

FROM SURVIVAL TO MASTERY

The 80/20 Formula
for Wealth, Freedom,
and Fulfillment

MARTIN A. PERDOMO

From Survival to Mastery
The 80/20 Formula for Wealth, Freedom, and Fulfillment

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The author makes no guarantees concerning the level of success you may experience by following the advice and strategies contained in this book, and you accept the risk that results will differ for each individual.

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DEDICATION

To my children, grandchildren, and the generations of Perdomos coming after me...

This book is my charge to you. A blueprint. A strategy guide. A tool that outlives me and serves you, so you never have to start from scratch like I did.

Everything I've poured into these pages comes from real experience, real pain, real growth. My hope is that you read it, apply it, and pass it on. Let this be something that helps you build your life with purpose, discipline, and direction.

And if you're not part of my bloodline but you're holding this book in your hands, I wrote it for you too. I may not know your name, but I believe in your potential. If you're willing to do the work, the strategies and mindset in this book will change your life just like they changed mine.

Stay focused, The Future is waiting on you!

— Martin Perdomo

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever struggled financially? Have you ever been in a place so low that deep down you knew, God, the universe, your Creator, had something better for you? Have you ever felt stuck, desperate to figure it out?

That was me, many years ago.

Childhood in Two Worlds

My parents were both born in the Dominican Republic. My oldest sister, Ingrid, was born there too. My mother became pregnant with me around the time she had an opportunity to travel to the United States. That's how I came to be born in New York City, where I would spend much of my youth.

But being young, poor, and alone in America, my mother couldn't support me. So she sent me back to the Dominican Republic, where I spent the first five years of my life with my grandmother and father.

We didn't have much. In fact, we had very little. But as kids, we didn't know we were poor, we were happy, free, and unaware of what "poverty" even meant.

We lived in a three-bedroom house made of asbestos and tin, with no running water. Every morning at 6 a.m., my grandmother and I would

walk up the road with the neighbors to fetch water. Just enough to brush our teeth, cook, clean, and flush the toilet.

When it rained, it rained inside the house. The Caribbean sun burned pinholes into the tin roof, and the water poured through. My sister and I would run around catching rain in bowls and pots, tossing it out into the backyard, turning survival into a game. Sometimes I'd go outside and stand under the gutter with my friends, taking showers in the rain like it was normal life. And for us, it was. I thought it was fun. But the truth? We were just poor.

I watched my grandmother wash clothes by hand for neighbors to earn a living. Later, she started a small cinder block business in the backyard. That's where I first saw the grind, hard work, discipline, entrepreneurship. I didn't have the vocabulary for it back then, but the seeds were being planted.

A Crowded Apartment, A Determined Family

At age five, my mother sent for me and my sister, and we returned to New York City. Soon after, she met Ricardo, who became my stepfather. He had two kids of his own — Richard and Belkis. Eventually, my youngest sister, Maly, was born — the spoiled baby of the family.

All seven of us lived in a one-bedroom apartment in Washington Heights. My mom made it work. She built a temporary wall in the kitchen and turned it into a second room. That's where she set up twin bunk beds. I shared a bed with Richard. Ingrid and Belkis shared the bottom bunk. And Maly slept in the bedroom with my mom and Ricardo.

That's how we lived. Cramped. Tight. But we survived.

At 17 years old, I met Annie, the woman who would become my wife. We worked at the same retail store — she was actually my manager. The first time I saw her, I thought she was the most beautiful woman in the

world. Long black ponytail, red lipstick, radiant smile. It was love at first sight for me. I knew she was going to be mine. And more than two decades later, she's still the most beautiful, intelligent woman I know.

By 21, Annie and I had already purchased our first home. We were young, in love, and raising our children — Christopher, Jeremy, Gianni, and Julian — while building something from scratch.

The Hustle and the Awakening

At the time, I was working for a major life insurance company, grinding in the field every day, selling policies. And it was during that season that something shifted in me. That's when I discovered personal development.

And it changed everything.

It opened my eyes to something no one had ever told me: that my mind had power. That my perspective could shape my reality. That I didn't have to stay stuck in the story I was born into.

That was the beginning, not just of my growth, but of the man I was becoming.

The First Taste of “Success”

At 20 years old, I earned \$48,000 in six months. In 1998, that felt like a fortune. I remember cashing my first \$3,000 commission check at a check-cashing place in New York City. I didn't know how banks worked, so I carried around a wad of cash in my pocket, thinking I had “made it.”

