving presidents, Franklin D Roosevelt. The man was permanently paralyzed from the waist down. That notwithstanding, he went on to win the

Governorship twice and Presidency thrice. What a man! My point is don't wait for a clear sky or a calm sea to sail to your dreams. Thrive amid darkness and light in winter and summer.

Stephen King's manuscript was rejected over 30 times by publishers, yet his books have sold over 350 million copies. Whatever challenges have bedeviled your life, use them to fuel your desire to become a better person and improve your life. Come on, rise and triumph over the adversity.

Great sons and daughters of the universe have all used adversity as stepping to new levels of consciousness. They have understood the age-old truth that the path of least resistance will always lead to the miserable pool of average. Embrace challenges and adversity. They will train and equip you with the requisite mental fortitude to propel you to levels of legendary.

Adversity is a necessary evil. It helps us decipher the beauty of life as Earl Campbell intimates that we won't know what it is to walk in the light if it weren't for the dark days. John Mason says that opportunity's favorite disguise is obstacles. Adversity is not here to kill you but rather to prepare

you to handle your greatness. Do not allow adversity to numb your desire for excellence but allow then pain to fuel your resolve.

Being an ambitious, focused person will not guarantee you a smooth ride. It will not be a walk in the park. It may unleash Murphy's Law into your life. Take encouragement from Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed

Corinthians 4:8-9

Adversity can deal you a life-threatening blow but hang in there. We are in an era of overwhelming challenges. As I write this book, coronavirus is ravaging the planet. Lives are being snuffed out left, right and center. Economies are crumbling. People are banished in lockdowns, and businesses are sinking. Yet Bob Marley reminds us that we will never know how strong we can be until being strong is the only option we have. Consider this wisdom from Washington Irving, "there is in every Person's heart a spark of heavenly fire which lies

dormant in broad daylight of prosperity, but which kindles up and beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity”

In times of adversity, you can reach deep in yourself and rekindle your creative genius. Hardships are temporary and should not be allowed to dent a permanent scar in your life. As Timber Hawkeye reckons, you can't calm the storm, so stop trying. What you can do is calm yourself. The storm will pass

Take the risk. Take the chance. Put your heart and soul into it, because when you put your soul into it, you will become what you've always dreamed. You will become a legend - Jamie Brewer

CHAPTER 7

Live like a legend

We are created to awe the universe with our magnificence. We designed to charm the world with the genius of our talents. You can have legendary exploits. You can illuminate the world like Messi, Tyson, Michael Jackson, LeBron James, Barack Obama, and Eliud Kipchoge, to name just a few. To reach the legendary levels and live an iconic life is hard but possible. Only less than 10% of the whole universe has achieved this feat. That should ring a bell to you that catapulting yourself requires a quantum leap.

The virtuosos of this world have the courage to stick to their guns even when everything else is screaming otherwise. Take the case of Petra Majdic in what is dubbed as the miracle of Vancouver. Petra won a bronze medal despite getting involved in a life-threatening accident that left her with four broken limbs and a wounded lung! This legend had every reason stop (legitimate reason) but chose to keep pushing for her dreams. She skied four times

with the excruciating pain to win a bronze medal for her country.

Legends do not see the obstacles, but they are obsessed with their goals to the point that nothing can dissuade them from the course of their targets. Living like a legend does not require a revolution. It requires you to take sentient, deliberate, and unwavering effort to continually and consistently improve every aspect of your life. Optimize every part of your life. The way you work, speak, think and relate with others. As Robin Sharma wrote, the smallest of actions are better than the noblest of intentions.

Legendary is not a gift given to a few but a decision available to everyone. The difference between those that attain legendary and those that don't is decision making. Take football, for example; for the past decade, we have had two players dominating the football scene, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi. In the same period, we have had dozens of players touted as the new Messi or the new Ronaldo, but they fell off the wayside after a few seasons. Though talent plays a role in the final analysis, the acts and omission of the players

define who they ultimately turn out to be. Robin Sharma says, “Longevity is the DNA of mastery.

Legendary demands putting your best feet forward every day and creating world-class rituals, and living them. In his book *5 am Club*, Robin Sharma discusses what he terms as four interior empires that one must work on to live up their true potential. The *5 am Club* is a guidebook for legends. Make sure you read it! Robin Sharma counsels that we should daily work on self-mastery by developing our heart-set, health-set, soul-set, and mindset.

Legends look for the right circumstances. If they don't find them, they create them. They are firmly in control of their lives. I think that is the most distinguishing factor between the legends and ordinary people. Research has it that, for one to become great at something, they must invest 10,000 hours of consistent practice. Most of us tend to quit too soon. Stay there and make every day a day to improve yourself.

Our greatest undoing is impatience. People want to achieve legendary status with a sudden flight. Some people want to start singing today and sing like

Michael Jackson tomorrow; others want to kick the ball today and play like Messi tomorrow. Some want to create companies like Equity Bank, IBM, Coca-Cola, and Apple overnight. People love the thrill and joy of success but hate the pain and the grind of sacrifice. They are unwilling to put in the work, go the distance, and suffer inconvenience and discomfort that characterizes the journey to greatness.

If people knew how hard I had to work to gain my mastery, it wouldn't seem wonderful at all - Michelangelo

The choice is yours, my friend. Are you going to join the statistics of people who failed their potential and expectations? Are you just like the rest of the multitude who wander through life whining about what fate has thrown to them? I like this conversation from William Shakespeare's *Julio Caesar*. The character *Julio Caesar* says to *Brutus*, "the fault, dear *Brutus* is not in our stars but ourselves that we are underlings.

The fault, dear friend, is not in your background, your level of education, your family, your spouse, your height, your creed, tribe, or race. The fault, dear friend, is you, that you are an

underling! Therefore, arise today and seize this moment and decide that never again will you be an underling! Reach deep within and harness your will, hearken to the call of your life, and rise to the legendary.

*What lies behind us and what lies
before us are tiny matters compared to what
lies within us.” Ralph Waldo Emerson*

CHAPTER 8

SELF ESTEEM

I have had the discontentment of experiencing the ugly side of life. Growing up with absent parents, being orphaned at a tender age. Poverty knew me by all my names! I grew in an environment of scarcity and shortfall. My childhood environment and the mean slaps of life crushed my self-esteem to the point that I could not see any good in myself. I had been socialized to look down upon myself, which psychically became the lens through which I viewed myself.

It took me years to completely recalibrate my self-esteem and start seeing myself as a brilliantly gifted chap. Low self-esteem is a hurdle that has stopped many from achieving their dreams. Simply put, Self-esteem is the way you describe yourself to yourself. I had to validate myself continually. It is one of the hardest things to do. You can never logically lie to yourself and convince yourself. To win yourself over, you have to legitimately prove that you are indeed what you claim to be.

