

**SUCCESS
FOR TEENS:**



• THE •
**Missing
Manual**

WHY DO ADULTS GET ALL
THE SUCCESS BOOKS?

TOMMY LATHAM

AUTHOR OF THE DAD FORMULA

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**"DO YOU WANNA END UP LIKE ME,
IN A VAN, DOWN BY THE RIVER?"**

– Chris Farley, *SNL* 1993

**"IT IS BETTER TO GIVE...
THAN TO NOT."**

– Steve Martin, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* 1988

**"IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING STUPID,
IT REALLY BETTER BE WORTH IT."**

– Tommy, (*this book*) 2022



FOR MY 10 KIDS.

And for my wife, who sometimes has to deal
with me as her 11th kid.



Tommy Latham

Dad of 10, Uncle of 53, and a clumsy husband.

Credited as a top creative branding expert, Tommy Latham mixes his adventure of raising 10 kids with his experience as the creative powerhouse behind best-selling authors, speakers, coaches, as well as some of the biggest names in the personal development, health, fitness and entertainment industries. Tom has had his work featured on ESPN, The Today Show, Top Chef, The Wall Street Journal and more.

Tommy has launched a restaurant, multiple other business startups, and is a High School Coach, speaker, marathon runner, pilot, musician and a National Ski Patrol wilderness First Responder.

Tommy coaches stay-at-home Dads, work-from-home Dads, and working Dads on how to build a successful business from home, make more than you ever could at a day job, find work-life balance, and still be a rock star Dad.

Other books by Tommy Latham:

The Dad Formula // How to Achieve Work-Life Balance and Be a Rockstar Dad

Walks with Dad // 52 Talks to Position Your Son for Success

Stuck at the Top // When High Performance Men Are Low Performance Dads

How to Raise Analog Kids in a Digital World... and Not Make Them Hate You For It

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**TIME
TO GET
OFF THE
WRONG
PLANE**

When you get on a plane, the flight attendant always says the same thing. Say you're flying to Seattle, so they'll say this, *"This is United Flight 345 to Seattle. If you're not flying to Seattle, then you're on the wrong flight. This is the time to get off the plane."*

You have to know when to quit before you get too far. **And knowing when to quit is a whole lot different than being a quitter. Knowing when to quit is just plain smart.**

I once met the founder of Tyson – it's the meat company and conglomerate – a huge company. Not Mike Tyson the boxer. Other guy. Older. We were at a party, and trying to make small talk, I asked him if he could give me his one greatest piece of business advice.

He said, *"Sure. Here it is. It's not what I did, but what I DIDN'T do that made me successful. Knowing when to sell that bad company, to say no to a deal, to let an employee go..."*

Okay, so it's the same thing here. **Knowing when NOT to do something, or when to STOP doing something that isn't working out for you is more important than knowing WHAT to do.**

Now, that doesn't mean you're only focusing on the negative things in life. You should be prioritizing your day and your life more to hit the positives than you are trying to avoid the negatives. But you also have to realize that the negatives do exist.

A true optimist is someone who recognizes negativity, but keeps it in its right place. A false optimist always thinks everything will be just fine, and they ignore the bad, until it's jumping right up and smacking them in the face. Too late.

A true optimist recognizes that some negative things are just temporary roadblocks that can be overcome, but other negative things are deal-breakers and should be cut loose as soon as possible.

That one troubled friend who needs some extra help from you is fine, but when that friend starts dragging you down mentally or emotionally, you have to know when to end that relationship.

Because sometimes it's good to be a quitter. To know when to say no. To walk away from a bad situation. To avoid a situation before you even get into it. Or to just get off that plane to Seattle.

**JUMPING
OFF
ROOFS**

Let's talk about investors. You know, those old people with money. The goal for an investor is to take the smallest risk possible and earn the highest reward possible. You know this already because you're not stupid.

I use the term "risk/reward ratio" to my kids all the time. It means this: If you're going to do something stupid, it better really be worth it.

Like, *"Hey Dad - I'm gonna jump off the roof."*

Dad: *"Uh, how much fun could that possibly be for how much you're probably going to get hurt?"*

My kids are like that. And I have 10 of them.

So you see, it's a high risk for a low reward. Now, a nice send on a massive terrain park feature? Yeah, totally worth it. Roof? No.

So back to the ratio, and old guys with ear hairs.

There's this billionaire investor named Paul Tudor Jones, and **one of his greatest successes is that he knows he can be wrong and still be successful.** How? It's because he's always looking for an investment with a 1:5 risk/reward ratio – where if he risks \$1, he believes he can make \$5.

So with that ratio, you can fail a few times, but you still make money, right? Compare that to jumping off the roof, where you're pretty much

GOING to get hurt, but you don't get much satisfaction out of it. That roof jump is like a 2:1 ratio. It's backwards. And it's sort of stupid.

1:5 ratios are like the entrepreneur who wanted to learn how to dunk a basketball. This is a business guy who didn't play much hoops. But he started on this personal journey to learn to dunk. So he recorded some YouTube videos of his progress along the way. Well, the next thing he knew, his YouTube videos were a big hit (I guess a ton of other people want to learn how to increase their vertical). Anyway, within a few years, he had turned a few videos into a million dollar business.

Actually, that's not a 1:5 ratio at all – that's like... a 1:1,000,000 or something ratio, because the "risk" to start was basically just the time it took to record and publish a few videos. But the rewards were huge!

When I look back over my own life, a lot of good things happened when I took small, calculated risks. Really just spending time on things and then *jumping* when the opportunity was right, but also fairly safe.

So when you're doing something risky – in school, in life, physically, romantically... think of the risk versus the reward. And think of rich, old, fat investors with 3 names and ear hair. No, don't.

**MOST
PEOPLE
AREN'T
EVIL, BUT
THEY ARE
WRONG.**

Most people are wrong. A lot. You, me. All of us. But we don't really see it that way. We tend to think that people are **evil**, instead of thinking that they're **wrong**.

Here's what I mean. We don't use the word "wrong" very often, but we do use all sorts of other nasty words to describe the people that think differently than us.

Think of one of your classmates who disagrees with you morally or politically. You're a lot more likely to say that this person is bad, or evil, than to simply say that they're wrong.

How about your teacher? Maybe they add a question to an exam that wasn't something you ever covered in class. That happened to me several times in high school and college. Do you think that teacher has it out for the whole class and wants to destroy all of you? Heck no. They're overworked and they made a mistake. In other words, they were wrong.

Think of the heads of companies that make huge mistakes. Or your local civic leaders, like your mayor or city council. Maybe you disagree with them politically and you feel that they're wrong, but really, they just want things to be good for their community (higher up politics... well that's a different story). Look back on great leaders in history, and very rarely do you find a

case where they would speak badly of someone, or especially defame or slander anyone. It's rare.

But it's just so much easier for us to assume people are evil, than wrong. And when we assume this, we often say (and write) stuff that's full of hate, rather than stuff that's full of kindness. *Especially on social media where you're more faceless.*

The vast majority of people are good, but everyone is wrong.

Out of 7 billion people on this planet, about 7 billion are good. Including you. But every single one of us does something wrong every day.

We make bad choices, we get short tempered, we don't try hard enough with our schoolwork. But it doesn't mean we're bad, or evil, or malicious.

The small amount of people that are truly bad are just noise. These are the people that we hear about in the news, on social media, or when we're gossiping. It's so misleading, because people that actually *try* to do bad to other people are... well, they're actually *really hard to find*.

**People that are wrong would be 100%.
People that are evil are just really rare.**

So remember, when someone butts heads with you, just realize that their belief may be wrong. It also may be right. But their intent isn't evil.

MAKE YOURSELF MORE LIKEABLE

You know the friends who whine that they can never get a date? Or... maybe that's you.

Here's two instantly fast solutions:

1.) Adjust your expectations

2.) Make yourself more likeable

One of my 7 sons was in high school and came home one day and said, *"Dad, no one really likes me."* I said, *"Okay, make yourself more likable."* I'm blunt like that. So we had a chat about the things you can do to the people around you to make yourself more likeable, and we quickly discovered his problem. He said, *"Well, I just don't really like*

any of them." AHA! I said, *"Well then, it's time to adjust your expectations."*

Adjusting your expectations is basically changing your standards with friends. And by that, I don't mean that you should hang with just anybody – whether we're talking a friend, or a special someone – You want to hang out with someone who's pretty awesome and amazing. But if you find that you're not getting any dates, or you don't have many friends, then maybe it's *you* that's being too picky. That vibe rubs off on others, then that feeling becomes mutual in both directions.

Learn to like more people by practicing it constantly.

Open up and be more approachable to everyone you meet throughout the entire day – your family, friends, teachers, even strangers. When someone is completely different than you – even opposite – I can bet you \$20 that there's still at least 5% of that person who shares the same things as you. **Find that 5% and connect with them on that level**, even if it's just the fact that you both cheer for the same team.

Just open yourself up and be a little vulnerable, and you'll find that you enjoy people much more. And after that, I guarantee the magic will happen – you'll get way more dates, build better relationships, and instantly widen your circle of good, solid friends you never knew you could have.

Now, number two: Make yourself more likeable.

It sounds hard, but it's easy, because if you do step one, you're already halfway there.

Here's a trick, and this has more to do with relationships. Imagine the perfect guy or girl for you. Then sit down and make a list of every single positive thing you might want from that dream person. Really sit down and actually do this. Whatever it is: personality, skills, faith.

So you have this list of every single thing you want from that person....

...then become those things yourself.

And it's magic (for the second time). **Because if you can't be those things yourself... if you aren't willing to work on yourself, then you won't attract those same qualities in someone else.**

It's not someone else's responsibility to be attracted to you – YOU make yourself more attractive by being a better person.

You see, it works a little beneath the surface, and it's mostly due to **confidence**. The more you *work* on yourself, the more you'll *be* yourself, and the more confident you'll become. Then you'll project *real* confidence without even trying.

And *that* will attract the right people to you.

The whole “love yourself for who you are” thing is totally misunderstood. **Sure, love yourself for who you are, but that doesn't mean you just give up working on yourself.** Too many teenagers do that. They think, “*This is me. It's how I am. I don't need to change. You can accept me how I am.*” Okay, good luck with that. **Because you can love yourself for who you are and where you're at in life... but that's not going to get you to where you want to be.**

You might be happy with yourself, but if you want to attract a romantic partner, or find good friends, then you absolutely need to work on yourself, every single day.

M&M'S
AND CRAZY
BRAIN
CHEMICALS

I was doing consulting at an event in LA for a client years ago (the client was the voice coach for Bradly Cooper, John Mayer and Selena Gomez). So I'm in the break room and grabbing some M&M's, and I hand the bag to a 20 year old guy who was there helping his dad, who's the agent for the voice coach.

I hand him the bag and I'm like, "M&M's?"

"No thanks, he says, *"I gave it up for Lent."*

"Oh, I didn't realize your family was Catholic."

"We're not. But I go to a Catholic college and a lot of my friends are. They're giving things up for Lent, so I thought I'd do it too. It might make me a better person."

Daaaaaaang.

I walked over to his dad and I'm like, *"Good kid you got there. He's gonna go far."*

Giving things up, sacrificing, having restraint – whatever you want to call it – it's good for you, in more ways than one. The reason Catholics give up things during Lent is mostly for a sacrifice – it's an act of love – a giving of one's self – to prepare themselves for Good Friday, then Easter.

But let's look at it on a more human level. Limiting yourself makes you strong and builds your

character. It's the reason people run marathons or go to boot camp or climb Everest. It makes you fulfilled and happy when you finally hit the end.

The cherry at the top of a sundae is awesome, but if you cranked open a jar of maraschino cherries and chowed down, you'd be like, *"meh"*. It's the reason we look forward to weekends, but we hardly notice a weekend when we're on vacation. *"Whoa - it's SATURDAY?"* It's the reason people that party every night become blah in their life, and they need the next thrill. Depression and drugs almost always follow.

In those cases, you're living a life of constant gratification and stimulation.

So here's the key: You should try to limit most things to some degree, whether they're not good for you, neutral... or even good for you.

Like this: Working out is *good* for you. But if you spend 2 hours every day in the gym, you're going to run the risk of it becoming an addiction. Unless you're a pro athlete or you're on your way to the Olympics, you have no business working out at that level when you're living a normal life. You also wouldn't spend hours every day in church unless you're a monk. Working out and praying are *good* things, but they have to have their place. You need limits.

And then there's the things that aren't so good for you: Fast food. Partying. Vaping. They're not bad things in themselves, but you should limit these in your life or they'll become bad real quick.