But I had already hit my financial thermostat — my mental blueprint for money. Just like lottery winners who go broke, I hadn't built the foundation. I hadn't gone through the process. And so I stayed stuck at that level, thinking small.

A few years later, reality hit hard. I was making \$50,000 a year with three kids, a pregnant wife, a mortgage, and responsibilities stacked high. We were so broke that Annie and I once sat on the floor of our living room, breaking open our kids' piggy banks to scrape together a mortgage payment. For some months, I had no income at all. If it weren't for my mother-in-law, Antonieta, helping us out, I don't know how we would have survived.

The Mentor Who Shifted Everything

And then, my first mentor showed up.

His name was Titus O. Ekeoma. Nigerian immigrant. Heavy accent. Top producer in our office. Titus was outpacing everybody, and my ego couldn't handle it. I kept asking myself, *How can this guy, with his accent, outsell me?* Deep down, I knew the truth: he was simply doing the work I wasn't willing to do.

Soon, he brought in two other powerhouses, Mike and Harry, who were writing \$70,000 in new commissions every month — more than I was making in an entire year. Titus became my manager, and I eventually swallowed my pride and asked for help.

One day after a meeting, I walked up to Harry. He had just shared how he wrote \$70,000 in business in a single month. More than I had made in a year. I couldn't take it anymore. I asked him:

“How in the world are you doing this? What am I missing?”

I'll never forget his response. He looked me dead in the eye and said:

“You've got to work harder on yourself than you do on your business.”

I didn't get it at first. So he explained. He told me to read books, go to seminars, and surround myself with people who were already living the

life I wanted. He told me to pick up a book called *The Magic of Thinking Big* by David Schwartz and apply the principles.

That moment changed my life.

That night, I went to Barnes & Noble, bought the book, and started reading. Within a year, by applying those principles, I went from \$50,000 a year to \$104,000 at age 24. Nothing external had changed — the city, the company, the product. What changed was me. My mindset. My perspective.

And that's when I truly began my journey into personal development.

CHAPTER 1

SELF-DISCIPLINE

“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.”

—Jim Rohn

Self-discipline is a must when it comes to building a strong mindset. Every great leader who has ever accomplished anything worth remembering had this one thing in common. Without discipline, nothing great is ever created. Period.

Discipline means you do what you said you would do — whether it’s the big things or the small things — again and again, long after the excitement is gone. Success doesn’t come to the most talented. It comes to the one who can keep showing up.

When you fall in love with the journey instead of only chasing the outcome, you win twice. Because every time you show up, you’re already successful. That’s why I tell my students and mentees: focus on the outcome, yes, but fall in love with the process.

Here’s the difference:

- The outcome is about what you get.
- The journey is about what you do, and who you become along the way.

Discipline is keeping your word to yourself. And let me tell you something — that is one of the biggest secret weapons of every achiever I've ever known. When you can look in the mirror and know, "I said I was going to do this, and I did it," that builds a confidence no one can take away from you.

Starting Small

Discipline doesn't start with massive change. It starts small.

You say, "I'll do 10 pushups every morning." Then you actually do them. Track it on a calendar. Check it off. Build the muscle. Because what gets measured gets improved.

The best way to lock in a habit is to tie it to something you already do.

- After my coffee → 10 pushups.
- After I brush my teeth → write one paragraph.

It doesn't matter what it is. What matters is you keep your word to yourself.

Think about Michael Jordan. He wasn't the best just because he was born gifted. He was the best because he made a decision to train like the best long before anyone ever called him the GOAT. He took 500 jump shots a day. Rain or shine. That kind of discipline builds belief — and belief turns into greatness.

Your Greatest Asset

Most people think their biggest asset is their house, their car, or their investments. Let me challenge that for a second.

You can lose a house and rebuild.

You can lose money and make it again.

But lose your health? Or your mind? All the money in the world won't buy that back.

I've seen people chase money, grind themselves into the ground, and then have no energy left to enjoy it with the people they love. That's not success; that's tragedy.

Discipline means you take care of your body and your mind the same way you take care of your business. Because both are required if you want to live fully.

T + F + A = Results

I once heard a speaker share this formula at a seminar, and it blew me away:

T + F + A = RESULTS

- A Thought creates a Feeling.
- That Feeling creates an Action.
- That Action creates a Result.