Firstly, I told myself that despite the challenges, I was going to get an education. Driven by a conviction, this had to happen no matter the challenges. I delivered it! Slowly and consistently, I built my credibility with myself to the point that I knew I was a man of my own words. That is how you can raise your self-esteem. Your mind is rational and will not take empty optimism as bait to boost self-esteem. It is your performance that will increase your self-esteem and vice versa.

When you stay true to your words and thoughts, you unconsciously prove your worth to yourself. You start thinking highly about yourself. People worry so much about how people view them, yet that has no bearing on what they can do or become. The determinant is how you view yourself, your opinion of yourself. The ultimate war is the war against self. To prove you are worthwhile. You will never get a greater critic than yourself, and you have to prove yourself to that critic!

Grow your competence, hone your skills, go out there, do things you want to do but perceive to be hard, and your self-esteem will skyrocket. Low esteem can result from an event in the past. Maybe you did something or failed to do something, and

the refusal to let go can hurt how you feel about yourself. Building high self-esteem calls you to rise to the occasion, take responsibility for your life, and confront challenging situations rather than avoiding them. Nothing can fortify your self-esteem like coming out victoriously from a complex problem.

Self-esteem is self-love. High self-esteem is valuing yourself, having a great sense of self-worth. When you attain this kind of feeling, nobody and nothing can pin you down. You become unstoppable because deep down within, you know you are good enough. Harvey Fierstein counsels that you should never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself.

High self-esteem is the fuel that drives you to go for what you want. It creates conviction, enthusiasm, and optimism. Chose today to change your self-concept. Start viewing yourself as a titan, a champion, and psychically your worldview and reality will transform. Buddha preached that you deserve your love and affection as much as anybody in the entire universe.

*“It is well to be up before daybreak,
for such habits contribute to health, wealth,
and wisdom” — Aristotle*

CHAPTER 9

Win Your Morning

Walking up before sunrise has been a common trait for super achievers. It is a poorly guarded secret that waking up early in the morning can help you become insanely productive. The world's greatest have elaborate morning routines that they use as a springboard to create days of the elite of performance. Among the earliest risers are Jeff Bezos, Tim Cook, Mark Zuckerberg, Oprah Winfrey, William Ruto, James Mwangi, and Ratan Tata.

Waking up early in the morning will set you apart from the multitudes. It will allow you to rise with the world. When you start the day before the sun, you will be on the front foot, rather than playing catch up as others do. Nature has an excellent lesson for us.

When you visit a game park, you have to rise early to see a lion. Lions hunt in the early hours of the day. They feed on fresh meat and rest when the sun is hot. On the other hand, the scavengers such as hyena come late to rummage for carcasses left by the lions. There is a clear distinction between the two animals. When you look at a lion, you see a magnificent,

powerful, healthy, and vibrant beast. On the other hand, when you look at a hyena, you see a frail, dirty, lazy, and morose beast. Choose your side, my friend!

I understand that waking up at 4 am is not everyone's cup of tea, but I can bet that morning hours can be the most productive hours. It's weird for anyone to get to Netflix, Facebook or Instagram at 4 am but someone can binge-watch their favourite series overnight. I used to think I was not a morning person until I discovered the miracle of waking up early. The inner calmness that greets you anytime you rise before the sunrise is otherworldly.

Adopt a routine that ensures you rise early, pray, read a book and exercise every day of your life. I assure you that you will transcend the ordinary and find yourself in the realm of extraordinary. When you wake up early, you create massive time resources for self-development daily. Just imagine reading for 30 minutes every day for the next decade. You will be among the top 5% in the world in your field! As they say, leaders are readers.

Upgrade your life today by upgrading you're waking time. Hal Elrod opines that there is no better day than today for us to give up who we've been for

who we can become and upgrade the life we've been living for the one we want. It is a time to leap; stop dilly-dallying. The vines of your greatness are ready for plucking. When and how you start, your day has a significant influence on how productive you become. Wake up early in the morning, elevates your game and sets yourself apart from the crowd.

Once you set a program for a productive day, it will build up into a productive week, then a productive month, a productive year, and ultimately a productive life. You can completely alter your life by altering when and how you start your day. Robin Sharma writes that once you own your morning, you elevate your life.

Mastering your morning routine will not be a walk in the park. It will take painstaking discipline to adopt, implement and sustain such a program. Develop a regimented morning routine that allows you to have time for yourself before the hustle and bustle of life. Use your morning to replenish your spirit and fortify your will. The morning routine will arm and equip you to face the challenges and shocks that you may encounter during the day.

I urge you to confront your weakness and become a master of your morning as Antonio Brown

counsels. If you want to be the best, you can't take the path of least resistance. Every morning, you wake up, and your mind tells you it's too early, and your body tells you you're a little too sore, but you've got to look deep within yourself and know what you want and what you're striving for.

*“You’re never as good as everyone
tells you when you win, and you’re never as
bad as they say when you lose.”*

Lou Holtz

CHAPTER 10

Rise Above Criticism and Praise

In April 1910, the former American President Theodore Roosevelt gave a powerful speech christened “The man in the Arena” below is an excerpt from the speech.

“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 them 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, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

That was a phenomenal piece of wisdom. In this world, one of the most common talents that people

have is to criticize others. People are quick to find fault, shortcomings, and weaknesses. Millions of dreams have been killed; lives have been wrecked by criticism. However, it is imperative to note that not all criticism is destructive.

Constructive criticism is a great feedback system for what we ought to improve on. It should aid you to see what is in your blind spot and excel in your endeavors. Constructive criticism succors titans to polish their craft and add the touch of genius. Constructive criticism originates from frank, objective, and benevolent critic. Embrace this criticism, and improve yourself. As William Gilmore Simms warned, the dread of criticism is the death of genius. It is essential to be vigilant, and negative criticism can masquerade as constructive criticism.

On the other hand, negative criticism is a destructive form of criticism. It is inspired by envy, hate, jealousy, and insecurity. Ignore this criticism; it is meant to pull you down and scuttle your ambitions. Sometimes your friends and your relatives project negative criticism as jokes. You must guard and protect your dreams from the vultures of negative criticism. Do not be distracted by the critics. Nobody knows what you can be, and none has your life's manual.

Drown the naysayer's babble with the waves of relentless focus and ruthless discipline.

Praise is essential. It makes you feel good about your achievement and abilities. However, recognition can numb your sense and desire to do more and be more. Most people have allowed praise to get into their heads. They become comfortable with little, whereas they can get and be more. Do not be like them, as Nicky Gumbel opines; when people praise you, don't let it go to your head. When they criticize you, don't let it get to your heart.

Nobody knows the depth of your flaws or the height of your powers. The dreams that you cherish have been bequeathed to you only. They may not make sense to others. I agree with Friedrich Nietzsche's assertion that those who hear not the music think the dancers mad. Go for your dreams with undivided devotion, discard the distractions of praise singers and critics chatter.