And then there's neutral things. A great example is playing video games. Totally fine, but if you play until 2AM every night... yeah. Not good. For *anyone*.

And that brings me to the #1 best way you can practice restraint on a daily basis: *Your phone*. I know, here we go. But stick with me because here's where we bring in fun brain chemicals.

Your brain has four different "pleasure center" brain chemicals: Dopamine, Oxytocin, Serotonin and Endorphins. You've probably heard of some of these. They all do a little bit different things, but basically they all make you happy, either through love, excitement or satisfaction.

Dopamine is the chemical of Anticipation. It's released when we expect something pleasant and it keeps us seeking what our body needs or craves. It's like opening a gift or scratching off a lotto ticket or pulling the handle on a slot machine. You get a dopamine hit every time someone sends you a message, or you check out Snapchat or whatever. Or every time you smoke or drink or use whatever other substance, because dopamine is super addictive to us.

Oxytocin is the chemical of Connection or Social Bonds. It's the love drug, but also the drug of safety and trust. It's the chemical that makes us do crazy things that make no logical sense when we're in love. At least for me, anyway. Oxytocin is released through touch or interaction with others, like when we get a hug. It's released through friendship – that good feeling when we're with someone we trust.

Serotonin is the chemical of Status or Social Significance. It flows in the brain when we feel significant or important. Any time we feel bigger or stronger than another person, or when we receive social recognition from our friends.

Endorphins are the chemical of Work Reward. Runners or other athletes that do a hard workout are addicted to endorphins, and it's sometimes called the "runners high". Endorphins are similar in chemical structure to the drug morphine. They help bring about feelings of euphoria and general well-being. Similar to Dopamine, which is released when you anticipate a reward for completing a task, endorphins kick in when you complete a tough task. Think of when you finished an exam after several long days and nights of studying for it. That's endorphins.

So it's good to do normal, natural things that give you all these boosts, like exercising or hanging

out with friends. When these chemicals hit our brains through these **natural** activities, it's pretty regulated, **because our body naturally feeds our brains the right amount relative to our age.**

But when we bring in an external, unnatural stimulus, things change fast. An obvious one is drugs. It pushes more of these chemicals into our brains than what is natural for us to handle. Or porn, which is more addictive than heroin. There's also the rush of chemical hits we get from watching violent movies and playing video games. And there's the dopamine push we get every time we see a comment or like on our photo, video or post. **That validation makes us feel good, and that IS good. That's normal. But not ALL THE TIME.**

It gets even worse when we're too young to handle a stimulus. Even through our teenage years, our brains are still programming.

That's why kids don't drink alcohol – it's not so much because they'd do stupid things, but because their brains can't handle that stimulus at that age. It's also why adults and teens can handle watching a violent movie, but it's super destructive for little kids. Same with most other adult things (that you can guess what I mean).

So back to your phone. Checking your phone every minute is actually pretty destructive to your brain. It gets even worse when we grab it as soon as we hear a ding. **That ding is training us to get that little dopamine hit, over and over and over.**

Eventually we get desensitized to the dopamine, and the rest of life feels sort of blah. You've probably noticed the positive change in yourself when you're without your phone for a while.

Add to that the dissatisfaction of seeing your friends (or celebrities) doing cool things that you're missing out on, or looking super hot, and it's a recipe for a trainwreck in your life. **It's the #1 reason why so many teens are depressed and suicidal these days.**

*So here's the one thing you need to start doing today: **Turn off your notifications. Leave your phone ringer on, and maybe your texts, but don't have notifications pop up for every Snap or social media app you have.***

Then, when YOU decide it's time to check in on friends or relationships, you can have fun seeing what they're up to, and get the warm satisfaction of likes on your posts. ***But do it on YOUR schedule.***

100% THROTTLE

When I was in college, I was studying to be a Park Ranger, so I got a pilot's license. I never ended up being a Park Ranger, but I did a whole ton of other interesting things in life instead, like writing this book.

Anyway, I was flying this tiny little trainer plane with one propeller. Dinky little plane. So in a

plane like that, when you're tearing down the runway right before takeoff, you need to push the throttle to 100% power. **Only at 100% power can the plane actually leave the ground and get airborne.**

If you back the throttle to even 98%, you'll have problems. I tried that with sketchy results.

Even after takeoff, if you back the throttle to anything less than 100%, you'll crash. You've got to keep the throttle at 100% until you get to cruising altitude.

Once at cruising altitude, something interesting happens. You can back the throttle down all the way to 10% power, or even 5%, and stay flying with no problem! Once you're cruising along in the sky, the engine is barely working as compared to when it was taking off.

Watch me tie this in to your life. Because you already know how this book works. *Here goes.*

So you're sitting in school and you're working hard. Good on you. But what most teens do is that they take that throttle and blast it to 95% and keep it there. They feel good because they're working hard! They're getting decent grades, they're doing pretty well in sports and whatever else. But the problem is, they never get off the ground. They just keep chugging away at 95% power on the runway... forever.

The smart people, the ones who want real success and long-term happiness in life, take that throttle and push it up just another 5%, to hit 100%. They keep it there for a few years. Anyone who's started a business knows this.

During those years, it's a little painful. They're out of balance. Other parts of their life might have to take a pause. They get a little stressed sometimes. But after a few years, when their business is configured correctly, they can back that throttle all the way down to just 10% or 5% if they want, and it's smooth sailing for the rest of their lives.

What you do in your teen years sets you up for life. If you push it to 100% for a few years, you'll be set up in a great position for life. You'll be way ahead of your buddies, the ones who are grinding away at 95% forever, trying to make it work, or others who have totally given up and crashed. And here you are, chilling at 10% or less, making more money, having more success and enjoying your life and your family.

So how can you not give 100% when it's 100% your choice?

It's up to you to push it to the limits for a few years and get on the fast track to a successful, fulfilled life. Write on your phone, or on your wall, the phrase: *"Where is my throttle set?"* Make an Instagram post that says *"Where is your throttle set?"* and share it. When people ask about it, tell them this story.

THE GROOVE OF STATUS QUO

There's two voices inside each of us, and if you hear them... *go get help fast!* Kidding. No, you know what I mean. Two voices that speak to you, and no, I'm not talking about good and evil – those are there too. There's a lot of voices, but let's focus on a certain two of them for a sec.

These two voices are CHANGE and STATUS QUO, and they work against each other.

Change can come as a feeling of excitement... and it can also come as a feeling of fear. For example, there's the voice of change that's the **exciting** kind, and it tells you things like:

I want to ask that person out.

I should start a band.

I think I can make the basketball team.

This voice of change makes you feel good, energized and uplifting. It's **exciting**.

But the voice of change can also be **fearful**, like this:

I think I need to break up with that person.

I think I should quit this job because it's eating way too much into my study time.

I might have to drop off the soccer team.

This voice of **change** gives you a big knot in your stomach.

Now, every time the voice of change comes in, an equal and opposite reaction fights against it... and that's the voice of **status quo**: "*Stay the course and it will be just fine!*"

Status quo is the comfortable groove, or maybe... like the routine rut, you know?

But life is about change, and decisions have to be faced, and choices have to be made.

Anytime you're facing the voice of change, there's a reason for it, and probably an important one.

But the voice of status quo will knock that important voice of change right down. The voice of status quo will come up with the most ridiculous and stupid excuses you can imagine to not change. Because the groove of status quo is usually comfortable, and change isn't. By nature, we're opposed to change, even when it excites us!

Here's an example:

Voice of Change: I know working at Bob's Burgers is wasting my time. My grades are suffering and I don't even make much money anyway.

Voice of Status Quo: Yeah, but that cute guy/girl works there.

Voice of Change: But if you leave and focus on your grades, you can maybe get that college scholarship, end up getting a great job and someday come back and buy all three Bob's Burgers restaurants.

Voice of Status Quo: Yeah, but their fries are so good and I get them at half price when I'm working.

Get it? **Don't let status quo blind you from an important decision.** Sometimes it's the option you *do* need to go with, but more often than not it jumps in the way of *real, meaningful and positive change*.

HOW TO EAT AN ELEPHANT

One of the most controversial thoughts about achieving what we want in life is to think big and to live big. We hear stories about the great leaders and successful business startups who had huge dreams and took massive leaps of faith against impossible odds.

Okay, wait - don't get me wrong here – there's nothing wrong with thinking big, but **when it comes to taking action and making progress, starting small is the key.**

But we ignore small. We tend to skip over the things that don't give us big results and applause

and clicks and likes and pats on the back. We jump for the big flashy challenges, because we're so programmed that greatness means doing the really big thing, or the impossible challenge. Just Do It... be epic... go big or go home. Sound familiar?

We're just not very impressed with people who are moderate. It's not known as a really positive quality. People don't celebrate walking up a nice grassy slope the way they celebrate climbing mountains, right? So you tend to tackle an hour-long wash and wax job on your car before just checking the washer fluid.

It's because we think of starting small as mediocre. At this point in your life, you might find that it's hard to get motivated. You're good sitting around, until there's a big plan and you jump at it and you're "all in, baby!" Then it's back to being un-motivated and the mundane little stuff keeps piling up.

You might find that the things that you really enjoy doing are the more challenging or difficult things. But when you get confronted with the day-to-day routine things that no one will ever notice, you fall flat. If this is you, read on.

It's me too.

But I can tell you, great things almost always start small. Throughout our day and our lives, we interact with so many "big" things that we forget – or don't even know – that they started small. One of the greatest saints of all time is St. Therese. She's considered great because she went about her daily tasks with absolute perfection. Everything she did was small, and it all added up to greatness. She called this her "Little Way". **I tell my kids that I'd rather have them be decent at everything than great at only one thing.**

That might sound crazy for a parent to tell a kid, but it's a model that works. It's what success courses teach to successful business professionals... and now you get to be in on the secret.

Look at building habits. It's long-term work, because to make your habit "stick", you have to start small so that you can do it on a regular basis. You start small and build from there.

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. Same thing here. **Want to make a habit stick? Start small, one bite at a time.** How do you create the huge success you want in life? One step at a time. Don't hold out for the big achievements that will bring you glory. **Just START.** The "Little Way". *One bite at a time.*

THAT ONE TIME I WORKED AT SNAPPLE- TREES

When I was in college I worked at a restaurant. It was one of those big corporate chains that I probably shouldn't say the name of here. But it rhymed with "Snappletrees". That one.

And while I was there, they had these "Core Values", like companies like to have. So this one day, I go into work and I have my tag that had my

name on it and I was pretty stoked for the Core Values meeting. No, I wasn't really, but it was good for me, now that I look back.

So, one of the Core Values was "Hit Issues Head On". I did a lot of that in high school football, so I was pretty good at that already.

Fast forward 20 years from Snappletrees, and

I'm doing consulting work for a bank. Telling them things like I'm doing for you right here, right now. See, you can make a pretty good living making things come out of your mouth, then writing them down. Try it.

So we're going through the bank's "Core Values"... yes, again with this whole Core Values thing. Everyone in the corporate world loves this stuff. And one of their Core Values was... yep. You guessed it: "Hit Issues Head On".

They either had a spy at the Snapple trees headquarters, or it's just a really important Core Value in all of Corp 'Merica.

Well, it turns out it is an important value because **successful people face facts squarely. They do what's uncomfortable and they take steps to create the outcomes they want.** Successful people don't wait for disasters to happen, then blame something or someone else for their problems. They hit issues **HEAD ON.**

Once you start to respond quickly and decisively to bad things as they happen, life actually becomes much easier. You think it's the opposite, but it's not. Trust me on that.

If you don't deal with life proactively, life is going to deal with it for you.

I'll repeat that:

If you don't deal with life proactively, life is going to deal with it for you.

Life has a way of doing that. If you're unhappy, stressed, have anxiety, depressed... then.... you get sick. You mess up your life. You fail in school. You get fired from your job.

You need to make your own decisions before life does it for you.

When you hit issues head on, your attitude of "*nothing ever seems to work out for me*" is kicked in the butt and replaced with "*I feel great. I'm in control. I can make things happen.*" Just from hitting issues head on.

The bottom line is this: **YOU are the one who's creating your life the way it is.** The life you currently live is the result of all of your past thoughts and actions. You are also in charge of what goes into your mind – the websites you spend time on, the movies and shows you watch, and the people you hang out with.

To be more successful, all you have to do is act quickly and decisively on the issues, then act in ways that produce more of what you want.

That's it. It's that simple!

THE COMFORT ZONE THUNDER- STORM

So my buddy goes skydiving. He gets up there and he's just scared to death. And he tells me this story about what happened when he was up there. So the instructor guy is strapped onto him and they're jumping together. So the instructor

tells him that they're jumping on "three".