Is that good or good? That's good.

Here's the truth: every single thing you have in your life right now started with a thought. Your thoughts are the root cause. Change your thoughts and your whole life shifts.

But here's the problem: most people walk around saying they want more money, but deep down they believe what they were told as kids: "Money is evil. Rich people are bad." So what happens? They make poor financial decisions over and over again because their unconscious beliefs sabotage them. The fruit always matches the root.

Think of a hand-pump water well. You've got to pump the lever again and again before any water comes up. At first, nothing happens. A few drops if you're lucky. Most people quit there. They throw their hands up: "All this work for nothing? Forget it."

But if you keep pumping — consistently, daily — suddenly the stream flows. And once it's flowing, you don't have to work as hard. Momentum takes over.

That's self-discipline. That's how the compound effect works.

But here's the catch: stop pumping for too long, and the water falls back down. You're back at zero. That's how most people live — in fits and starts. They build momentum, quit, and then wonder why they're always starting over.

Winning the race is about pace. Be the tortoise. Build habits so steady that they can't be broken.

The Four Levels of Action

Now, let's get clear. There are four levels of action. You need to know which one you're operating in:

1. Doing Nothing

- The “regular folks” mindset.
- Believing success is for other people, not you.
- This is the generational curse: family after family telling the same limiting story.

2. Retreating

- Quitting at the first obstacle.
- Saying things like, “Maybe it wasn't meant to be.”
- Retreaters live in fear and let life beat them into surrender.

3. Average Action

- Doing what everyone else does. Go to work, pay bills, watch TV, repeat.
- Living in what I call *hypnotic rhythm* — patterns so automatic you don't even realize you're trapped in them.

- Earl Nightingale once said: *“Most people spend more time planning a vacation than they do planning their life.”* And he was right.

4. Massive Action

- Taking bold, relentless, intelligent steps.
- Owning failures, fixing them, learning, growing.
- Surrounding yourself with people smarter than you, feeding on books, seminars, and constant growth.
- Living by C.A.N.I. — Constant and Never-Ending Improvement.

Which one are you? Be honest.

Breaking the Curse

For years, I felt stuck. I was raising four kids on a 100% commission job I didn't even like. Driving home from New York to Pennsylvania, I'd tell myself, *“This is all I know. I can't leave this without risking everything.”*

That was a lie. A story I told myself because of the patterns I saw in my father, who was a mechanic entrepreneur all his life. I thought being a man meant grinding at one job forever. That was my hypnotic rhythm.

The breakthrough came when I started asking better questions. Not “What else can I do?” but:

- *What can I do today, even for 15 minutes, that moves me toward freedom in 3–5 years?*
- *What skills do I need to learn?*
- *Who do I need to become?*

Better questions gave me better feelings. Better feelings led to better actions. Better actions led to freedom.

Self-Discipline Breakthrough: Action List

Grab a pen. Take 20 minutes. No distractions. Answer these questions honestly:

1. When I hear “self-discipline,” what emotions rise in me? Guilt? Pressure? Power?
2. What did I see growing up about discipline? Did my parents finish what they started?
3. Between ages 0–7, what was I conditioned to believe about follow-through?
4. What beliefs about discipline no longer serve who I’m becoming?
5. What is my definition of success — did I choose it, or did someone else?
6. Why am I doing what I’m doing right now — survival, approval, or calling?
7. When did I first decide this was my path? Was it faith or fear?
8. What calling has God placed on my life — am I walking in it or running from it?
9. Am I fulfilled in my career, relationships, and personal life?
10. Do I keep my word to myself? Every time you do, you build power. Every time you don’t, you lose it.

The Oak Tree Within You

Let me leave you with this.

If you take the seed of a mighty oak tree and plant it in a small two-foot pot, that seed will never grow into the oak it was created to be. Not because there’s anything wrong with the seed. God designed that seed with greatness inside it. The problem is the environment. The roots will hit the walls of the pot, and the tree will be stunted before it ever reaches its full potential.

That's what happens when you live without discipline.

Your lack of discipline becomes the pot that cages your growth. You were created in God's likeness. You were created for expansion, for strength, for legacy. But without discipline, you'll stay small. You'll stay contained.

Discipline is what breaks the pot.