I recall when I decided to go to high school, having stayed four years at home. My decision was met with unbridled criticism from some of my family members and friends. My decision was touted as slapdash, illogical, and plain stupid. One person

confronted me and declared that I was an imbecile. As a stubborn dreamer, I went on to complete high school and later graduated from university. Pursuing your dreams is not a popular initiative; hang in there despite the opposition you may encounter. In the final analysis, you will be proud of your resilience.

*Nothing can stop the man with the
right mental attitude from achieving his goal;
nothing on earth can help the man with the
wrong mental Attitude, Thomas Jefferson*

CHAPTER 11

The power of attitude

Attitude is one the most written and talked about subjects in the field of self-development. However, I cannot be at peace if I will not impress upon you how important it is to cultivate a positive attitude in your life. Attitude is simply the lens through which we view ourselves, others, and everything around us. It is the outlook, how you perceive and interpret happenings in life. Bob Urichuck refers to attitude as librarian of our past, speaker of our present, and the prophet of our future.

Attitude is the engine that drives your life; how far and how fast you can go in life is determined by your installed engine. How do you feel? About yourself, your life, people around you, and the world? That's your attitude's manifestation. Attitude can be your enabler or your constraint in the journey of life. Beliefs and environment, and experience influence attitude.

We live in a negative world. In this world, being positive is may make people doubt whether your mental faculties are functional. What would your

colleagues think of you if you showed up at work with a wide grin and humming with enthusiasm? Well, if it is not payday, they would murmur that you are high on something. Walk in the street and observe the countenance of most people; most people look sad, angry, and menacing. The python of negative attitude has injected the venom of self-hate and flawed the self-concept to many.

The road to your greater self, starts inwards. Some of the perceptions that hold you back originate from your beliefs. If you entertain a negative attitude, you will live a punctured life. The good news is that your attitude is not cast on stone; you can change it. It is for your own good if you change how you perceive things. Interrogate some of the things that you have been made to believe. Are your beliefs factual? Maybe they said that you are not good enough and don't have what it takes but remember that great deed you once did.

Unshackle yourself today from the chains of the negative attitude, believe in yourself again, bolster your self-confidence and rekindle your positive, upbeat self. It is impossible to harbor a negative attitude and lead a vibrant, successful life. Surround yourself with positive vibes, avoid negative do-nothing friends who only

whine and complain about how bad things are. Feed your mind with positive and inspiring thoughts. Take heed of Benjamin Disraeli's words. Nurture your mind with great ideas, for you will never go any higher than you think.

*Discipline is the refining fire by which
talent becomes ability*

Roy L Smith

CHAPTER 12

Rise Above Indiscipline

Discipline is what keeps us going when motivation fades. As Jim Rohn opines, it is the bridge between goals and accomplishment, necessity and productivity. Pursuing your dreams will not be a rosy affair all the time. You will encounter storms that will shake your resolve, and that's when discipline will guard you against falling back or giving up.

Discipline is an inconceivable force with which ordinary men can transform themselves into heroes. Discipline is the trademark of superstars. When you harness the power of discipline, you can create a mega life! Discipline will help you remain committed to a course even when it's uncomfortable, unattractive, and painful. With discipline, you can wage a successful war against mediocrity and incompetence that plague the lives of many.

Discipline is a mystic key that will open your doors of prosperity, happiness, accomplishment, and self-confidence. Discipline can radically change your destination. Discipline is the art of striving to become, the ceaseless battle to improve what we are and what

we do. It is the basic law of nature by which all living things strive for.

To achieve and fulfill your natural potential, you must allow discipline to reign supreme over your life. Most people have tremendous reservoirs of potential, loads of ambitions, fantastic goals, and lofty dreams. Their greatest undoing, however, is indiscipline. Are you in this category? All of us know friends, neighbors, or relatives who everyone says if only they were a bit serious. That is what indiscipline does. It sucks the power of your possibilities out of and leaves an empty shell.

Discipline is the power to self-regulate, the ability to remain accountable to oneself, the ability to rise above your weakness. Aristotle quipped that an undisciplined life is an insane life. Are you a disciplined person? Do you say what you do and do what you say? Do you align your aspirations with your actions and conduct? If you have any chance of rising to heights of accomplishments, then discipline must be your constant companion. The power of discipline is the ability to do what needs to be done, even when one does not feel like doing it. Taking responsibility for your life with martial grade discipline.

The good news is that the power of discipline is always available for you. All you need is to go forth and decide to commit yourself to the practice of discipline. Let your thoughts and actions be congruent. Decide what you want to achieve, formulate routines and rituals that will help you achieve it, and stick to them religiously. Consider these inspiring words by Dwayne Johnson “We do today what they won’t so that tomorrow we can accomplish what they can’t. Whether you succeed or not depends on how disciplined you are.

People are circumnavigating in the desert of scarcity, mediocrity, and failure not because they don’t have the ideas or because they don’t know the way. They are perishing because they have the wish and not the will and the desire but not the discipline. According to Robert Kiyosaki, “Self-discipline is the number one delineating factor between the rich, the middle class, and the poor.” It is that plain simple, the cost of success is discipline. Are you willing to pay the price? Is your desire for greatness powerful enough to withstand the pain of discipline? Jim Rohn cautions that we must either suffer the pain of discipline or the pain of regret and disappointment

Let me ask you this, where would you be if you were always disciplined? If you lived and acted in line with your highest aspirations? What if you never got distracted, that you always remained true to your loftiest dreams and chased and worked for them every day without fail? What will your life look like? Do you get how extraordinary your life can be? The choice is yours; it is never late to take charge of your life, and time is now. Recapture your sovereign power to drive and direct your life.

Discipline will strengthen your character. Realistically we are all vulnerable to dropping the ball; I have been a victim of procrastination, I should have written ten books, but here I'm writing my third book. Things I should have done I have not, and some things that I shouldn't do I have done! And this is the beginning of transformation, the appreciation that lack of discipline is a catastrophe that can extinguish the very flames that illuminate your life. Indiscipline is what keeps you limited! Renounce the lure of indiscipline and elevate your life. Discipline is making hard decisions when the easier ones are available. That is what sifts the wheat from the chaff. It divides success and failure, will and wish.

You are potentially the most influential person we know. You can become an authority in your field. It is possible to rekindle your true self and seize victory from the verge of defeat. You can craft a brand-new future as Dan Kennedy enthused that Self-discipline is the magic power that makes you virtually unstoppable. You can become a powerful transformational force in the world. All you need is to embrace self-discipline.

I like the words of Jim Rohn that rewards for lack of discipline are immediate but minor, while the rewards of persistent self-discipline are great but delayed. Immediate rewards for lack of discipline is a fun day at the beach. A future reward of discipline is becoming the owner of the beach. Do not choose today's pleasure at the expense of tomorrow's fortune. My high school principal Mr. Kimani always said that we must have delayed gratification.

Nobody can supervise and enforce self-discipline. You have to develop and cultivate self-discipline by fortifying your will to live up to the true measure of your potential. Life has two distinct paths, a life of ease, no struggle, no grind, no thrill, temporary bliss, poverty, and a life of discipline, grit, sacrifice, happiness, and prosperity. Both paths are available for your choice. It is your call.