"Ready? One..." and on *"Two"* the instructor jumps out of the plane with my buddy. Well, it's like that with everything - before you go on

stage at school, before an important test, before you make a big life decision, before you move out from home... There's really never a good time to do any of that, and if you wait for the perfect time, you'll never do it. You just have to break from the comfort zone and do it when the timing might not be just right.

Because **comfort zones are not really about comfort, they're about avoiding fear.** Break the chains of fear to get outside your comfort zone, and once you do, you'll start to actually enjoy taking those risks, and you'll start growing in the process.

The ability to take risks by stepping outside our comfort zone is the #1 way that we grow. But we're usually too chicken to take that first step.

Why? Because we're so addicted to the past... to comfort... to the way we've done it. Because we don't like it when we don't know what the outcome will be. It's a thunderstorm happening – cold and hot air. You think, “I want it, but... I don't want to do it. Because I'm comfortable.” So it's a battle we're fighting inside us.

But here's where we have to be careful:

- Too much **comfort** and we cease to function.
- Too much **risk** and it turns to chaos... and we fall apart.

It's a perfect bell curve, and there's not much room in the middle – but you have to find it.

Here's how:

Figure out the things that are outside your Comfort Zone: **What are the things that you believe are worth doing, but are afraid of doing because of the potential for disappointment or failure?**

Take out some paper and draw a circle, then write those things down outside the circle. Then write your comforts inside the circle.

Then take the list of things outside the circle, and write what your fear is for each one. Be specific and write exactly what that fear is and why you have it. Then get comfortable with those fears.

Make it a goal to get comfortable with discomfort – To avoid running away from discomfort. Start with the smallest, easiest things first, taking small steps toward the fear that you are trying to overcome.

This will feel scary at first, but as you slowly push past your comfort zone, you'll feel more and more at ease about the new stuff that seemed so dangerous to you at first, and tough decisions will be just a breeze on a calm day!

COMPLAIN-
ERS **SGONNA**
COMPLAIN

Dude! You're complaining to the wrong person!

Have you ever noticed that complainers almost always complain to the wrong people? They complain to people who can't do anything about it. They go to school and complain about their mom and dad to their friends. Then they come home and complain to their mom and dad about the people at school.

Why?

Because... it's... **easy!** And it's less risky. It takes a lot of guts to tell your mom or dad that you're really bothered by something they've done. It takes guts to confront a friend at school and tell them that they're out of line for the way they're acting. It takes guts to talk to a teacher about treatment you thought was unfair.

But only your mom or dad can fix a problem that you have with Mom or Dad. And only your friend can fix a problem you have with them. And only a teacher can fix... okay, you get it. I'm repeating myself because this is important stuff.

Now, sometimes you **do** need to get advice from parents about an issue with a friend, or a situation at school. Sure. But note the key word here. **Advice. Getting advice is a whole lot different than complaining, because you're looking for an outcome to a problem that can actually be solved.**

When it's just "venting" or complaining, all you're doing is just loading someone else down with baggage that they don't need.

In high school, my running coach painted on the wall, *"Quit yer cryin'."* He also happened to be my older brother too, so I heard him say that all the time. Now that I'm a coach, I tell the guys, *"Listen. I have zero tolerance for complaining. But if you have a true medical concern, then yeah – talk to me. And if you need to discuss your poor performance with the result of improving, then yeah – talk to me. Just don't go crying to the other teammates."*

Here's a trick. Learn to replace complaining with making actual requests. Really – practice it.

After you've explained your problem to the *right* person, figure out how to either:

- 1.) **Fix the problem**, or
- 2.) Learn to **deal with it**.

That's what successful people do. That's what works. And that's what keeps you from going crazy, because it puts *you* in control.

Remember, if you find yourself in a situation you don't like, get advice and work to make it better, or just accept it. Or... a third option is to walk away and let it go!

UN- STOPPABLE SELF CONFIDENCE

When you think of a confident person at school, the truth is, they're probably not as confident as you think they are. Think of a confident person you know. Picture them. I bet that person is good looking and attractive, huh?

See, most people think that the number one factor in a person's self confidence is that they're

good looking. But that's wrong. **The truth is, the major booster of self-confidence and self-esteem is the ability to achieve, to accomplish, and to perform well. Yep, it's performance, not perception.**

What people think about you only slightly boosts your self confidence, and it only raises it

for a short period of time.

What really gives you long-lasting self confidence is being good at something. When you excel, you feel accomplished. When you feel accomplished, your self confidence goes through the roof.

It's funny, because we all tend to think that those talkative, loud people are the confident ones. But often, they're masking low self esteem by talking loud, by butting in, or by being the life of the party. And, they usually plaster their pics all over social media. On the opposite side, we tend to think that people who are quiet in a group, or who don't post about themselves all the time must have low self esteem. But these people are usually the cool, confident ones. They don't feel the need to validate themselves. They sit back and smile, smugly.

Some of the most confident people you know really aren't confident down deep.

So back to building confidence by achieving. Okay, maybe you don't play sports, play an instrument, or anything else. **You can still build a huge amount of confidence by hitting your personal goals, especially when these goals involve things that impact others.**

Here's what business coaches teach adults... and of course teens never get to hear this good stuff:

You have a lack of confidence when you're not clear. In other words, when you're not clear on your goals and not clear on your wants.

Your goals don't have to be huge, but they do need to be CLEAR. Get clear on what you want in life, what you want to achieve this school year, or this summer break.

Look in the mirror each morning and be clear on what your purpose is that day. The absolute best confidence builder is just knowing *"I can make a difference today."*

Self confidence also comes from knowing where you stand and who you are. Some teens are just "lost" – they don't know what they're all about or what the heck they're doing. That's a fast-track for dumping your self confidence fast. Think: *"What's my thing? What makes me tick? Am I a runner? A musician? Someone that makes other people happy?"* Build your identity.

Also think: *"Where do I stand on issues?"* When you can defend your beliefs in any discussion, you can build strong self confidence.

So get some clarity – on your achievements, your future goals, your plans, who you are, and what you stand for. Get clear on that and you get unstoppable self-confidence!

**THE MOST
PERFECT
DATING
TECHNIQUE
EVER**

These two high school kids go out on a date and get some pizza and have a great time. They talk and talk and talk. The boy comes home and his dad says, *“How did it go?”* And the boy says, *“It was great! We talked and talked and she was so interesting. I really connected with her.”*

The girl comes home and her older sister says to her, *“How was it?”* And the girl says, *“It was sooooo boring. He talked about himself the whole time.”*

So here are some techniques for dating or just hanging out with friends, and honestly, these are the basics that work – for guys or girls.

Body language is so important. **What** you say is not nearly as important as **how** you say it.

Smile. Not a huge stupid grin, but just a nice smile, even when you’re talking. Raise your eyebrows to show interest, when talking or listening. Lean forward – into the conversation. When your date is talking, look right into their eyes, and change your expression a little while they’re talking to show them that you’re locked into them and analyzing every word they say.

Next, NEVER think about what you’re going to say next while the other person is talking.

Instead, focus on what they’re saying intently, then when they finish talking, just wing it based off the last few words or sentence that they said.

That also goes for planning what you’re going to say hours or even days before you’re going to meet someone you really like. **The more you practice what you’re going to say to them, the more you’ll stupidly blurt it out way too fast when you see them.** It’ll sound completely rehearsed and unnatural.

Sure, it’s fine to have a few funny one-liners ready, but the most you should have prepared is a topic or two to talk over.

When you’re hanging out and want to make conversation with that special someone, here’s the method that works:

Pick a topic, then stick to it. Next, ask them a few questions on this topic. This engages them. Make sure all of the questions are related, and based off their last answer, so that it flows. Otherwise it’s basically an interrogation, and... well, THAT’S not a real great way to start.

I’m not going to even get into pick-up lines, because hands-down the most successful one is just to **walk up and say hi, say your name, and then ask them what theirs is.** Bam. Done.

And most importantly, just be nice. Be polite. Be thoughtful. Be courteous. And be real. Because these all go ten times further than humor, good looks or anything else.

FIXED MINDSET VS GROWTH MINDSET

Where you *believe* success comes from will predict whether you become a success or not.

What?

No really. The author Napoleon Hill based a whole book around it called, *Think & Grow Rich*.

Because you can't be a success if you don't think you can.

Here, let me put it this way:

Adults, kids, you, me – we all think about success in one of two ways:

A **Fixed Mindset**, and a **Growth Mindset**.

If you have a Fixed Mindset, you assume that your character, your intelligence, and your creative ability are just things that you... well, you just *have*, or you *don't have*. And you believe that since success is based on those things, you'll

either *have* success or you *won't*. You think that there's nothing you can do to change that. It's like, "*There's no way I could ever get into Med School - that's for smart people.*" Or, "*I can't sing.*" In your mind, being smart or skilled are **fixed standards**, and failure is the enemy.

But if you have a Growth Mindset, you thrive on challenge, and you see failure not as a lack of intelligence or a lack of ability, but as a springboard for growth and a chance to improve.

So, where you *believe* success comes from really has a powerful effect on your ability to actually *be* successful! The view you choose to have for yourself hugely affects the way you lead your life.

Like this: If, when you were younger, your mom or dad told you that you aced a test because you were super smart. Well, that would have taught you a Fixed Mindset. But if they told you that you did a killer job because you really cranked on it, studied hard, and gave it a lot of effort... that would have taught you a Growth Mindset.

It's a good thing beliefs can be changed. So start now, and beware of the fixed mindset! Having a fixed mindset puts massive limitations on your life.

Here's how to make some quick changes today to shift to a Growth Mindset:

Make Challenges Your New Best Friend. People with a Growth Mindset go crazy for challenges, because they propel them forward toward their goals. Challenges are the fuel that helps them rise to the top.

Embrace Failure. It's all about learning from mistakes and doing it better again and again. No matter how far they fall, people with a Growth Mindset continue to get back up and go again.

Be Unstoppable. The crazy tenacity of people with a Growth Mindset forms part of their character. It's the essential ingredient in becoming unstoppable. Giving up is not part of their vocabulary. They have a goal and won't stop until they have arrived.

Be Massively Inspired by Others. Don't be jealous of others – *learn from them!* Having genuine happiness and excitement for others attracts and returns success back to you.

Developing a Growth Mindset is based on your willingness and commitment to change your most powerful beliefs, and to wake up and become a new, better version of yourself.

**FAKE IT
TIL YOU
MAKE IT**

Have you noticed that your buddies that do the best in school seem to have a never ending supply of energy? Or that the world's most successful people seem to always go... and go... and GO?

How do they do it?

It's called a cybernetic loop, and it's pretty cool.

This is where your mind and your body are connected to one another. Hm. Okay, I'll break it down.

You've heard the saying, "*Fake it 'til you make it*", right? Well, it works.

Try this right now. Smile. No really, do it right now – just SMILE! Now see if you feel a little happier. Try feeling miserable while you're smiling – it's almost impossible. If you want to feel happy, smile! So you're not really "faking it", you're just acting the part.

This idea has been really screwed up these days with all the self-help books out there that basically say, "*Act like you're rich, and you'll become rich.*" To an extent, yeah – that does help to start moving you down that road, but it's not going to help you now. I'm talking about things *now*. Today.

There's a lot of science that proves that your physiology – *your body* – has a lot to do with

what happens in your mind... or how you feel. And since you have complete control over your physiology (what you do with your body), you should then have complete control over your mind – *or how you feel* – as well. Are you picking up what I'm putting down?

I remember this one time as a kid, I faked sick so I didn't have to go to school. Okay, it was more than once I did that, but I remember one time specifically, and here's why. I had to put on the act to my mom, so I really started acting sick. And within about 20 minutes, I seriously started feeling sick to my stomach. No joke.

See how it works both ways? To be happy, it's just a matter of moving like you're happy. Walk a little quicker instead of dragging your feet and walking slowly. Smile. To have energy, bounce up the steps. Look up. Sit up straight. **Act alive!**

One trick is to glance in the mirror and see if your eyes are drooping or half shut. Then open them wider. Every time you look in the mirror, check this instead of checking your hair. It's amazing how much more awake it makes you feel to open your eyes a little wider, and how much more energy you have, and how much better you LOOK!

Then let that cyber-cool loop thing work for you!

OPTIMIZING FOR THE STARTING LINE

You hear a lot about goals and goal setting in your life, but I'm going to show you how to reach them in a different way – by using **intention**.

Goals are the end result, but **intention** is the intent you give to that goal... it's the *action*, or the *habit* you form to get there.