It's the daily choice that allows your roots to spread, your trunk to strengthen, your branches to reach the sky. Discipline is what allows you to grow into the massive oak tree God intended you to be — not the bonsai version trapped in a container.

So hear me on this: there's nothing wrong with you. You already have the seed of greatness inside. The only question is: *Will you discipline yourself enough to grow into it?*

Because God didn't create you for the two-foot pot. He created you for the forest.

CHAPTER 2

THE POWER OF BETTER QUESTIONS

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

(Matthew 7:7–8)

Asking better questions leads to better results. Questions are the directing power of your mind. If you want better outcomes in life, it doesn't start with action — it starts with the quality of the questions you ask yourself.

Your mind harnesses its power to create based on the questions you give it. But not all questions are created equal. We all have an unconscious primary question — the one we've been asking ourselves for years — that drives our behavior whether we know it or not.

Let me show you how my first primary question came about.

Discovering My First Primary Question

As a teenage boy living in New York City in the mid-1990s, I was working part-time at McDonald's while scraping my way through high school. I was never great at academics — I did just enough to get by.

Living with a strict single mother trying to raise a man, I felt like I had no freedom. Between the ages of 14–16, my mom kicked me out of the house nine different times because I didn't want to follow her rules.

Then came June 28, 1994 — my 16th birthday. After school, I went to get a haircut without telling my mom. When I got home two hours late, she was waiting at the door.

“Get out of my house,” she said. “You will not continue to disobey my rules in my home.”

I'll never forget the feeling — sadness, desperation, anger all rolled into one. I looked at her and said, “This is the last time you will kick me out of your house. I will never come back.”

And I didn't.

For the next few days, I slept on NYC trains, on Rockaway Beach, on park rooftops, and crashed on friends' couches. That's when reality hit me: I needed shelter and food, and that meant money to survive.

That's when my first primary question was born:

“How can I make more money?”

At that time, it served me well. I was making minimum wage — \$4.10 an hour — at McDonald's, and it wasn't cutting it. From ages 16–24, I kept asking that same question, and sure enough, I kept making more and more money.

By 24 years old, after reading *The Magic of Thinking Big* and applying the principles, I jumped from \$50,000 a year to \$104,000. That was huge. Back then, six figures put you in rare company.

But there was a problem with my question.

My compass pointed to money — every time.

When the Question Stops Serving You

By the time I was 30, I had a wife and four kids, and every decision I made still came from that same place: how can I make more money?

One day, my wife said something that rocked me:

“You look at the kids and me as if we are a business deal.”

I was shocked. I told her she was crazy. I said, “Everything I do is to give you and the kids a better life.”

But she was right.

Not long after, I was having a beer with a friend, and he said almost the exact same thing:

“You treat our relationship like a business transaction. Everything is black and white with you. If it makes sense like a business, you do it. If not, you dismiss it. You’re always looking for an angle to make money.”

That’s when it hit me — it wasn’t just my wife’s perspective. This was a pattern.

If I met someone new and perceived them to be a high-income earner, I would unconsciously start figuring out how to sell them one of my insurance products. I wasn’t looking at people as human beings. I was looking at them as potential deals.

That’s when I knew: my primary question was running the show, and it was no longer serving me.

Rewriting the Script

I attended a seminar where the speaker asked us to uncover our primary question. I wrote it down and stared at it:

“How can I make more money?”

Almost all of my behaviors were rooted in that question. But I wasn't a 16-year-old kid sleeping on trains anymore. I was a grown man, a husband, a father. That question needed to evolve.

So I created a new one — what I now call The Primary Question Pivot (PQP):

“How can I appreciate and enjoy all of my blessings even more — and get even more resourceful to achieve all of my goals now?”

That question shifted everything. It moved me from focusing on what was missing to focusing on what was already working. From gratitude came power. And from that power, I could still achieve, but in a way that fulfilled me, not just drained me.

I believe this: God gives you more of what you're grateful for.

When you appreciate what you already have, you open the door for more.

How it showed up immediately: the very next week, instead of answering clients' calls after dinner, I left the phone inside and went out back to play basketball with my boys, Christopher and Julian. That was around the time I made them a vow: “You won't beat me in this game until you graduate high school. I don't care how strong or how fast you get — I'm not letting up.” For Chris, it never happened. For Julian, it finally did — time caught up with me and he got me. That night I chose presence over pressure. I went to bed lighter, woke up sharper, and the next day I showed up grounded, not needy. Same hustle. Different heart.