Discipline is a vehicle that will take you to the station of a good life. You have most of the knowledge that you need. Over the years, you have gathered and accumulated the most transformational ideas, yet your life has intriguingly remained the same, why? The answer is simple you don't have the discipline to apply all that you know. As Robin Sharma writes, ideas are worth nothing unless backed by application. If you fail to adopt self-discipline as part of your daily practice, the dreams you pursue will be elusive. Your life deserves your development; thus, be disciplined.

*Everyone has unique gifts and talents.
What you love is what you're gifted at. To be
completely happy, to live a completely
fulfilled life, you have to do what you love.*

Barbara Sher

CHAPTER 13

Find Your Gift, Elevate Your Value.

You are naturally equipped with unique, exciting, and incredible capabilities. You harbor something precious, a solution to problems of the universe. You are not a statistic. There is a particular assignment set out for you! You are here not by accident but by design. The world needs your gifts and talents. You will not live a pleasant life if your gifts are dormant and unused.

King Solomon wrote in Proverbs 18 that a man's gift would make room for him and bring him before great men. Your gift is your fortune. Growing up, we were compelled to study, work hard and get jobs. Nobody talked about our passion and our gifts. There is a false doctrine imprinted into the minds of many that they made to work for others. The philosophy is pegged on the desire for material possession at the expense of all-around personal actualization.

There is something that you feel competent in, more than anything else. There is this one thing that you are so confident about. The one you think you

know; you know. That is your gift. The world needs your gifts manifested; your talents showcased. Your greatness is wrapped in your gifts. When you find your gift, it will lead you to your purpose. Your gift is naturally placed in you. They lay dormant, awaiting your awareness to unleash them.

What you do well with the least amount of effort is your gift. Take a chance on yourself. Work on your talent, acquire skills that will help better your ability. Refine your flair, do whatever the necessary, develop, and fine-tune your gifts. That is your surest route to the top. Make your talent a craft, your trademark, and your passion.

I love the words of Roy T Bennet “Have faith in yourself. You are braver than you think, more talented than you know, and capable of more than you imagine. “You have unique gifts, find them and pursue them with all that you have.

The world-beaters, the history makers, and global superstars have worked in areas they are most gifted in. Imagine if Lionel Messi became a carpenter, Michael Jackson never sang music, and Michael Jordan didn't play basketball, imagine the joy the world could have missed. You are robbing the world of great

pleasure by dilly-dallying and second-guessing your gifts.

Stop being a jack of all trades and a master of none. Stop spreading yourself too thin. Identify what you are good at and spend the rest of your life refining it. You cannot be good at everything, but you can surely be great at the one thing that you are made for. You cannot be world-class in a terrain you are ill-equipped in. Do not lower your competitive advantage by venturing where you have no gifts and talent to thrive at the level of world-class. The treasures that you seek will be delivered by your refined and fine-tuned aptitude, so get to work!

The world is full of exceptionally gifted people living average miserable lives. Gifts without hard work cannot deliver value to you. Unless you work hard, your talent will be useless. Myles Munroe once remarked that the graveyard is the wealthiest place on the planet. There you will find loads of unsung music, unwritten books, and astonishing discoveries that never saw the light of the day. Are you going to deny the world the splendor of your gifts?

“...You can do something extraordinary, and something that a lot of people can’t do. And if you have the

opportunity to work on your gifts, it seems like a crime not to. I mean, it's just weakness to quit because something becomes too hard..."

— Morgan Matson

Unlocking the power of your gift requires repulsive work ethics. It is not a walk in the park. As Erica Jong said, everyone has talent. What is rare is the courage to follow the talent to the dark place where it leads. Hold fast and remain true to your gift. To manifest and express your talents is your gift to the world. Don't be selfish; the world is longing and waiting for a gift from you.

Whatever you were created to do is within your reach. God has blessed each of us with an inherent capacity to become what we were destined to become. Myles Munroe says that your future is not ahead of you. It is within you. Your gift is not in another city and is not in another country; it is within you. You're engineered and fashioned with a gift that will help you serve your purpose. Therefore, if you fail to use your gifts, you cannot serve your purpose.

A gift cannot be taught in school; it can only be refined and polished. Michelangelo had no Ph.D. in arts, yet his works are still awing to the world centuries

later. Pele did not attend a football academy, yet he is the greatest footballer of all time. Ludwig van Beethoven was not a professor of music, but he is still one of the most admired musician's, centuries after his death. How well you use your gift will determine the longevity of your name and the legacy of your life.

The value of your life springs from your gift, People can fire you. They can steal your valuables, but no one can snatch your dream from you. Do you believe someone can steal Eliud Kipchoge's running prowess? My opinion may be politically incorrect, but I have to tell you that failure to find and use your gift will significantly diminish your value in the world. Find your talent, elevate your value.

The world pays you for the value you render to it. Find your gift, rarify it with relentless refinement, and it will open for you the doors of fortune. Skills can earn you a living, but your aptitude will earn you a fortune. The wealth and impact you desire to make will only be possible if you manifest your glorious talents. Your imagination is a benchmark of what you can become. It presages where your gifts can take you.

You can't outwit fate by trying to stand on the sidelines and place little side bets about the outcome of life. Either you wade in and risk everything to play the game, or you don't play at all. And if you don't play, you can't win." –Judith McNaught

CHAPTER 14

DARE GREATLY

Life favors the bold, the world as we know is a product of daring people that chose to leave the harbor of comfort and safety and wade into the murky waters of risk to chase their dreams. The eccentrics and misfits who dared to see the world, not at it was but what it would it could be! These heroes dared greatly to walk to uncharted territories and changed the world. I urge you to dare pursue your dreams no matter how implausible they may appear.

Here is your life; how are you going to live it? Theodore Roosevelt advised that it is far better to dare mighty things, win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight knows not victory nor defeat. Are you one of the poor souls who drift through life under the curse of conformity and safety? Well, if that is the case, this is a redemption call. The moment to venture out of the cage and boldly take the road towards your destiny is now.

The world is awash with brilliant individuals who, with the boldness of courage and daredevil bravery, altered the course of history. Hellen Keller admonished that life is either a daring adventure or nothing. I encourage you to shed the lethargic tendencies and live life on full throttle. Remember the story of the two bicycle mechanics who ushered in the era of human flight. The Wright brothers were inspired by a man by the name Otto Lilienthal. The legend died on the course of trying his flying glider. However, despite the dangers they faced, the brothers dared greatly and produced a masterpiece that forever changed the world. Now, do you still believe that your dreams are impossible to achieve?

It is the time to push the envelope, and it is the moment to dare mightily. It is the stretch to seize the road less traveled and test the limits of what is possible. Dare to elevate yourself from a run-of-the-mill person to a truly exceptional character. No one has accomplished a triumph by hiding in the shadow of average. On August 1492, 41-year old Christopher Columbus led a group of sailors on a journey to nowhere. They were determined to go to the East by sailing west! How daring can that be, sailing west to an endless ocean in a bid to get a sea route to the East?