A **goal** is like this: *“I’m gonna make this specific thing happen.”*

An **intention** is like this: *“I’m going to align myself in the right direction to achieve that specific thing.”*

It’s so much easier to succeed in reaching your goal when you have a strong intention. Got it? Now here’s the magic part:

If you set your intention, you can allow the goal to *shift* if needed, while the intention remains the *same*. This way, failure can actually occur without destroying the eventual goal. **Basically, you get to move the goalpost and still score.**

You need goals, but intention is greater and more powerful, and you do this by...

Optimizing for the starting line.

By using intention, we start working on the goal right at the *start*, and we don’t worry about the *finish line*. Well, not yet anyway.

Because way too often, the goal sabotages you. This happens when you focus too intently on the goal at the *start*, and don’t allow for changes – or flexibility – to your goal to hit the *finish line*.

It’s because goals are almost always *narrow and defined*, but intentions (the actions that get you to the goal) are more *broad*.

Lost yet? This lesson is a bit complex. Okay, an example will help:

Goal: *“I’m going to drive to school today without an accident.”*

Intention: *“I’m going to be the safest driver I can.”*

According to the goal, if you had an accident, you just *failed*. According to the intention, if you had an accident, well, it’s okay – things happen, and you didn’t mean to slide on that icy corner.

or...

Goal: *“I’m going to get straight A’s this semester.”*

Intention: *“I want to do the best I possibly can in school.”*

If you end up with a C average at the end of the semester, you failed your goal, but your intention was solid, as long as you tried your best. Making sense now?

So does this mean we shouldn’t have goals at all? Of course not. Some specific goals do make sense, but most should be broad and general, and most importantly, *be realistic and attainable!*

But intention is more important than goals, so start there. Set good intentions for yourself that will optimize you for the starting line today.

CHANGE WHO YOU ARE BY CHANGING WHAT YOU DO

Every action you take is a vote for the type of person you wish to become.

“Wait, I’m confused. How is it like a vote? That makes no sense.”

I’ll say it another way: *The best way to change who you **are**... is to change what you **do**.*

So every action you take, every single day, is a vote for the type of person you want to become.

If you go hit the gym a lot, then you’re probably the type of person who likes exercise. If you practice guitar, then you’re the type of person who likes music. And If you study a lot, then I’m guessing you’re a good student. Each action is

like a suggestion: *“Hey, maybe this is who I am.”*

And when you do an action over and over, it's called a **habit**.

This is important: No single action will transform your beliefs, but as the “votes” add up, so does the evidence of your new identity. This is one reason why **real, meaningful change doesn't require radical change. The most successful improvements happen slowly and steadily, not suddenly.**

So, small habits (*actions you do over and over*) can make a huge difference in your life because they *prove* that you have a new identity... that this is the new you! Only *small*, repetitive habits make *huge* changes – kind of a cool paradox.

Okay, so putting this all together, you can see that habits are the path to changing your identity.

Review: *The most practical way to change who you are... is to change what you do.*

Now, each habit not only gets *results*, but it also does something else pretty cool. It teaches you to *trust* yourself, and that's way more important than results.

You start with incredibly small actions, building consistency, and you start to believe you actually *can* accomplish these things.

When the votes add up and the evidence begins to change, the story you tell yourself begins to change as well.

Of course, it works the opposite way, too. Every time you choose a bad action, it's a vote for that identity too. So...

Good action = *a vote for that identity*

Bad action = *a vote for that identity*

The good news is that you don't need to be perfect :) In any political election, there are going to be votes for both sides – you don't need a unanimous vote to win an election, right? You just need a majority. It ultimately doesn't matter if you make a mistake and cast a few votes for a bad behavior or an unproductive habit.

Your goal is simply to win the majority of the time.

This is why you have to start with those small actions.

Remember: If you want to change, new identities require new evidence. **If you keep casting the same old votes you've always cast, you're going to get the same results you've always had. If nothing changes, nothing is ever going to change!** So start changing who you are, by changing what you do!

**THE
CATER-
PILLAR
AND THE
ILLUSION**

Every problem is an illusion. Okay, here I go again. Um... WHAT?

So think of it this way: Every time we get a problem stuck in our heads, we think it's more serious than it really is. And most of the time, it's just an illusion.

There are three caterpillars crawling along on their tons of tiny feet, and they come up to a wall (*not a true story*).

The **Victim Caterpillar** says, *"There's a wall here. I'm stuck. Someone put this wall here to stop me and I'll never get over it."*

The **Achiever Caterpillar** says, *"I'm going to get over that wall."* And he tries and tries for hours.

The **Focused Caterpillar** says, *"I think this problem is just an illusion. I'll wait a bit and figure this out."* That caterpillar then turns into a butterfly and flies away. The wall becomes a non-issue.

So imagine people are talking trash about you. Happens to me. If you're the Victim, you'd say, *"I'm tired of people talking trash about me."* And you walk away mad. If you're the Achiever, you'd say, *"I'm going to prove them wrong."* If you're

Focused, you'd say, *"What's this illusion? Why is it happening? What's trying to emerge out of me that I actually am? Let's take a little time and figure it out."*

In the movie "Adaptation", Nicholas Cage says to his brother, *"In high school there was a girl you really loved but she was saying crap about you, but you didn't care. Why's that?"* And the brother says, *"Because whatever she says about me, she can't take away from me how much I love her."* And then he continues, *"You are what you love, not what loves you."*

So sometimes you're stressing because you're under the illusion (*you think*) that who you **are** is what people **think** about you. But in reality, what they think about you only has to do with *their* issues, not *your* issues.

Making sense now?

When people talk trash about you, they do it to create the illusion that you're actually the way they're describing you.

At that point you have a decision: You can accept what they think of you, or you can reject it. But either way, it doesn't mean that this is what you actually **are**.

MOTHS GO TO THE LIGHT

There's a joke that goes like this:

A moth walks into a foot doctor's office.

The doctor says, *"Why are you here? I'm not a veterinarian, I'm a foot doctor. I can't help you."*

The moth says, *"I'm just here because your light was on."*

It's a funny joke (okay, not really) because moths are stupid. But humans are pretty stupid too, because we do the same thing.

We want change. We want results. We want to improve... but we just blindly go try the easiest thing possible without really working *hard* at it.

I remember our school principal telling me that. He said, *"There are students who want to do well in school, but they don't really want to work hard enough to really want it."*

I catch myself doing that so much in life! Is that you too? You fail a class and get a big wake up call and only *then...* do you decide it's really time to start hitting it hard.

So when you want to improve an area of your life – or fix a problem – you have to *really* want it. My dad coached hockey and he'd say, *"Ya gotta wannit!"* He made stickers and we put them everywhere.

There's two types of motivators in your life that will make you want to improve:

1.) Something really bad happens, and you realize you need to make a change.

Say you crashed your car, got busted by the cops, flunked out of school... You've hit rock bottom and now it's time to change, because if you don't, your life will come crashing down.

The avoidance of pain is a pretty solid motivator for any of us to want to improve – to make a change. It happens almost naturally because, well... um... we don't want pain, right?

The second type of motivator isn't as strong, so it isn't as effective in making a change happen:

2.) You want to improve, so that something bad does NOT happen.

This would be like noticing that your grades are slipping, so you start some extra tutoring, or you decide it's absolutely not cool to drink alcohol at a party, so you don't.

This second motivator is much less drastic, so it's harder to put into place. It doesn't hit you over the head with fear like the first motivator does, but it's really where you need to be operating.

Because in the first one, you're making changes *after* something bad happens, so you're acting

in a **reactive** way. Sure, you might be more motivated to make the change, but you don't have as much control over the process. Instead, the situation is mostly *controlling you* and *forcing you* to improve.

But when you're making changes *before* the poop hits the fan, you're operating in a **proactive** way, and you can move your life down a path that you choose.

There's a saying that goes, "*Focus on where you want to go, not on what you fear*". When you're snowboarding or skiing, you never look at the tree or rock or bump you want to miss, because you'll hit it. Because you're operating on fear. Instead, you look at where you want to go.

Same with school. When you decide you're never going to fail a class again, you're looking at the obstacle, and sometimes it's too late. Because you're operating on fear. Sure, fear is a great motivator, but **you can't live your life just making decisions based on fear or you'll always be one step behind** – and probably die of stress-induced heart failure. You'll just be that stupid moth, blindly going towards the easiest, nearest light.

Instead, focus on where you *want to go*, and constantly make small adjustments and improvements to meet those goals. **Because it's not what we do once in a while that shapes our lives, it's what we do consistently.**

NEGATIVE FRIENDS

One time my daughter said to me, *“Dad, every time I go and hang out with Katie, she’s just down and she complains the whole time. I come home feeling really bummed out.”*

I asked my daughter why this was happening, and she said that this girl had gone through hard times most of her life and she was just really negative all the time because of that.

I asked her why she hung out with Katie then, and she said, *“She’s always been a friend, and she just really needs help.”*

Okay. STOP. Right there. I shut that one down pretty quickly. It’s hard enough for a professional counselor to help people that are having depression, or life / family issues, but a teenager? **No way.**

If you have a friend that’s going through a hard time, but is normally an upbeat person, then yeah - go ahead and help them, of course! But if you have a friend who is pretty much always down, depressed and negative? You have to walk away, because you just won’t be able to help them, no matter how much you try.

In fact, the reverse will pretty much happen. *You* will become like them, and the next thing you know, you’ll be down in the dumps and your life at home and at school will suffer.

I saw this happening with my daughter and couldn’t figure out where it was coming from, but when she told me about Katie, it was a real *“aha!”* moment for my wifey and I. It was just taking such a huge toll on our daughter and was starting to overwhelm her, big time. Talk about “baggage”! Yikes.

So here’s what I told my daughter.

I said, *“Listen, when I hang out with my buds, sure, sometimes they bring up some problems, but that’s just here and there. Maybe it’s about work, or their wife or something. But most of the time we’re just telling funny stories and we’re making each other laugh. We’re bringing each other UP!”*

And I said, *“If you have a friend who you hang out with, and more than a quarter of the time you’re with them they’re being negative and down and poopy, then you need to just hang out with them way less, or maybe not at all. It’s not your job to fix their life.”*

It’s true. **Who you hang out with is who you’ll become. Hang out with losers and you’ll become a loser. Hang out with straight-A nerds and you’ll get straight-A’s... and maybe get a little nerdy, which is kind of okay too.**

Get it? Ditch those complainers and build a team of cool, fun, energetic and good friends.

WHY "JUST IGNORE NEGATIVITY" WILL RUIN YOUR LIFE

Part of the problem with the whole "*power of positive thinking*" thing is that the people who push these ideas seem to have an amazing ability to remain oblivious and not give a bleep about all the human suffering happening around them.

I've actually read that in order to avoid negative

thinking and to remain positive, you should just stop caring and ignore the bad stuff happening around you!

Whenever I watch a video or read something by one of those people telling the rest of us to just "be positive" because the world is such a

wonderful place full of joy, abundance, and blessings, I think, *“Wow, positive people really make the world so darn negative!”*

Now, we just talked about walking away from negative, depressed friends, and later in this book, I’ll show you how to deal with problems by facing them, solving them or letting them go. And even getting worry out of your mind for a 7 day “diet”. But these things are different than completely *ignoring* negativity. That’s what we call *avoidance*, and avoidance is bad.

People that say to *“just ignore negativity”* are actually pretty hypocritical in most cases. We’ve all known people like this. They try to convince us that they’re just overflowing with happiness and never have a bad day, but these people who try the hardest to project a certain image are usually concealing the exact opposite. They’re using “positivity” and “happiness” to compensate for the fact that their life is a total disaster.

For them, having to be authentic, honest, and actually acknowledge some really negative stuff in their life overwhelms them with anxiety.

But here’s the weird part: **Negativity is what makes positivity possible.**

If you’re like me, and you care a lot about people, then you really want things to be better for

everyone. This requires that we acknowledge the existence of bad things in the world, and then feel enough empathy to do what’s necessary to create positive change.

Unfortunately, this means allowing **SOME** negative information into your brain, and feeling bad, at least temporarily. And that’s okay.

Here’s how to do it. Ready?

Focus on the good you can do, instead of trying to fight all the bad that you can’t change.

Fighting the bad that you can’t change will only fill you with negativity and misery. And that limits your power to live a healthy life and do as much good as possible where you do have control.

Just because we have to let negative information into our lives in order to make positive change, doesn’t mean we should allow a full-on flow of negativity to take over our lives.

And yeah, that’s easier said than done. Because the news and social media continue to warp our stupid monkey brains. Our brains were created to pay attention to potential danger and human suffering nearby, for obvious survival reasons. But now we have bad news pumping directly into our brains from all parts of the globe constantly.