The Self-Preservation Trap

Here's why this matters on a deeper level.

We are wired for survival. Thousands of years ago, our ancestors had to constantly be on guard for predators — saber-tooth tigers ready to pounce. That wiring is still in us today.

But instead of looking out for predators, our brains now default to looking for problems, for what's wrong, for what could go bad.

Example: You see an old friend on the street. You wave. They walk right past you without a word.

Where does your mind go?

“Did I do something wrong?”

“Are they mad at me?”

“Do I smell bad?”

That's your brain doing what it was designed to do — scan for danger. But the danger isn't real. The wiring is.

And that wiring creates problems.

Remember the formula from Chapter 1?

T + F + A = R

Thought → Feeling → Action → Result.

A bad question sparks a negative thought.

That negative thought creates a negative feeling.

That feeling drives poor action.

And poor action delivers poor results.

But here's the good news: with awareness and practice, you can flip the script.

An old poem often attributed to Walter D. Wintle says it this way:

**“If you think you are beaten, you are... Success begins
with a fellow's will, it's all in a state of mind.”**

Let me break it down for you:

Your questions are the roots. Your results are the fruits.

If you don't like the fruit you're seeing in your life, don't blame the tree — check the roots. Check the questions you're planting in your own mind every single day. Because the quality of your questions determines the quality of your harvest.

So instead of asking:

“How can I start a business so I don't have to stay in this job I hate?”

Try asking:

“How can I create massive value in people's lives, so I can spend more time with my loved ones doing what my heart desires now?”

Say those two questions out loud. Feel the difference?

The first one comes from frustration. The second one comes from vision. And where your focus goes, your energy flows — and results show.

Two more quick flips (use them):

- **Health**

From: “How do I lose this weight fast?”

To: “How do I build energy and strength I can sustain for life?”

- **Relationships**

From: “Why don’t they appreciate me?”

To: “How can I show up with love and leadership today, regardless?”

Action Items

Uncover Your Primary Question

Sit quietly. Ask: “Unconscious mind, when did I first create my primary question?” Listen. Write it down.

Thank Your Old Question

Write: “I am happy and grateful for my old question, because it helped me create ____.” Then release it.

Write Out Your Future Vision

Be bold. Be specific. What does your life look like in 5–10 years?

Create a New Daily Question (use PQP)

Ask: “What one question can I ask daily that will pull me toward my vision?”

(Pro tip: move your body first — pushups, jumping jacks, a walk — so your physiology primes your mind.)

Final Word

Your future self is waiting for you to rise.

The questions you ask yourself are the seeds of your destiny.

Ask small questions — you get small answers.

Ask powerful questions — you get powerful answers.

Ask bigger; live bigger.

CHAPTER 3

GOALS

“A goal is a dream with a deadline.”

—Napoleon Hill

Goals are the roadmaps to check in as to how we are doing internally in our mindset. A goal is a clear definition of what success looks like, feels like, sounds like and what makes sense to you in the future.

If you don't know where you're going you will get nowhere every time. However, knowing where you're going without knowing why you're going there is just the same. Goals give us clarity in our life. It's the compass for us to measure up and see if we are on track or going in the right direction of our desired outcomes.

This reminds me of the story of a man on a horse. There was a well-dressed handsome man riding a horse. It appeared as if he was going somewhere important. A man standing alongside of the road shouts where are you going? the rider replies, “I don't know, ask the horse”

This is the story of most people's lives. They are riding the horse of life and their habits with no idea where they are headed. It's time to take control of the reins and move your life in the direction you really want it to go. In order to get from where you are to where you want to be is

going to require a new or a different version of you. The first step in this journey is to get clarity on what you truly desire out of life.

“Clarity is power.”

The clearer you are on what it is you want the easier it will be for you to visualize it and get there.

It’s important that you know your desired outcome and be aware of your habits and how they are helping or hindering you.

Most people spend more time planning a vacation or a trip than they do planning their life. If you really want to succeed in anything you want to take charge of your mind and direct your focus where you want it to go. How committed are you to getting what you want out of life? Most people say they are committed to achieving their goal but at the first sign of adversity they give up. You have to unleash your hunger and desire and awaken the laser-like focus within you.

One of two things needs to happen inside you — period.