Although they did get to India as anticipated, these guys landed in the Promised Land, America. When you dare, you may even achieve more than you planned or expected.

Let go of the fear that yokes you in the dungeon of the ordinary. Let the daring pull of your dreams chaperon your steps. You are potent beyond comprehension. Pursue what you want with all that you have, steady your nerves, steel your will, and face every challenge on the way. Raise your spirit to the skies and situate your feet on the ground. You will become an unstoppable triumphant force, irresistible and irreversible force of transformation! Let today herald your new life, fearless, boundless, and limitless!

Switch the button inside you, from surviving to thriving, from fear to courage, from indecision to decisiveness, from lethargy to energy. Dare to live the life that you have imagined, become what you want! Slay imaginary dragons that inhabit the route to your greatness. Rise above the ordinary, resist the urge to live in the defined shell and venture into untested waters and chart a new way! Get inspiration from the words of Robert Frost, two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.

Sacrifice what you are for what you can become. Transform yourself into a game-changer. Drain the reservoirs of your powers chasing the lofty dreams and aspirations of your heart. Don't spare your potential; you need it not in the next life. Harken to the sweet words of Hunter S. Thompson that Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming "Wow! What a Ride!"

Let the embers of your dreams burn day and night, let the visions of your life become a permanent fixture in your mind. Dare to outgrow your weakness and drown your critics with unforeseeable feats. Trash your haters with unimaginable exploits. Surprise all and sundry with meticulous living. A mega life is waiting for you to man up (and can I say woman up). Rise and divorce the miserable life of whining and wishing. You are better than that. John Mason says, to small thinkers, everything looks like a mountain. The grandest things are, in some ways, the easiest to do because there is so little competition.

Dare to be a genesis of a generation in your family and community. You are the one you have been

waiting for! It is time for a paradigm shift. The life that you desire is on the other side of fear. There is no life for cowards, only existence. For how long will you allow your immense potential to stay dormant? Wake up and dare!

“If I could describe myself in one word, it would be hungry! Hungry to improve myself, hungry to succeed, hungry to inspire and help others, and most of all I’m just plain hungry.” - Anonymous

CHAPTER 15

BE HUNGRY

Success can be detrimental if it makes you complacent, languorous, and comfortable. You become a one-time wonder. The secret of greatness is unyielding tenacity powered by the hunger to improve and become better continually. When you lose your hunger, you lose your ticket to excellence. Greatness is sired by a rapacious appetite to be and do more. I love the words of Arnold Schwarzenegger; “for me, life is continuously being hungry.” The meaning of life is not simply to exist, to survive, but to move ahead, go up, achieve, and conquer.

The heights you strive for will require you to never settle for less but rather be hungry to flourish. There is an old saying that says the biggest room on the planet is the room for improvement. Be hungry to improve your performance daily, hone your skills, and polish your gifts. Never give up the desire and longing to be greater and superior to your circumstances. Be hungry to the point that your dream becomes a dazzling obsession. Develop untamable hunger to the point that if you derail from the course of your destiny, life becomes dull and bearable.

Hunger is a significant delimitation factor between those that are great and mediocre, those that succeed, and those that fail, those that wish, and those that act. If you want to rise to the highest echelons of your power, you must protect, nurse, and nurture your hunger. When you are hungry, you cannot give up. When you are hungry, you cannot oversleep. When you are hungry, you cannot dawdle; when you are hungry, you cannot give or accept excuses. Success comes to those that are hungry every day.

Every day, be prepared for inconvenience, discomfort, and unease if you want to savor success. You need to stay hungry if you want to win the battle for your future. To break endless generational cycles of poverty, playing small and mediocrity, you must fuel your hunger and desire to win. To become great than anyone thought possible, you need to stay hungry to rise to the rare realm legendary! Tomorrow is not promised. You do not have time. Get it done now today.

Wake up every day hungry, seething with unbridled passion. When you are hungry, your creativity skyrockets. Once you are hungry, you will not be contented with the little. You will raise your game and hunt down every dream that you have with a

ruthless eminence. When hunger consumes you, ideas will germinate in your mind, strategies will emanate, and resources will come to the fore. Paulo Coelho wrote that when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it. The universe will help you when you become hungry enough.

The problem is many people cannot sustain the hunger. They cave in the sight of the lavish meal of procrastination. They become lured by the delicious waft of complacency and get tempted by the cozy comfort of average. Where is your hunger, my friend? Where is your desire for greatness? Is this all you that you can be? Tell me, is this the farthest you can go? Wake up from your slumber, Seize this moment and rekindle your erstwhile burning desire. Ignite your enthusiasm and stoke the embers of your hunger. The superior version of you is waiting to be unleashed! Be hungry, thirst for greatness.

To live up to your highest ideals, you got to be hungry. To radiantly manifest the glorious gifts, you have to be hungry. It is time to turn into a new leaf. To realize your vocation, you have to stay hungry. Hunger is a driver to great destinations and an enabler of extraordinary feats. Arnold Schwarzenegger pumped iron for 5 hours, attended classes, and laid bricks for

sustenance. He fitted all these activities in a day. Some years later, Arnold won Mr. Universe, starred in several best-selling movies, and later became the governor of California.

Cristiano Ronaldo is well known for his insatiable hunger to continue going for greatness even after reaching the top. The 35-year-old Portuguese maestro is one of the hardest-working athletes on the planet. The living legend is giving teenage prodigies a run for their money.

“I work because I’m hungry. I’m hungry because I have goals. Those goals are based on my dreams, and my dreams will soon become my reality.” — Anonymous

“People are usually afraid of change because they fear the unknown. But the single greatest constant of history is that everything changes.” Yuval Noah.

CHAPTER 16

Embrace Change

According to Peter Drucker, we live in an era of accelerated change, overwhelming complexity, and tremendous competition. A small firm in Africa is battling in the marketplace with a Wall Street blue-chip company. What you learned in school will become irrelevant unless you keep updating yourself with the new developments. A study has it the amount of knowledge is doubling after every two years. Thus if you don't keep learning in Five years, you will be a greenhorn in your field!

You cannot become the best version of yourself by remaining the current you. It is the change that will midwife your growth. Embrace it, for there can be no growth without change. If your plans are not working, change them and try more effective ones. When riding a dead horse, the best option is to dismount. Some people buy new whips and shout obscenities, but as long as the horse dies, there will be no movement. You owe it to yourself to climb off the dead horse. It would be the only option you have if you were to get to your destination.

Embracing change is a commitment to growth, I love the words of Billy Cox “Life will only change when you become more committed to your dreams than you are to your comfort zone” It is Abraham Maslow who taught that at any particular time, we have two options either to step forward into growth or retreat to safety. My high school principal implored us not to be rigid and impervious to change. Refusing to change is refusing to live and grow.