And we just don’t know how to deal with it.

We also don't have the ability to prioritize what's a real danger and what's inconsequential to our lives – what we should ignore.

Because of this, we easily fall into the trap of being stressed, depressed, and outraged about everything. Sure, it would be mean and insensitive to ignore the suffering of someone right next to us that we could easily help, but being depressed by things happening on the other side of the globe that we can't do anything about probably isn't the best use of our time and energy.

So here's tip #2:

Pay at least as much attention to all the good stuff happening in your life as you do to the bad stuff happening in the world.

Find the balance between being informed... and going too far where you're overwhelmed with negativity about the things you can't change.

We can't really cut all negative news out of our lives or force ourselves to just "stop caring". Express gratitude for the good stuff. Share it. Encourage others to be aware of it in their lives.

Because if you only focus on endless negativity and ignore the positive, you're just like those hypocritical positive people – just in reverse.

Both perceive the world in a way that is totally subjective, biased, and often wildly inaccurate.

Teenagers have a tendency of characterizing all happy people as delusional, selfish, and callous towards the suffering of others. *"How can I possibly be happy when the world's in such an awful state?"* They feel guilt for being happy, the same way some people feel guilt for ever having a negative thought.

Both of these approaches are irrational, unhealthy, and stifle emotional maturity and growth.

The secret is balance. Because life is as positive or as negative as you want it to be.

There's enough of both the good and the bad in life for you to choose from, and there's nearly an infinite amount of good things in life to be grateful for.

And the good things in life vastly outnumber the bad things for most of us, most of the time, like being born into the best time and place to be alive in all of human history!

Stop feeling guilty for having a good life and experiencing positive, healthy, normal, human emotions.

And, that's all there is to it!

GET A JOB

Here's a secret: When you apply for a job, your potential employer sees you as a big, fat dollar sign. (the dollar sign is fat, not you.) And that's all they see. Sure, they might be looking for skills, attitude, a personality that fits the company culture or whatever else, but all of that boils down to one thing: **Mo-neyyyyyy!** What *you*, the employee, can make *them*, the

company. And that makes the boss look good. So he's basically sitting there, looking at you, thinking, *"How can this kid make me look good? How can this kid make me more money? How can this kid do a bunch of work real fast so I can take some time off?"*

Before every job interview my kids have done, I've told them, *"Make sure that whatever question*

they ask you, the answer is in line with the real question they're asking you, which is, 'How much money can you make me?' "

During the interview, try to show them that you're a person that can fill the role of two employees, saying something like this: *"I'm a fast learner, a hard worker, and I expect to move up quickly. But I'm never afraid to get my hands dirty and I can always clean a bathroom, no matter how high up I get."* BAM. That's music to their ears.

Don't be cocky and arrogant, saying things like, *"I want YOUR job someday."* That doesn't work. But self-confidence and assertiveness does. Look the interviewer right in the eye, speak loudly and clearly, and just be honest and tell them, *"I really want this job."*

Dress nice, speak up, be assertive, and you'll probably get the job.

And congrats – this is when the work really begins. Don't ever make your goal to just *keep* your job and barely skate by – even if it's a temporary job you're doing for some quick money. Almost every job is a step to a better one, and you need a good reference from this job for your next one. Besides, you just might move up in this company and stay there, so **treat every**

job like it's your career, because it sure could end up being exactly that.

The best way to do this is to **act like the boss**. Not by bossing people around, but by doing things that the boss would do. Dress one step better than your coworkers. Stay an extra 10 minutes late. Suggest a new idea to improve the company. Pick up some litter as you walk by. All of these things distinguish you from the next person and set you apart. The upper management notices these things (eventually) and they see you as something unique.

Starting a few minutes early and working a few minutes late takes almost no extra time from your day, but the mileage you get from it in the eyes of your boss is priceless. Someone that shows up the second they're supposed to and rushes out immediately is following the rules. There's nothing the boss can do to get mad at them. But it shows that they're only willing to do the absolute bare minimum to get by and get their paycheck and... *"Seeee-ya!"*

Bring up new ideas to the boss and volunteer to help with extra things, especially asking to do the tasks that someone above you does. Even ask to help the boss with their own work. Your boss will see this as flashing dollar signs, making them look good *and* making their life easier!

A while back, my son was working for a fencing company, and one day he told me that when they'd be working at a nice house, he'd usually see the homeowner at some point, and he'd say, *"I really like your house. I'm curious what you do for a living. I'd love to have a house like this someday."*

"Wow," I said. *"Nice Move. Keep that up, and I bet you'll get a job offer."*

"Uh... I already got three offers in the last two weeks. I'm taking one of them."

And he did. He went to work for a bigger company that does warehousing and pulls retail items from the shelf. The new boss said, *"Do you know how to drive a forklift?"* My son said, *"No, but I can learn fast."*

At the end of the first week, the boss came up to my son and was like, *"Who ARE you???"*

"What do you mean?"

"Well, normally, we want people to be up to 50% of our target speed of picking items from the shelf by the end of the first week. You're at 90%. It normally takes people 6 months to get to that point. How are you doing it?"

My son said, *"I was never very good in school, but I'm good with my hands and I'm a really fast learner."*

It was time to clock out that day, and the boss asked my son if he could stay an extra 2 hours and work overtime so he could quickly train him how to do the next level of work. *"Sure,"* my son said. He cancelled the plans he had and he stayed late. It turned out he got promoted right there on the spot and went to the next level of work within the first week, while other employees there said they'd been trying to get that position for 6 months.

My cousin took a job right out of high school working for JC Penny. They put him in the Mens Department, and he did a great job, worked his way up to Department Manager, then Store Manager, then Regional Manager, then Purchaser, and in less than 20 years he became the Chief Marketing Officer of the entire company. He just worked and worked and worked, and he kept getting promoted.

So walk in to your next job interview with your qualifications and experience typed out in a nice format (even if you applied online), dress nice, shake hands, look the interviewer in the eye, speak up, and tell them how good you are for the job, and how you're just a big, fat dollar sign!

SHAKING HANDS IS COOL. JUST ASK MY MOM.

Shaking hands is cool - just ask my mom.

Yep, when I was a kid, my mom taught me how to properly shake someone's hand. Not my dad, but my mom. Sure, Dad was pretty solid, but I've always told people that my dad taught me how

to play sports – *but my mom taught me how to win*. It's just the way they were.

30 years later, I'm working for the #1 Vocal Coach in America, and he fills me in on the rest of the handshake skills.

Now guys, shaking hands is still the way to go, even with viruses and all that in this crazy world. Hugs might be the new form of greeting for most of you, but handshakes are still staying strong.

Because fist bumps and bro hugs and going high are great for your buds, and perfect for sports, but the boring old handshake done really well will get you farther along at your first job or college admission than anything else.

Okay, here's how it's done:

Squeeze, Look, Speak.

1.) Squeeze hard enough so that you're putting some real pressure into the other person's hand. When in doubt, squeeze harder than lighter. The limp handshake is just really, really bad on so many levels.

If you're shaking a man's hand, go harder. If it's a woman, you can ease up a bit. Same for the elderly. We don't want to be collapsing arteries here.

A note on shaking a woman's hand. My mom always said to wait for a woman to offer her hand first, and only then do you reach out and shake. But if it's a man, just stick your hand right

out there and take the initiative (whether you're a guy or girl). These are just the older style rules, but they do still apply in business situations.

2.) Look the person in the eye. Shaking hands while you're looking somewhere else is just unfriendly. Unless you're the President and you're getting one of those handshake photos taken, then yeah, you're good looking at the camera. But until you become the Pres, just look the other person in the eye. Eye contact is really important for making that first impression.

3.) Speak when shaking the person's hand. This is for two reasons: First, shaking hands while looking right at the person and saying nothing is just awkward. Try it, you'll see. The second, and cooler reason is that when you speak, sound vibrations travel through your body. If you say in a strong, low voice, *"Good to meet you!"* as you're grabbing their hand, your vibrations carry through that person's hand and arm and right into their body. This gives them an instant strong impression of you. Pretty cool, huh?

So that's it - just those three things: **Squeeze, Look, Speak. And make sure you're getting your hand out there first. Be the one to make the handshake happen and you'll see how differently the other person instantly treats you!**

**JUST
BE
INTO
SOME-
THING**

“Peer pressure”.

That’s one of those dork words that your mom or dad says, and you’re like, *“Puh-leeese! Get over it. I’m not gonna get sucked into bad stuff. Stop worrying so much.”* Well, I think I mentioned it already, but I’m a Dad of 10 kids, and I’m a high school coach, so I get this stuff.

And I can tell you one thing: **If a good kid hangs out with a bad kid, the good kid will usually turn bad.** We just covered that a few pages back.

It’s just how it goes and it’s how the odds are.

Now, every one of us is born different. Some of us tend to be stronger and can push back when we’re pulled towards bad things. And some of us have a harder time with that. Nothing wrong with that, it’s just the personality that we were given, and *some personalities tend towards peer pressure more than others.*

But kids that have been able to keep themselves from getting sucked into bad stuff – they all have *one common trait* that they share. It’s absolutely the single best success factor to avoid the pressure of running with the wrong crowd. And it’s this: **Just be into something.**

Gangs recruit bored kids - true story. And these kids aren’t just bored because they don’t have

stuff to do, but because they have no *direction* in their life. They have no *interests*, and that creates **low self confidence.** They’re lost. And that is a recipe to get sucked in to peer pressure.

I was hanging out with two of my teen boys one time and I told them how important it was that every one of my kids was the *absolute best in their school* at something. Anything.

My son Aidan was like, *“What? There are kids at school that are better than me at everything. I’m not that good at stuff.”*

I said, *“Think about it. What are you better at than anyone else at school?”*

He started thinking, then said, *“I might be the best on guitar. At least close. And I’m definitely the best downhill biker.”*

“Okay, what else?”

“Um... well, this is dumb, but I’m the probably the best mountain bike trail builder in our whole town.”

Then my son Marcus says, *“I’m the funniest kid in school.”*

“Yesssssss you are,” I laughed. Marcus the Carcass is a freaking riot. *“See?”* I said. *“See, you guys just came up with three and a half things.”*

It's so important to feel like you really are the best at something, and I don't care if it's the smallest, weirdest thing – just be into something and be the best at it.

My Dad always told us, *“Go get a job, then learn how to do the job perfectly, suck up all the knowledge you can about it, then become a guru at it.”* He used that exact word: Guru.

He honestly told us in high school that we could all become the best in the world at something someday, and most of us siblings have. Years ago, I knew more about how to use a type of marketing software than the owners of the company did, and they brought me in to train their people on it.

So why does that help with peer pressure? Well, it's because **being good at something gives you purpose, and purpose makes you feel needed, and feeling needed boosts self confidence, and self confidence allows you to say, “Heck no” when it's time to walk away from a bad situation or to confront your friends.**

Gretchen Ruben who wrote the book *“The Happiness Project”* says that one of the key factors to being happy is to be involved in something.

To be part of a project, or a group. For you, that might mean being on your sports team or being in band, or in a club, or just working really hard on guitar in your room. If you're in sports or a group at school, you *know* the feeling. Being good at something, combined with being needed in a group, and then working towards a common purpose... you feel how it makes you happy!

Here's another way to look at it. I asked my teens once, *“Stop and think how many people would be really screwed if you died tomorrow.”* That sounds crazy to think about, but really, do it. Right now. Stop and do it. Sure, people would be sad... even devastated by the loss, but that's not what I mean. If the first string quarterback on your team died during the middle of the season, aside from it being a sad tragedy... well, your team would really, really be screwed, right?

So that's a good study to gauge how needed you are. And when you're involved in things, or you're really good at things, you're also *needed*. And like we learned a minute ago, **being needed makes you happy and builds self confidence, both of which give you the power and strength to say NO to the peer pressure when those times come.**

**STOP
WORRYING
SO
MUCH**

A psychology professor was teaching an auditorium filled with students. She picked up a glass half full of water and raised it in the air, and everyone expected they'd be asked the typical question: *"Is this glass half empty or is this glass half full?"*

Instead, with a smile on her face, the professor asked, *"How heavy is this glass of water I'm holding?"*

Students shouted out answers ranging from eight ounces to a couple pounds.

She replied, *"From my perspective, the actual weight of this glass doesn't matter. It all depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute or two, it's fairly light. If I hold it for an hour straight, it's weight will make my arm ache. If I hold it for a day straight, my arm will likely cramp up and feel completely numb and paralyzed, forcing me to drop the glass to the floor. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it feels to me."*

And the whole class agreed. She continued, *"Your stresses and worries in life are just like this glass of water. If you think about them for a while, nothing much happens. If you think about them a bit longer you begin to ache a little. Think about them all day long, and you'll feel completely numb*

and paralyzed – incapable of doing anything else until you drop them."