First, you get so inspired by a vision that it lights a fire in your soul.

Second, you become completely obsessed with your desired outcome, so much so that your imagination ignites and you can *see* it, *feel* it, *taste* it.

That’s when the magic begins.

That’s when you stop waiting and start moving. You begin taking massive, intelligent action. You start asking better questions. You look for mentors. You pick up the books. You shift your circle. And just like that, things start clicking. Doors open. People show up. Opportunities begin to align.

You attract exactly what you need, because now you’re in alignment.

But here’s the key: you have to develop the mindset that everything is happening for you — not to you. Every challenge, every delay, every

detour is part of the process to refine you, strengthen you, and pull you *closer* to your goal.

That belief right there? That's how winners are made.

Look, everything that happens in your life — good or bad — is trying to teach you something. And if you're smart, you'll use all of it to your advantage. Every situation is either a lesson, a blessing, or a setup for something greater. But most people miss the lesson because they're too busy complaining about the discomfort.

You've got to start treating your life like a school that never lets out. Every moment is an opportunity to grow, to get better, to level up. The painful moments? That's tuition. The wins? That's your return on investment.

But you only get paid in wisdom if you're paying attention.

Stay alert. Every day, life is handing you feedback. Learn from it. Apply it. Stack those lessons, and you'll start earning results that most people only dream about.

If you're taking this advice, that tells me one thing — you're someone who's always learning, always growing, and asking yourself, "*What did I learn today?*" That's powerful.

What I like to suggest is this:

Start a journal. Every morning, write down *at least* three things you're grateful for. Set your mindset right from the jump. Then in the evening, reflect. Review your day. Journal your thoughts — what went right, what didn't, and most importantly, what you learned. No matter how small the lesson is, write it down.

Because the moment you start documenting your lessons, your awareness goes up, your growth accelerates, and your mind starts working for you instead of against you.

This is how you compound wisdom. One day at a time.

This right here is what I call the law of the process. It's simple but powerful: what you do every single day — the habits, the routines, the disciplines — is what builds who you become and the results you get in life and in business.

If you want to know who someone's becoming, just look at what they do day after day. Not what they say — what they do. That's the truth.

And this daily practice of journaling? That's part of the process. When you do it consistently, you're training your mind to focus on what's good in your life instead of what's missing. You're teaching yourself to stay in a state of gratitude and growth.

And remember this: whatever you're grateful for, God and the universe will give you more of. That's how it works. *Gratitude multiplies what you already have. Discipline locks it in. And consistency makes it permanent.*

When you have well-written and thought-out goals, and you keep them in a place where you can see them every morning when you wake up and every night before going to sleep, along with a vision board filled with pictures of all the things you want to acquire and achieve — by doing this, you are directing your mental focus toward what you want. You are taking control of your mind.

This will take some time for your unconscious mind to start directing your actions and behaviors in the direction of your goals, but just like gravity, this is also a universal law.

Have you ever purchased a car? Most people that have would do some research on the car before they buy it, they test drive it, they compare the gas mileage etc. Then the day of the purchase comes and you drive out of the dealership and then all of a sudden you start to see that car everywhere you go, but you weren't seeing them everywhere before.

This is science, here is what occurred in your brain in the simplest terms I can put it. Because you spent time and mental energy looking at this vehicle and took massive action in the purchase of the vehicle you have now activated a part of your brain called the reticular activating system (RAS). When activated it finds things, opportunities that were always there but because your focus was not on looking for them you couldn't see them.

Now all of a sudden because you've shifted your focus it starts to appear everywhere. This reminds me of the time I started investing in real estate professionally. I say professionally because there is an amateur way of investing in real estate and I also did that and lost money and got frustrated before I got my education and hired a coach and got a mentor.

Anyway, when I started out, I was told by my coach that one of the ways you find deals was by looking at houses with overgrown grass, mail boxes full of mail that look like they haven't been picked up in weeks and houses with boarded up windows. All of a sudden when driving to the office the following week I started seeing all of these opportunities with all these houses that met what I was looking for now. I activated my reticular activating system (RAS). Those houses were there the whole time, but my mind wasn't focused on looking for them, so I couldn't see them. My mind deleted and distorted all of the opportunities that were right in front of me every single day. Because I wasn't directing my focus and energy toward finding deals, I simply couldn't see them.