The most significant impediment to change is the fear of the unknown. People prefer the safe harbor of known. It is the survival instinct of our brain. The brain places a high premium on our survival as an adaptive mechanism that helped us survive harsh habitats. Although the threats have been significantly reduced by civilization, the brain in its unguarded moments reverts into its ancient program. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley said that nothing is as painful to the human mind as a pronounced and sudden change. Therefore you must learn that changing your life will get resistance from your brain. That is a war you must win.

To get to your destinations and to accomplish glorious feats that you long for. You have to adapt yourself to the changing world. Walt Disney opines,

“Times and conditions change so rapidly that we must keep our aim constantly focused on the future.” John Mason says that when Henry Ford built his first car, he forgot to put a reverse gear, but this was changed and is a little known about the mishap because he was willing to change. Change and modify the way you live your life to live a life of purpose and impact.

We are a product of habits. We are a total of what we repeatedly do. From time to time, in the process of growth, it behooves us to change our practices to become better well-equipped persons. The process of change is frighteningly painful. It is where wheat and chaffs separate. It is a pain that makes change so unattractive and inconvenient. You can only be truly successful if you have the spine to stomach the pain and discomfort of change. I have to tell you this plainly. To change your life is no mean feat. It will require a gritty determination that will hoist you above the power of pain.

Yesterday’s world will not be tomorrow’s world, stay adept and stand on guard. To succeed in the continuously changing world, you have to be adaptable and flexible. Les Brown says that at this age, you have to run to remain standing. Once you become complacent, the world will outrun you and entomb you

into the graveyard of irrelevance. I urge you to embrace change, constantly work on yourself. The pain of change is better than the pain of regret.

The change will come in your environment, workplace, or even government policy. You will have to adapt yourself accordingly. Failure to change with change will make you a victim of circumstances. Jim dean postulates that although you may not have the power to change the wind direction, you can adjust your sails to get to your destination.

“Start a crusade in your life to dare to be your very best.” Become a yardstick of quality. Do the right thing regardless of what others think. William Danforth

CHAPTER 17

Make Excellence Your Trademark

The world is full of people who just do enough to get by. Organizations and companies are full of employees just doing enough not to be sacked. That is the tragedy of this age. Most people are living the life of bare minimum. They get to work by the exact time specified and leave at the exact time as scheduled. There is no urge or incentive to do and become more. The spirit of mediocrity is entrenched into their psyche, it becomes a way of life that infiltrates their thinking, mannerism, and life's bearing even in their private life.

I urge you to adopt excellence as your trademark and leave a trail of distinction where you go and in whatever you touch. Raise the standards, do the best that can be done in whatever you find your hand to do. Perform your duties like Michael Jordan played basketball and Cristiano Ronaldo played football. Refuse to settle for anything but the very best.

Imbibe excellence in all facades of your life. Be the best father or mother to your kids. Do everything that you can do to mold the beautiful angels in your

hands to become the finest human beings they were created to be. Be a blessing to your partner. Let them thank God day and night that you came into their life. They have chosen you from 7 billion people globally, don't be a disappointment, burden, or a scar in their life!

Be the star that illuminates your workplace, shine by radiating the highest standards of excellence. Let your colleagues celebrate that work with them. Be an indispensable blessing to your boss. Excellence is an ongoing personal effort to rise to the pinnacle of greatness. It entails the conviction to surpass the standards and expectations of others on you and setting new ones. Somerset Maugham once said that if you refuse to take anything but the best, you will find it. It is the time to reject anything but the best.

Do you want to vivify the world with your gifts? Do you want to manifest your glorious potential? If yes, then excellence is your only option! You have to set your mind on a high pedestal of doing the very best you can in all your endeavors. Let excellence become your description. If people describe your life, conduct, and work with one word, it would be excellent!

Become an enemy of average, loathe okay with passion, become uncomfortable with decent because excellent is what you should be. Let every aspect of your life testify to your commitment to excellence. You will be amazed by the trajectory your life will take and the heights you will scale.

Draw your line in the sand. Make your decision now and start taking action to really live your dream. By not taking bold steps to live your dream, not only are you missing out on fully living, but the world is missing out on the greatness you have to offer. Les Brown

CHAPTER 18

Be Decisive

It is Michele Jennae who said, “One thing I’ve learned is that the road rarely rises to meet you until you’ve begun walking.” You have to take a step and decide. Indecision is a plague that has entombed great dreams, talents, and glorious possibilities. Despite the great things we have discussed, the buck stops with you. The ability to make decisions will determine whether or not you will live up to your inordinate potential. With your head bubbling with ideas and noble intentions, your waterloo could be indecision. Precious reader, I implore you to be decisive. It will save you from the trap that has floored many.

It decisions that will help your ideas to materialize into reality. Five years from now, you will land at a destination; your capacity to decide daily will determine the destination that you will arrive. Remove hesitancy from your life before it erodes your enthusiasm. Everyone has excellent targets, but most of them never release the arrow. They end up just having great intentions but zero actions. That is a tragedy that you can avoid. Be ready to be a decisive force; dilly-dallying is not a quality of winners!

Without decisiveness, your ideas, dreams, and intentions will become wishful thinking. Robin Sharma wrote that ideation without implementation is just mere delusion. Decision-making requires courage to overcome the fear of uncertainty. The fear of the unknown has bedeviled humanity for eons. I want to break to you today that nothing is certain. Even this life that we have can be taken from us at any moment. You are here today, and tomorrow you are gone. Steve Jobs said that you could only connect the dots going backward. Therefore worry not for no one is sure of anything in this life!

John Mason said that the train failure runs on the rails of indecision. One way to remain in the mud of mediocrity is certainly indecision. Indecision will clip your wings and ground your flight. The reason why many fail in their undertakings is that they are not decisive enough. They decide to do something, and then once they encounter a challenge, they back down from their decision. Zig Ziglar, when obstacles arise, you change your direction to reach your goal; you do not change your decision to get there.

What you are is a product of your past decisions. If you reflect carefully, you can recall what decisions were instrumental to shaping the person that

you are. Verily I say to you the person you wind up to be in the next decade will be determined by your ability to make decisions. Harvey Cox admonished that not deciding is a decision itself and will shape the person you will become.

Anyone can be angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not easy.

Aristotle

CHAPTER 19

Master Your Emotions

Emotions are robust; in fact, they actively influence how you feel, relate with others, and how productive you are at a particular moment. We are not emotional beings. We exist in an ocean of emotions. Feelings can be positive or negative. They can build or wreck, dwindle or fortify your resolve to achieve great things. They can go either way on you. Mastering your emotions is a stepping stone to self-mastery. Smart management of your emotions can deliver spectacular feats to you. Without a shadow of a doubt, emotions can change the course of your life at any particular moment. We have had wars caused by the mismanagement of emotions. Families have broken at the spur of a moment, lives have been lost at the heat of the moment. Jim Rohn says that civilization is the intelligent management of emotions.