While it's true that we should always face our problems, there's a big difference between facing a problem and dwelling on it.

When you're dwelling on a problem, you're basically reliving an old situation and re-creating every emotion and personal hardship you faced at that time. And that just creates more and more of the original problem.

The entire purpose of thinking about a problem in the first place is to *solve it... or move past it.* **But when you dwell on a problem, you're not able to see the solution.**

Problems can only be solved by seeing beyond, or outside, the problem. And this can't be done if all you're doing is worrying about it, stewing over it, or getting angry or negative about it.

So here's how to do it - it's 3 steps:

First, face the problem and acknowledge that something went wrong. To face the problem properly you'll need to take on an objective stance, where you see the problem as a spectator watching a performance, and not as an actor participating in that performance. The subtle difference here lies in the fact that you *must*

remove yourself from the situation by no longer seeing yourself as being part of the situation. In this way, you can look at the problem from a distance, and then not be affected emotionally by what happened. With this “objective perspective”, you should be able to see several things that led to this problem and then find solutions. Then, second: **solve it.**

That takes some practice, and it’s a great strategy for a problem that can be solved. Okay, then what about a problem that *can’t* be solved, like getting dumped by someone? In that case, you have to again – first, face the problem and acknowledge that something went wrong. Then you skip to the third part, which is this:

Let go, which we know is much harder than it sounds.

And here’s how you do THAT.

It’s called the 7 Day Positivity Diet, and trust me, this works. For one week, remove all negative thoughts from your head. The first day you will do terrible on it. Negative thoughts, worries and problems will be flooding into your head, but just try – do your best to instantly remove them, over and over. The next day you’ll get better at it, and by the 7th day - poof! They’re gone.

Have you ever noticed how when you’re in

a really good mood or really excited about something, you have no problems? Like when you first start dating someone, and they say, “*I love loud concerts!*” And maybe you’re not really a fan of loud concerts, but you’re totally willing to make it work, so you say, “*Omigosh, me too!*” You just make it work because you’re happy about the situation you’re in and the problem is solved.

Of course, you still need to think about actual problems that you deal with in your daily life, like a test coming up, or a conflict with a friend. This is different than worry or negativity, both of which you’re taking a “diet” from for 7 days. Don’t avoid actual issues, but maybe push off for the next 7 days things that you can – things that don’t have to be dealt with right away.

When a true problem does come up during the 7 days – **face it, acknowledge it, then (if possible) solve it or let it go.** Do that quickly, then go back to your “diet” where you continue to remove the worry and negativity in your life – for one week.

After the 7 days, you can go back to normal, but you’ll find that your “normal” has adjusted quite a bit. **It’s because this 7 day “diet” trains your mind to sort out the actual problems from the needless worry and harmful negativity – neither if which can be solved.**

TAKE 100% RESPONSI- BILITY

There's a guy out walking one night and he sees another guy down on his hands and knees looking for something under a streetlamp. The guy asks what he's looking for, and he says that he's looking for his keys.

The first guy offers to help him, so he gets down on his hands and knees too, and he helps him search for the lost keys. After an hour of

searching and not finding anything, he says, *"Hey, buddy we're just not finding your keys. you sure you lost them here?"*

And the other guy says, *"No, I lost them in my yard, but there's more light out here under the streetlamp."*

So basically, it's time to stop looking outside

yourself for the answers to why you haven't created the life and the results you want so far, because other than the stuff you *have* to do in life right now – like school and things your parents tell you to do – it's *you* who creates the quality of the life you lead and the results you produce.

You – no one else!

To achieve major success in life, and to achieve the things that are important to you, you have to take 100% responsibility for your life. Period. Nothing less will do. People with “victim mentality” blame their failures or their bad life on everyone else but themselves.

And by responsibility, I mean *personal* responsibility. You can't change the circumstances, the weather, or most other things around you, **but you can change yourself.**

One of the most common (and really, really stupid) myths in American culture today is that we're all entitled to a great life – that somehow, somewhere, someone else (but of course not us) is responsible for filling our lives with nonstop happiness, exciting career options, and blissful personal relationships... simply because we exist.

Wrong. **The real truth is that there is only one person responsible for the quality of the life you live.**

That person is you. And I'm so glad you're this far into this book. You're going to be a success, I can already tell!

So if you want to be successful, you have to take 100% responsibility for everything that you experience in your life. This includes you being 100% responsible for how great your achievements are, you being 100% responsible for your grades in school, you being 100% responsible for the quality of your relationships, and you being 100% responsible for your attitude, your health, your money, your debts, your feelings... **EVERYTHING!**

It's easy to understand this, but it's hard to really get yourself to act this way, I know. It's hard for adults too.

It's because **most of us have been conditioned to blame something outside of ourselves for the parts of our life that we don't like.** We blame our parents, our teachers, our friends, our bosses, the media, the weather, our lack of money – anyone or anything we can pin the blame on. We never want to look at where the real problem is: *ourselves.*

Remember, it's YOU who creates your quality of life, so take 100% responsibility starting today.

THE

ELEPHANT

ROPE

“Second elephant story in the book!” (I called it before you did)

So a long time ago, an explorer was walking through a camp, and he noticed that the elephants weren't being kept in cages or held from escaping by using chains. All that was holding them back from walking away was a very thin rope tied to one of their legs, then attached to a tree.

As the explorer looked at the elephants, he was completely confused why the elephants didn't just use their strength to break the thin rope and escape from the camp. They could do it, but they didn't try to at all.

Curious, and wanting to know the answer, he asked a local man nearby why the elephants were just standing there and never tried to escape. The man replied, *“When they are very young we use this same thin rope to tie them, and at that age, it's enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe that they cannot break away. They believe the rope can still hold them, so they never try to break free.”*

The only reason that the elephants weren't breaking free and escaping from the camp was that, over time, they adopted the belief that it just wasn't possible.

You know I'm going to tie this concept in to your life now, right? Yup. Here goes:

No matter how much the world tries to hold you back, always continue with the belief that the good things you want to achieve are possible. Believing you can become successful is the most important step in actually achieving success.

Sometimes you're being held back by yourself... by your own limiting beliefs. This can come from having been told you can't do something, or being told you aren't capable of something. Other times, it comes from having tried something once and failed at it, and now you're convinced that you just can't do it.

All you see is that rope around your leg, holding you in place. What you believe about yourself is so powerful.

And I'm not talking about cutting lose your religious beliefs, or disobeying your parents, teachers or good, lawful authority. Of course not.

But when there's something you really want to achieve, and you know it's right, virtuous and good – but you're holding yourself back – make the decision to break free from the perceived ropes, and go for the things that are right for you!

Figure out what ropes have been holding you in place... and cut them.

THE TEENAGE TIGER THAT CHASED FIELD MICE

One time there was this teenage tiger. Wait...
Do I tell too many animal stories in this book?
Maybe. *But stick with me.*

Okay, so there was this teenage tiger. His buddies

would go out with the older adult tigers and
chase down antelopes and bring in the hunt. But
not this teen. This tiger's jam was just chasing
field mice. All day. He'd catch lots of field mice,
eat them, then come back at the end of the day

and chow down on the antelope that his buddies and the old guy tigers brought in.

His buddies started to get upset with him for not working his fair share. So his dad (also a tiger, because... well, yeah) sat him down and had a little tiger-to-tiger chat with him. He explained to his tiger teen why they only go after the antelopes and not field mice.

He said that it takes too much energy to chase down a field mouse than the tiny little bit of nutrition and calories that you get back from it. If you only hunted field mice, you'd eventually die.

We're that way too. We're often wasting our time chasing field mice. The difference is, we won't die doing this, but it does affect our lives.

Ever notice how you'll sit down to crank out some solid homework, but first you need to get your work area set up, grab a drink, adjust the light, then maybe get up and walk around, then text, then straighten your room a bit, then, who knows what else. Everything but hitting that one big homework project, right?

We're chasing field mice. We chase after things that don't help us, but these small things make us feel good in the short term, because they're what we call "small wins".

It feels good because you think you're getting a lot done. And it feels good to say you did something, like, *"Hey look at me! I caught 75 mice today!"*

But it takes more energy to do these small things than the result you get out of it.

Now, you might have heard that to accomplish a large task, you break it into parts. Small steps. So you're thinking, *"Hey wait - now you're telling me NOT to do these small things?"* Big difference here.

You take small steps towards completing a BIG project. But you don't do small individual tasks that together don't really add up to anything productive. Make sense?

Think of the tigers hunting the antelope. They first get ready, like drinking coffee around the campfire, sharpening their claws, things like that. Then they organize the strategy. Then they go scope out the savanna and see how the pickings are looking for the day. Then they hunt. Get it?

Big projects are broken into meaningful tasks, that together move you toward finishing the project.

Be careful you're not just out chasing field mice and overlooking the important things.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A CHIMNEY FIRE

Think of a situation in your life when you've been in a sheer panic for a good 5-10 minutes. Like a car accident, a fire, a natural disaster... I'm going with chimney fire. I was going to go with bear attack, but I've never had that happen. But chimney fire, YES. Besides, we already have too many animal stories in this book... as... you... know.

Okay, so true story. One time our chimney caught fire from the wood burning stove. Basically, there's flames shooting out the top like a flamethrower. I freak out and I run grab a ladder to go up on the roof with a hose to spray it down the chimney. This is 3 stories up at the chimney part. I'm yelling at my son to grab the hose... not long enough. I'm now screaming at my other sons to get buckets.

(I told you I have 10 kids, right?) Well, they're sort of stunned, which makes me yell at them more... eventually the fire burned itself out before I even got up on the roof with the hose. By then, the fire department shows up and they're like, "Uh, yeah - you're all good here."

I turn to my family, make sure everyone is okay, and what do I do? I start apologizing for freaking out. Uh huh - you know that feeling, right?

In a time of stress or fear, we go into survival mode. All our focus goes to the problem, and little or no focus goes to people, feelings, or emotions.

If it was a bear attack (had to do it), I'd be freaking out, yelling at my kids to stay away, probably knocking down the tent, and probably accidentally knocking them down too. As soon as it was over, I'd be gathering them around, hugging them and asking if everyone was okay. Right?

So, on a smaller scale, when you're stressed about an upcoming test, you tend to snap at your friends, then have to apologize later.

It's because we're in survival mode at these times, whether it's a true emergency, or even a more minor stressful event. **And in survival mode, we always prepare for the worst.** It's how we were created. It has to do with the hunting and

protection instincts of our ancestors.

When you're under stress, you're trying to predict the future based on the past - *on what you know*. **You live in a state of narrow focus, versus living in a state of wide focus.**

As soon as your stress is over, your brain moves to the cleanup phase - the fire is out, the bear is gone, the test is over. So let's regroup. **But if you never leave that stress phase, you never clean up, and you can never form good relationships.**

Long-term anxiety comes from living in survival mode too often, without ever moving to the cleanup phase. **When you live in survival mode for an extended period of time, you literally start changing.** Your mind starts reprogramming your body to live with this survival mode, and that's the people you see that are living in constant stress. They have bad health, anxiety, depression, and so many more disorders.

The key is to leave survival mode as soon as possible. It's important to be in that mode to get yourself out of an emergency, or out of a tough spot in life, but **you have to teach your brain that there's pain in being overwhelmed. There's pain in being stressed. There's PAIN in survival mode.** *Then move to the cleanup phase as soon as you can.*

**TRYING
TO BE
HAPPY WILL
MAKE YOU
UNHAPPY**

We live in this world of “when I finally make the football team, when I finally make valedictorian, when I finally get that girlfriend, when I finally dump that guy, when I finally get my drivers license, when I finally get that great job, when I finally get that body... *I’ll be happy.*”

When you’re constantly waiting for something to happen to make you happy, you’re living in a place of want and lack. You’re starting from a place of **fear**. And you’re saying you’re **incomplete** how you are.

You’re starting from **incompleteness** every time you want something. From a place of “*I’m not enough-ness*”. You think, “*I’ll be complete when I finally have that thing.*” **But you won’t.**

Happiness – like other emotions – isn’t something you obtain like a goal. It’s something you inhabit. It’s temporary. Always. Like anger. People don’t say, “*I want to achieve anger in my life.*” You just get angry sometimes. It’s not a normal state, but it’s the same with happiness.

Think of it this way: If you have to **try** to be cool, you will never be cool. And if you have to **try** to be happy, then you will never be happy. People these days are just trying too hard.

Finding happiness is not achieved like a goal – it’s the side effect of a particular set of

ongoing life experiences. This gets mixed up a lot, especially since happiness is marketed so much these days as a goal in and of itself. ***Buy X and be happy. Learn Y and be happy.*** But you can’t buy happiness and you can’t achieve happiness. It just *is* – once you get the other parts of your life in order.

This doesn’t mean that to find happiness, you should lower your expectations or ignore your goals. Noooope.

Just because you’re removing the “*When I have X I’ll be happy*” statement from your thinking doesn’t mean you shouldn’t set goals and intentions and strive for great things – got it?

It’s about appreciating where you are **now** and being present in the moment in your life, then realizing that you can always be growing and building on your life.

It’s also about making “X” something real, and solid, and something of value. Something that brings ***happiness***, not ***pleasure***.

If you thought you were going to make \$100,000 and drive a Porsche immediately out of college, then your standards of success are skewed and superficial. You’re confusing pleasure with happiness.

The joy of life is not *having* a \$100,000 salary. It's working to *reach* a \$100,000 salary, and not worrying too much about small failures or setbacks along the way. Trust me on that one.

So... **Happiness is not the same as pleasure.** Let's go from here.

When most people seek happiness, they're actually seeking *pleasure*: Comfort, good food, a new car, parties with friends, becoming more popular. Sure, pleasure is great, but it's not the same as happiness.

Pleasure is related to happiness, but it doesn't *cause* it. Ask any drug addict whether pleasure ultimately made them happy. Heck no.

Pleasure is a false god. Research shows us that people who focus their energy on material and superficial pleasures end up more anxious, more emotionally unstable and less happy. Pleasure is what's marketed to us, and we use it to numb and distract ourselves. **While pleasure is necessary, it isn't sufficient. There's something more.**

Which brings me to what actually drives happiness....

Happiness is the process of becoming your ideal self. Finishing a marathon makes us happier than eating a chocolate cake. Raising a kid

makes us happier than winning in a video game. Starting a small business and struggling to make money makes us happier than buying a new car.

The funny thing is – all three of the activities above are... well, they're actually pretty unpleasant. They require setting some pretty high expectations, and then probably failing to meet most of them. Yet they're some of the most meaningful moments and activities of our lives! They involve pain, struggle... even anger and despair. But once we're done, we look back and we feel good. We feel happy.

Why?

Because these kinds of activities allow us to become our ideal selves. It's the constant pursuit of creating our ideal selves that gives us happiness, regardless of the pleasures or the pain, regardless of positive or negative emotions.

This is why some people are happy in war and others are sad at weddings. It's why some people are excited to work and other people hate parties. Wha?? I know, right?

The *end results* don't define our ideal selves. It's not just finishing the marathon that makes us happy – it's *achieving that difficult goal* that does. It's not having an awesome kid to show off that makes us happy – it's knowing that you gave

yourself up to the growth of another human being that is special. It's not the prestige and money from the new business that makes you happy, it's the process of overcoming all odds with people you care about. In other words, *happiness is in the journey.*

And this is the exact reason why trying to be happy will make you unhappy. Because to try to be happy implies that you are not already your ideal self. If you were already your ideal self, then you wouldn't feel the need to try to be happy.

Happiness occurs when you decide to pursue what's in you. And this is why happiness is so fleeting. It always feels like it's just around the corner, waiting for you, right? I feel that way. I'm sure you do too. No matter where you are in life, you will always feel like there's one more thing you need to do to be completely happy. That's why celebrities want to do crazy things like climb Mt. Everest.

And that's because our ideal self is always just around that corner – always three steps ahead of us.

We dream of being the coolest kid in school, and when we're the coolest kid in school, we dream of being the best on the team, and when we're the best on the team, we dream of... Yeah.

Again, it's not *achieving* these successes that matters, but that we're consistently *moving towards* them, day after day, month after month, year after year. Did I pound that in you enough yet? :) Because you have to watch out: The successes will come and go, but we can always continue following our ideal self down the path of our lives.

Boiled down, the simplest key to finding happiness:

Imagine your ideal self and then step towards it. Dream big and then do something. Anything.

The simple act of moving will make you happy and inspire you further. The fantasy and the dream are just tools to get you moving. It doesn't matter if they come true or not. Just live.

Stop trying to be happy and just BE.

PLAYING TEXAS HOLD 'EM

There's a great card game called "*Texas Hold Em*", and maybe you've played it with your buddies. And maybe you bet something on the game. And maybe you lost something after you bet. I

play with my sons and they try to take things from me. Okay, technically all of that is illegal, so nevermind – I'm just going to use this as an example.

So there's this strategy in Texas Hold' Em where **the most critical decisions are the ones you make in the first round.** Because the way the game works is that there are several rounds of betting, and each time you bet, another card is flipped over and shown.

So basically, you get closer and closer to making a safe bet as the rounds go on, while the first bet is really pretty risky. *That's why it's the most important.*

When you're pretty sure of something in life, you can make a pretty good decision – a bet, basically. But when it's a real “shot in the dark”, then that decision – or bet – is much more critical. You'll either win big... or lose big.

It's why you don't make a decision to marry someone until you've dated them for a while. You get to know them, and the more you do, the more confident you are in your decision. Sure, marriage is a big decision, but you're pretty darn sure, so it's not actually a *critical* decision.

The decisions that are critical are the ones you make at the beginning of a journey through life, when you're unsure of what's ahead.

These are the decisions you make early on in

high school that set the tone for the rest of the time you'll spend there. Or the decisions you'll make early on in your marriage, or your first job.

So the best way to make an early, critical decision is to get as much info as possible. In the military, they call this “*intel*”. Leaders need intel to make smart tactical decisions.

So the more info – or intel – you have, the more “big picture” you can see of the issue or problem. With more info, you can also see farther out into the future to take a better guess at how your decision will change things – for better or worse.

So when I'm playing Texas Hold Em, if early-on I can get some info about my players – their reaction and betting patterns – then I can predict a little better what will happen later on in the hand.

Remember that the most critical decisions are the ones you make at the beginning. You might be making a big bet, but you have to decide SOMETHING, so get good info, because your decision can affect you for years to come.

Oh, and always fold on the first round unless you're holding a face card or a pair. Trust me on that one.

**DO WHAT
YOU LOVE
AND
YOU'LL
PROBABLY
END UP
HATING
IT**

You know that expression, “*Do what you love and the money will follow*”? Yeah, that’s a load of bull.

It’s not about doing what you love, but about doing what you’re good at. It’s about using the talents God gave you, and the skills you’ve acquired along the way.

When you do what you’re *good* at, you experience a satisfaction that makes you feel proud, content and happy. But if you do what you *love*, you usually get burned out and dissatisfied. And the reason for that is because you’re taking a love and you’re shoving it into the role of money-making.

I’ll give you a few examples.

Say you love music, so you go and do it as a job. I did that professionally for some time, and let me tell you, you get burnt out. No matter how much the musician is smiling, they’re tired of getting home at 2 or 3 in the morning and having to always be “on” for hours at a time while everyone else is having fun. Or, someone who loves cooking then opens a restaurant... they’re usually ready to torch the place to the ground within two years. I did that one too.

Now look at this example: We once hired a guy to come fix our chimney, and he brought his teenage son along with him one Saturday to help. The

boy couldn’t stop talking about drywall, which he did for his weekday job. I mean - constantly. It was drywall this, and drywall that. I said to the Dad, “*He sure loves his drywall job.*” And the Dad said, “*That’s all he talks about - he’s so proud of the good work he does.*” Wow. I hired him the next winter to drywall our basement and he did a fantastic job.

I knew a tire store worker who was the same way. If he came to a party, he was talking tires. And obviously, tires isn’t his love. Either is drywall for the other guy. That’s just the product. **It’s the job itself that’s his love – It’s the quality of work that gives him the satisfaction and pride, and the sense of belonging and importance in being part of the company.**

Basically, you could be a garbage truck driver and be happy if you did an excellent job at it.

Now, let’s find some middle ground. A teacher. True, teachers mostly do what they love, because they like working with people and they like working with kids. It’s still not a hobby though – they don’t go home and do that for fun. They love it *and* they’re good at it.

I’m that way. I’m a creative that never went to school to be one. I do it because it’s a skill I have, and I also do enjoy the creative process – I like that

profession a whole lot more than say, the dental profession, but I still don't go home and paint or draw for fun. *It's not a true love, but something I like. And at the same time, I'm good at it.*

If you do what you love, you'll probably end up hating it. If you do what you like... and what you're good at... you'll end up happy and probably make some decent money along the way too.

So you might be thinking, *"Okay, if I don't choose a job I love, should I just choose one that makes really good money?"*

Nope. Not that way either. Sure, the purpose of a job is to make money, but working a job *solely* for money will make you dissatisfied and frustrated when the excitement of the new income level wears off.

Yes, you have to find a career that will give you a comfortable life, but money can't be the main driving force behind your choice for a job. Chasing money with no other purpose will *never* make you happy.

Balance the money factor in with your skills, abilities, and a job category you like, and you'll be happy, do a great job and THEN the money will follow.

Next, you have to be *proud* of your job. And this tends to be a more important factor for guys than girls. Just is.

When my little brother-in-law was 18, he told me that he got offered a job selling vacuums door-to-door. He said, *"What do you think? I hear people are making a ton of money doing that!"*

I said, *"You'd be good at that. But let me ask you something. If you were sitting on an airplane, and someone asks you what you do for a living and you tell them you sell vacuums, are you going to be proud of that?"*

"No..." he said. *"Well,"* I said, *"Then work that job for a little while and make some good money, then look for something else to do for your career."*

So find a job – or career – that balances these four things:

- Something you are **good at** (*your skills, talents*)
- Something you **like** (*not necessarily a passion or a love or a hobby*)
- Something that makes decent **money** (*enough money, but doesn't have to be the highest*)
- Something you are **proud** of

Follow that, and you'll end up with a happy job!

THE BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT THAT SAVED HER LIFE

When we're going through the worst, devastating setbacks, and our world is crashing down, I wish sometimes that we could look ahead and *see how this sh**show is actually the best thing that could have ever happened to us.*

Quick story: There's this really amazing woman I've worked with who was chosen by NASA to go up on the Space Shuttle in the 1980's. She has a Doctorate in Astrophysics, and she

owns a company here in our town that makes specialized amplifiers with the ability to jam the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that American troops encounter in Iraq. Badass.

So she told my brother and I this story once about how she was working with NASA and they gave her the opportunity to be on the Shuttle crew. Back then, that wasn't really a common thing for a woman to get to do that. I guess she would

have been the first woman to do something cool in space - I forget what.

Anyway, she was in training, and about six months before launch date, she found out she was pregnant! Her world came crashing down. Her dream had been shattered. She was so devastated, but she knew the choice she needed to make.

Six months later, the space shuttle Columbia took off into space without her, and as it reached the upper atmosphere – it exploded. I'm sure you've heard the story of that tragic day. It was a tragedy a lot like 9/11.

A few months later, her baby was born, and she looked at this beautiful little baby who had saved her life, and she *knew* there were great things still left to do in her life. She went on to have more kids, one of them starting a company with 20 employees... when he was only 15 (his mom had to sign a waiver for him when he'd fly by himself for company travel).

So think about this. Sometimes life will send you the biggest disappointments and the biggest letdowns. But as long as you expect it, then you can accept it and you can understand that there is

probably a really good reason this disappointing or tragic thing happened.

Last winter, I was riding up a ski gondola with a guy and we started talking about political issues. Now, I'm strongly in support of life – in all aspects and all ages, whether it's a baby or an old person.

He told me that he believed that it would be acceptable for a woman to abort her baby in the case of rape. So I posed this question to him: *“What if that baby was sent to save the mom's life?”*

“What?” He was surprised. I continued, *“Think of it this way: She was a victim, yes. But what if the baby is what heals her? Someone who is there for her, growing up at her side, giving her life stability and meaning. Without that child, her life would be completely different – maybe hitting rock bottom – who knows? But instead she has that baby and it grounds her and gives her life a much deeper meaning than she could ever have gotten from a job or a social life or things focused solely on herself.”*

It's just a question. We don't know. But there's a reason you're given a life to help bring into the world, sometimes even through the most tragic of circumstances. The act of *giving* brings you

peace and happiness and satisfaction. Maybe that child is there to give you some consolation and some hope. To help you through your journey of life and to then switch roles and care for *you* when you're old.

Even in the worst of times, in the most tragic, terrible circumstances, good will ultimately come from it, whether you find it yourself, or let it slowly surface on it's own.