Several powerful, life-changing emotions highly influence the life of a human being. When you master these emotions, you drastically change your life. These emotions include fear, disgust, resolve, desire and gratitude. How one channels them determines the

kind of life they lead. It can be successful, happy and vibrant, or poor, lonely and desperate. It boils down to whether you control your emotions or they control you.

Fear is one of the most powerful emotions, it can deliver a devastating blow to your success prospects, or it can also launch a flight that can take you to the high heights of accomplishments. Collin smith writes that fear is a power that can grip your soul. It will fight against your faith. It will battle for control of your mind and your heart. If there is a chance that you will live up to your true potential, you must not allow fear to control you. Many folks have sacrificed their dreams in the alter fear; they have lost their enthusiasm and allowed fear to paralyze them.

Fear, to start with, is a completely normal feeling; it is a mechanism by which your system communicates to you. It is designed to inform you of the potential danger that you could face. Fear whispers into your ears something like crossing this bridge is dangerous since you can fall off; starting that business is too much of a risk. Rather than freezing in your steps because of fear, you can turn fear into your ally. Use fear to propel yourself to action and work extra hard

and with the keenness of mind to avert the dangers pointed out by the fear.

Let fear give you some insight rather than allowing it to close your shop. Are you afraid you will fail? That is a message from your soul that failure will be your fate unless you change a few things. Embrace your fears and turn them into your allies in your journey to success.

I love the words of Ferdinand Cox that the most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire. Desire is the fuel of progress in life. Once you cultivate an intense desire to accomplish a feat you cherish, you become unstoppable; you become a dangerous living force. I recall when poverty and hardship threatened to bury my dreams. I had an insanely intense desire to further my education. The odds were stacked against my somewhat lofty idea. Many people around me thought I was out of touch with reality. I was ready to do anything to find myself in a classroom. When I went to seek admission to Kieni secondary school, the principal, Mr. Kimani, asked me what I would do to pay the school fees in kind. I told him that I was willing to become a watchman by night and a student by the day. The crazy part of it is that I was serious! Here is

an excerpt from my book Beyond Limits documenting my mood then.

Ultimately my unwavering desire to acquire an education won. I developed an untamable urge to go to any lengths as long as I would get an education. On 21st November 2006, I set out to my former primary school. I walked fifteen kilometers from Kahiga shopping center to Oldonyo Mara primary school. As I trod by the sides of the road, I would bite my lower lips in sheer commitment any time a negative thought crossed my mind. I walked with an aggressive conviction. The conviction was so intense to the point I felt haunted. I arrived at Oldonyo Mara Primary school at exactly 2.00 Pm hungry but hopeful.

Desire is the source of extraordinary power. It is an oasis of all achievements. Whatever you are chasing, the intensity of your desire will determine success. I dare say that it is desire and not the ability that determines success more often than not. Mohamed Ali, one of the greatest boxers of all time, said that “Champions aren’t made in gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them a desire, a dream, a vision. They have to have the skill and the will. But the will must be stronger

than the skill.” Ability without desire is like a new car with deflated tires.

Nurturing unbeatable desire require ultra-
clarity, specificity, and vivacity. If your endeavors are
vague and hazy, it will be hard for them to gather
enough pull to generate a sustained intense desire to
achieve them. What is it that you want to achieve?
Create an excellent mental picture of what it would be
like to achieve dreams. Let be vivid and animated, and
any moment your desires want to wane, remind
yourself what it is you want to achieve. Consider the
advice of Jack Youngblood, whatever you are doing in
life, obstacles don’t matter very much. Pain or other
circumstances can be there, but if you want to do a job
bad enough, you’ll find a way to get it done.

Disgust is a negative emotion that can be
properly channeled to impact a person’s life greatly. If
your current state of affairs pisses you enough, you will
wake up and try to remedy the situation. It is the feeling
of having enough of something that you can no longer
stomach it. It is getting disgusted with your situation,
environment, and circumstances that stir you into
action. Growing up in a humble household, scarcity,
hunger, anxiety, and powerlessness characterized our
lives. I hated poverty with passion; it disgusted me

greatly. There is a thin line between poverty and slavery. One will never be free unless one is free from poverty. The disgust for poverty was a driving force. I was determined to liberate myself from the yoke of poverty that drooped over my head.

Disgust can help you to avoid disgraceful habits. There was this man, a respectable, well-educated man. In a feat of binge alcoholism, he walked urinating in the market in broad daylight. It was such a disgusting spectacle, a 50-year-old man publicly displaying his genitalia in the presence of children and women. When he regained his senses, the man was humiliated and disgusted with his behavior that he never partook in the bitter liquid again. Despite being an addict, he did not need to go to rehab; disgust was enough! Do not just sit and whine; if you don't like something, wake up and change it. Jim Rohn says if you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree!

One of the most critical emotions is the resolve to pursue a specific path. It is generated by the commitment and conviction to a certain course. It is a firm decision to pursue a specific course of action. There is no success without resolve. Resolve that keeps you going long after motivation and enthusiasm wanes. It is hard to live your dreams. It is taxing to work for

dreams, your spirit will tire, but resolve will keep you in there during your low moments.

Resolve will lead you to unfamiliar paths. It gives you the air of invulnerability that you need on the journey to the top. I recall when I repeated high school after failing on the first attempt. I resolved that come what may, I had to pass my final exam, nothing would stop me. I would sleep at night, imagine myself failing again and I would rise and study. I had no alternative; I was either going to pass or pass. That is what resolve does to you, become devoted to your goals. I love the words of Richelle E. Goodrich “If you plan to build walls around me, know this—I will walk through them.”

There is no chance, no destiny, no fate that can circumvent or hinder or control the firm resolve of a determined soul, advised Ella Wheeler Wilcox. There is nothing in between you and your destination when you have the resolve. If you have the resolve, you will get there one way or another. I implore you to choose a path you want to follow in life and resolve to stick to it no matter what happens. Time is now, there is no extra time and penalties in life. You have to win in the regulation time. “There is no avoidance in delay,” said Aeschylus, Agamemnon.

Gratitude is a great emotion. Simply put, gratitude refers to the value of appreciation, gratefulness, and thankfulness. It is one of the rarest qualities. Most folks tend to pay a lot of attention to the things going against them than those going for them. If you randomly ask anyone how they are doing, they would probably say terrible because maybe their livelihoods are greatly affected by one thing or another. People fail to appreciate that we have lost millions of people in the same period due to war, diseases, accidents, and natural calamities. Some people would gladly take your place without a second thought.

There is a lot to be thankful for in your life. Do you know some people were born the same hour you were born, who are dead, others are bedridden, others are maimed, and some did not see even their first birthday? Have you ever visited a hospital and see how people are battling life-threatening conditions? What was it that you were complaining about again?

Learn to appreciate the little that you have as you chase bigger things. Be thankful for the time that has been given to you. It is impossible to value what you do not appreciate. Love and appreciate the people in your life. That partner or spouse that you have, do you know, chosen from a pool of 7 billion people?