And that's the key. You can take a bad situation and turn it better yourself. Or you can take a bad situation and accept it, then let it go. And it will almost always turn positive in the end.

Now, earlier in this book I taught you that you should get rid of the things that are not working out for you. *"Hey, isn't that the same here?"*

It's true that you cut the things loose that aren't working out for you, but those are smaller things. Those are things like, *"This person I'm hanging out with isn't good for me",* or *"This job is really getting to me, and I think I need to find a different one."*

Don't confuse the smaller life decisions with actual *life*. Ending one life to make *your* life better will most definitely not improve your life. Promoting and encouraging and working with lives is the greatest act of mercy and kindness you can *ever* do, and it's the **greatest job in the world**. Just ask my wife. As you know, she and I raised ten kids.

Recently, my wife and I were talking about how happy and satisfied we were with our lives, and she said that if she was dying – if she was on her death bed right now, today – that she would look back on her life and feel that *she has accomplished and done everything she's ever wanted to do*. And this is after raising ten kids and being a mom and never going to college.

So don't forget that bad things can come your way – things that are almost tragic and life-changing and devastating, like missing the opportunity to go into space.

But that missed opportunity can also be one of the greatest, most beautifully life-changing experiences that will ever happen to you.

THE
#1 FACTOR
FOR
SUCCESS

Years ago, research was done on hundreds of successful business startups to find the common factors that existed in these success stories. They looked at things like the experience level of the people, how well it was funded, the market they were in, and maybe 20 other things.

The one common factor they found that existed in every successful startup was timing.

And I can personally tell you that in our life, almost every amazing thing that has happened to us was because an opportunity came our way, and we jumped on it quickly. Our house, investments, business startups, everything. Even my wife and I meeting each other!

Don't keep waiting for the time to be "just right".

People that wait for the right time to have a baby often never end up having kids. People that wait for the right time to start a business rarely start one.

Whether it's a business startup or your personal life in your teenage years, timing is so important.

Of course, there are the other factors for success. I teach that there are five:

#5 Positivity – *the ability to keep your mind open to new opportunities and not be clouded by negativity.*

#4 Drive – *the "go get it", relentless attitude that every successful person has.*

#3 Discipline – *the habits you form, and the ability to be organized and prioritize what's important.*

#2 Honesty – *the integrity you must have in dealing with others.*

#1 Timing - *the ability to make fast decisions after quick, careful risk analysis. This is the most important one in many ways.*

Opportunities are all around you, but the really good ones need to be seized quickly. That person who you're interested in but you waited to long to make the move... they could have been your true soulmate for life. But you missed it.

God puts amazing opportunities right in our path, but it's our job to quickly reach out and take them. Sometimes they're obvious, and sometimes we have to dig a little. We have to recognize the opportunity, then make a quick decision to take it or not.

Timing is everything. Don't let greatness slip by!

ALL THE IMPORTANT THINGS IN ORANGE FONT, ALL IN ONE SECTION:

Knowing when to quit is a whole lot different than being a quitter. Knowing when to quit is just plain smart.

Knowing when NOT to do something, or when to STOP doing something that isn't working out for you is more important than knowing WHAT to do.

If you're going to do something stupid, it better really be worth it.

When you're doing something risky – in school, in life, physically, romantically... think of the risk versus the reward.

The vast majority of people are good, but everyone is wrong.

When someone butts heads with you, just realize that their belief may be wrong. It also may be right. But their intent isn't evil.

Learn to like more people by practicing it constantly.

It's not someone else's responsibility to be attracted to you – you make yourself more attractive by being a better person.

You can love yourself for who you are and where you're at in life... but that's not going to get you to where you want to be.

You should try to limit most things to some degree, whether they're not good for you, good for you, or neutral.

When we bring in an external stimulus, things change.

Turn off your notifications. Leave your phone ringer on, and maybe your texts, but don't have notifications pop up for every social media app you have.

Only at 100% power can the plane actually leave the ground and get airborne.

So how can you not give 100% when it's 100% your choice?

These two voices are CHANGE and STATUS QUO, and they work against each other.

Anytime you're facing the voice of change, there's a reason for it, and probably an important one.

Don't let status quo blind you from an important decision.

When it comes to taking action and making progress, starting small is the key.

I tell my kids that I'd rather have them be decent at everything than great at only one thing.

Want to make a habit stick? Start small, one bite at a time.

Successful people face facts squarely. They do what's uncomfortable and they take steps to create the outcomes they want.

If you don't deal with life proactively, life is going to deal with it for you.



YOU are the one who's creating your life the way it is.

To be more successful, all you have to do is act quickly and decisively on the issues, then act in ways that produce more of what you want.

Comfort zones are not really about comfort, they're about avoiding fear.

We don't like it when we don't know what the outcome will be.

What are the things that you believe are worth doing, but are afraid of doing because of the potential for disappointment or failure?

Make it a goal to get comfortable with discomfort – To avoid running away from discomfort.

Getting advice is a whole lot different than complaining, because you're looking for an outcome to a problem that can actually be solved.

Learn to replace complaining with making actual requests.

Yep, it's performance, not perception.

What really gives you long-lasting self confidence is being good at something.

Your goals don't have to be huge, but they do need to be CLEAR.

So get some clarity – on your achievements, your future goals, your plans, who you are, and what you stand for. Get clear on that and you get unstoppable self-confidence!

Most importantly, just be nice. Be polite. Be thoughtful. Be courteous. And be real. Because these all go ten times further than humor, good looks or anything else.

You can't be a success if you don't think you can.

It's a good thing beliefs can be changed. So start now, and beware of the fixed mindset! Having a fixed mindset puts massive limitations on your life.

To be happy, it's just a matter of moving like you're happy.

Optimize for the starting line.

Intention is more important than goals, so start there. Set good intentions for yourself that will optimize you for the starting line today.

Every action you take, every single day, is a vote for the type of person you want to become.

The most successful improvements happen slowly and steadily, not suddenly.

Your goal is simply to win the majority of the time.

MORE IMPORTANT THINGS IN ORANGE FONT:

You can't live your life just making decisions based on fear or you'll always be one step behind – and probably die of stress-induced heart failure.

Because it's not what we do once in a while that shapes our lives, it's what we do consistently.

Who you hang out with is who you'll become. Hang out with losers and you'll become a loser. Hang out with straight-A nerds and you'll get straight-A's... and maybe get a little nerdy, which is kind of okay too.

Pay at least as much attention to all the good stuff happening in your life as you do to the bad stuff happening in the world.

Because life is as positive or as negative as you want it to be.

Focus on the good you can do, instead of trying to fight all the bad that you can't change.

Walk in to your next job interview with your qualifications and experience typed out in a nice format (even if you applied online), dress nice, shake hands, look the interviewer in the eye, speak up, and tell them how good you are for the job, and how you're just a big, fat dollar sign!

Squeeze, Look, Speak. And make sure you're getting your hand out there first. Be the guy to make the handshake happen and you'll see how differently the other person instantly treats you!

It's so important to feel like you really are the best at something, and I don't care if it's the smallest, weirdest thing – just be into something and be the best at it.

Being good at something gives you purpose, and purpose makes you feel needed, and feeling needed boosts self confidence, and self confidence allows you to say, "Heck no" when it's time to walk away from a bad situation or to confront your friends.

While it's true that we should always face our problems, there's a big difference between facing a problem and dwelling on it.

When a problem comes up – face it, acknowledge it, then (if possible) solve it or let it go.

To achieve major success in life, and to achieve the things that are important to you, you have to take 100% responsibility for your life. Period. Nothing less will do.

Most of us have been conditioned to blame something outside of ourselves for the parts of our life that we don't like.

No matter how much the world tries to hold you back, always continue with the belief that the good things you want to achieve are possible. Believing you can become successful is the most important step in actually achieving success.



Figure out what ropes have been holding you in place... and cut them.

It often takes more energy to do small things than the result you get out of it.

In a time of stress or fear, we go into survival mode. All our focus goes to the problem, and little or no focus goes to people, feelings, or emotions.

When you live in survival mode for an extended period of time, you literally start changing.

You have to teach your brain that there's pain in being overwhelmed. There's pain in being stressed. There's PAIN in survival mode.

When you're constantly waiting for something to happen to make you happy, you're living in a place of want and lack.

Happiness – like other emotions – isn't something you obtain like a goal. It's something you inhabit. It's temporary. Always.

Happiness is not the same as pleasure.

Happiness is the process of becoming your ideal self.

To try to be happy implies that you are not already your ideal self. If you were already your ideal self, then you wouldn't feel the need to try to be happy.

Imagine your ideal self and then step towards it. Dream big and then do something. Anything.

Stop trying to be happy and just BE.

The best way to make an early, critical decision is to get as much info as possible.

Remember that the most critical decisions are the ones you make at the beginning. You might be making a big bet, but you have to decide SOMETHING, so get good info, because your decision can affect you for years to come.

It's not about doing what you love, but about doing what you're good at. It's about using the talents God gave you, and the skills you've acquired along the way.

If you do what you love, you'll probably end up hating it. If you do what you like... and what you're good at... you'll end up happy and probably make some decent money along the way too.

Don't keep waiting for the time to be "just right".

Timing is everything. Don't let greatness slip by!

You can take a bad situation and turn it better yourself. Or you can take a bad situation and accept it, then let it go. And it will almost always turn positive in the end.

That missed opportunity can also be one of the greatest, most life-changing things that will ever happen to you.

BONUS JUST BE A GOOD TEEN

I want to leave you with one last part:

Just be a good teen.

Be appreciative of your parents, because they're trying. Parenting is hard. The World's Greatest Job is also the toughest one. Right now, you're learning lessons from all the annoying mistakes your parents make, and then someday if you have kids, you'll know how to NOT make those *same* mistakes... you'll just make *different* ones.

Remember that your parents will always love you unconditionally, but they'll respect you only when you *earn* it.

Don't be so ticked off at authority. Following rules and laws and basic order and common decency teaches you discipline, and that puts you on a path to a successful life.

You want to know how to make a ton of money later in life? Just be a good teen now. Get the practice in, so the habits are formed early and carry with you for life.

But don't worry about being perfect – just be a good teen. Just be there, doing the work.

Be reliable. Show up. Give... in every small way.

And along the way you'll make mistakes. Then try harder not to make them again.

Part of being a good teen is... just accepting that. To dare to be good... to be average and normal, to have more humility. To accept responsibility more. To just get on with what's in front of your face. And then maybe pass that on to your kids someday. And in the end, to leave nothing of consequence to this world, apart from the fact that you were there for your family and friends and the people you love to the best of your ability.

Just smile, open your eyes wide, be appreciative, strong and caring. Then the good teen thing will come automatically, I guarantee. And that good teen will turn into a great adult.

I expect greatness from you. And someday if I meet you, I will see that. God bless, and talk to you soon in another book. – Tommy



Your author:

I am an entrepreneur, running coach, funky bassist, mountain man, marathoner, shredder of the deep powder, provider of the bacon, extreme trail blazer, optimism addict, tamer of 10 wild children, clumsy husband, glorifier of our Creator.

Other books by Tommy Latham:

The Dad Formula // How to Achieve Work-Life Balance and Be a Rockstar Dad

Walks with Dad // 52 Talks to Position Your Son for Success

Stuck at the Top // When High Performance Men Are Low Performance Dads

How to Raise Analog Kids in a Digital World... and Not Make Them Hate You For It

Reach out to me I'd like to hear from you. tommy@TommyLatham.com

WHY DO ADULTS GET ALL THE SUCCESS BOOKS?



Ever look for a self-help book for teens? You'll find that they all deal with *problems*: peer pressure, pregnancy, drugs, alcohol... It seems like all of these books are meant for pulling rotten kids up out of the trenches and sticking them right... well, on the baseline of... *normal*.

Let's go from the baseline of normal, and launch up to greatness.

This is a true life skills book for teens.

If you're a teen that wants to go from good to *great*, or you're the parent of a teen that feels that your child needs a fast track to success, this is your book.

WRITTEN IN A CASUAL TONE WITH AN EASY TO FOLLOW FORMAT, THIS BOOK HITS ALL THE MAIN SUCCESS TOPICS THAT EVERY TEEN SHOULD KNOW IN LIFE.

"I bought this for my teen, but ended up reading it too. I laughed, I almost cried... this book is filled with so much emotion and wisdom." – Jeff Charles

"Brilliant! It's written so perfectly for the teenage audience. Spot on." - Book Review

"I use these success strategies every day, and I often flip back through and re-read parts. I've shared it with my friends too!" - Kelly, 16