You are a choice! Melody Beattie posits that gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. Put what we have insufficient and more. Turn denial into acceptance, chaos in order, and confusion into clarity.

Life is not a bed of roses. The world can be a mean and nasty place to live. There are times things will go haywire. Gratitude will lift and help you appreciate that your troubles are not permanent; by appreciating the positive aspect of your life, you generate enthusiasm and happiness that will help you live a happy and productive life. Lewis Howes said that “If you focus on what you have, you always have more. If you focus on what you don’t have, you never tire of it.

Be thankful for the sun, rain, fresh air, health, family, friends, and colleagues. There are countless things to be thankful for. I thank God for my big eyes; they decorate my face! I love this idea of greetings from Les Brown. If someone asks you how you are doing, tell them, “I’m doing better than good and better than most,” Even as you seek to get more and great things in your life. Appreciate the good in your life. It rekindles hope in your downtime and inspires you to hope for better days ahead. Come on, brethren, be thankful. Remember the good and noble things people

have done in your life. The love of your mother when you used to soil your clothes and the patience of your nursery school teacher. No matter how bad your situation is, there is something to be grateful for.

“Everything you can imagine is real.”

Pablo Picasso

CHAPTER 20

Unlock Your Creative Genius

We are in the midst of creativity; everything around us was once a distant imagination. Earlier in this book, we talked about the enormous power of our minds. Creativity is the first fruit of a well-utilized brain. Creativity is what makes human beings tick. Creativity is the essential function of the brain. Deep down, in every person, there is a creative power that awaits provocation. Creativity is the knack of imagining things that are not to make them things that are. It has fueled the monumental transformation that has characterized human existence.

It begins with an imagination, which germinates into an idea, the ideas lead to action, and there you have, something from nothing. Creativity has seen humanity developed from hunting and gathering to nanotechnology. It has ushered the ultra-modern world where human beings will soon become multi-planetary. The world's foremost entrepreneurs such as Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, and Richard Branson have set their eyes on space as the next frontier! The legendary French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte once said that imagination rules the world. I can't agree more with those words.

Your creative power is waiting for you to stir it. You are endowed with a brilliant creative power. This power is available to everyone conscious enough to reach into their mind and stir it. Look around and see the marvels of creativity, your phone, car, clothes, gadgets, airplanes, and spaceships. We live in a vibrant ocean of creativity. The human conditions have greatly improved if you juxtapose the current society with caveman society. The transformation testifies to the fact that YOU are a brilliant creative force ready to be unleashed.

Your Creative genius becomes available to you when you drift from the beaten path and carve out your path. The problem is that our brain is programmed to take the path of ease, convenience, familiarity, and comfort. Creativity is going against the grain, questioning conceptions and assumptions. I love the words of George Bernard Shaw “The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man.” Don’t just accept things as they are, but think about how they can be.

Creativity is an ever-present phenomenon in life. It is manifested in the form of ideas, culminating in ideas formed over time through experiences,

concepts, and exposure. It involves a combination of a variety of concepts to bring forth a better variant of the existing concept.

To raise your banner into the stratosphere of greatness and become an exceptional creator, you will have to embrace an innovative thinking mindset. Interrogate your ideas, twist them, rinse them, tweak them, unwrap them and test them. Kevin Systrom started with an app called Burbn, which aimed to help people checking in their location. He kept toying with his app and, in the process, created a masterpiece: Instagram, a company he sold for approximately 1 billion dollars to Facebook in 2012. He is currently the CEO of Instagram, a platform that has over 800 million users monthly.

Your mind is a wellspring of ideas, and those ideas have the potential to change the course of history completely. Do not allow your ideas to just float in your mind; entertain them, and interact with their possibilities. I have a conviction that you have greatness within your reach. Probably you are the next Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, or Jeff Bezos. You have been living off others people's creativity. You travel around in automobiles because of Henry Ford's idea. You can close continents in a matter of hours because of the

Wright brothers' idea. You listen to radio courtesy to Nicolai Tesla. Stop belittling your ideas, imagination, and creativity. Research has it that you can train your mind to think through ideas by forming new neurons linkage through a change in behaviour and thought process. The learning capacity of the brain is known as neuroplasticity. Teach your brain to sieve through your ideas creatively. You never know!

“Don’t downgrade your dream just to fit your reality. Upgrade your conviction to match your destiny.” Stuart Scott

CHAPTER 21

Hustle

There is a significant factor that determines where you will become the person you know you can be. One thing that secures you a spot at the table of greatness. The ultimate defining factor between them that succeed and those that don't. It is work, ladies and gentlemen! I love the words of Marcus Washling, "Those at the top of the mountain didn't fall there." Every success you see, the greatness that inspires you, the superstars and the gurus that you admire are a product of, in words Will Smith, "ridiculous, sickening work ethic."

The dreams you cherish, the visions you hold dear, will translate to reality if you have the spine to work for them, day and night, in spring, winter, summer, and autumn. Through thick and thin, pain and discomfort, remember the wise word of Abraham Lincoln, "Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle."

The dreams you cherish will not become true through charity, magic, luck, miracles, or witchcraft. They will actualize from numbing hard work. When you create a culture of doing a little more than enough, you will hoist yourself in a different plane from the

multitudes who only do enough. There is no traffic in the extra mile, and that is where hard work takes you.

The surest way to transform your life is through hard work. Hard work becomes your trademark when you have undivided devotion to your goals. You become obsessed with building your future and improve yourself. Success is not a mystery; it is an open book. It is hardest working farmer has the best crops, and the hardest working entrepreneur will thrive in his trade.

Someone may be more talented than but you can beat them if you outwork them. Tim Notke said that hard work beats talent if talent does not work hard. If you put more hours, more passion, and zeal into your work, you will get to your promised land. The problem is that most powers work hard only when someone is supervising them. When someone is pushing and prodding them, it is induced hard work and not inspired hard work.

To become that icon, attain the mega life you fantasize with, you must match your intentions with hard work. Most people talk grind and walk lethargy. I agree with the words of Prabakaran Thirumalai, who said work, and you'll get what you need; work harder, and you'll get what you want. The good book admonished in proverbs 6:6, "go to the ant, O

sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise”. The ants have a philosophy of getting things done no matter what. The ants have a culture of doing all they can do. Adopt the industry of an ant and put in massive work on your intentions. That’s how greatness is achieved.

Savor these words by Les Brown, if you want a thing bad enough to go out and fight for it, to work day and night for it, to give up your time, your peace and sleep for it. If all that you dream and scheme is about it, and life seems useless and worthless without it... if you gladly sweat for it and fret for it and plan for it and lose all your terror of the opposition for it. If you simply go after that thing that you want with all your capacity, strength and sagacity, faith, hope and confidence and stern pertinacity, if neither cold, poverty, famine, gout, sickness nor pain, of body and brain, can keep you away from the thing you want, if dogged and grim you beseech and beset it, with the help of God, **YOU WILL GET IT!**

THE END

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