Here are four powerful strategies to help you grow into your full potential — your highest capacity:

1. F.O.C.U.S. — Follow One Course Until Successful

Lock in on one main goal. One.

Success doesn't come from doing a hundred things halfway — it comes from doing one thing with total commitment.

Decide what that one thing is, and give it everything you've got.

2. Put All Your Energy Into the Right Questions

Start asking:

- What do I need to learn?
- Who do I need to meet?
- What books should I be reading?
- What events do I need to attend?
- Who's the coach I need to hire?
- Who's the mentor that will help me get there?

Your answers to these questions will show you your next move. Don't guess — get clear.

3. Focus Only on What You Want

Let go of the past. Stop rehearsing what didn't work.

You can't build momentum looking backwards.

Put your focus on the journey ahead. Your power is in where you're going, not where you've been.

4. Be Present, With Vision

Keep your mind in the now — fully present. But always keep a clear vision of your purpose and your goal in front of you.

This is how you align your daily actions with your long-term calling.

I want to suggest a few key reminders as you continue on your journey to achieving your goals.

First, understand this — the only people who don't face adversity are buried in the cemetery.

If you're breathing, you're going to deal with challenges. Period.

But here's the difference between average people and successful people:

The successful ones reframe their mind when adversity hits. They don't let the situation define them. They have a different kind of internal conversation. While most people see setbacks as a reason to quit, successful people know that inside every challenge is the seed of something greater, if you're willing to look for it.

That means your hardship might actually be the doorway. The pain might be your next level calling you up. But it all comes down to your mindset. You've got to decide to look for the opportunity in the middle of the storm.

That's how growth happens. And that's how winners are built.

As the African proverb says, "*Smooth seas don't make skillful sailors.*" Challenges are part of the game, but the real question is: what's your mindset when adversity shows up? What kind of conversation are you having with yourself, and what language are you using? Because language matters — if you keep calling it a *problem*, you're putting yourself in a disempowered state before you even try to overcome it. Think back to the last challenge you faced — what did you say about it? Were you slouched or standing tall? Were you focused on the solution or stuck in the story? Take ten minutes and reflect. Write it down. Then decide on one thing you'll do differently next time. For example, every time I get in my car, I say out loud, "*I am resourceful, and whatever challenge comes my way today, I'll handle it like a leader.*" Maybe for you, it's catching yourself when you say the word *problem* and replacing it with *challenge*, or asking, "*What else could this mean?*" Most people fold when resistance hits, but you're not most people — you've got the tools, the awareness, and the mindset to keep showing up and winning.

There's this story, whether it's exactly how it went or not, I don't care, because the principle is solid. It's said that James Toney, the world

champion boxer, was being interviewed one day. The interviewer asked him about life, about pressure, about adversity. And James broke it down in a way that just hits differently.

He said, “Every day I go to the gym, and I lift weights. And those weights? They don’t get lighter. They get heavier. But I don’t avoid them. I will add more. Because it’s the resistance that makes me stronger. That’s how I became a world champion.”

That stuck with me.

Because life? Life is a gym. Challengers are your weights. And you can either walk away from them — stay weak, stay stuck — or you can face them. Day after day. Rep after rep. Every struggle you lift makes you more resilient. Every hardship you don’t run from adds muscle to your mindset.

People want success without the weight. But it doesn’t work like that. Champions are forged under pressure, not comfort.

Every eviction, every betrayal, every sleepless night, every deal that fell apart — that was my weight. And I didn’t pray for less weight. I prayed for stronger shoulders.

So next time you’re feeling the heat, don’t curse it. That’s your gym. That’s your training ground. Because without resistance, there’s no growth. Without struggle, there’s no strength. And without weight, there’s no warrior.

Most people think that the more successful you become, the easier life gets. Success isn’t easier, you just get stronger.

More money? Less stress.

More status? More freedom.

More wins? Less pressure.

But let me tell you what I've learned through experience, and what I teach my kids, my team, and anyone I mentor: it's the exact opposite. The higher you climb, the heavier the weight.

You don't get to the top because life gets easier — you get to the top because your capacity to handle pressure increases. Your ability to carry more stress, stay calm under fire, and still make smart decisions when everything's on the line — that's what takes you up the ladder.

It's like a staircase made of stress tests.

Want to move up? Then you better expand your container. Because success will expose you if your emotional, mental, and spiritual capacity hasn't leveled up first.

This is the principle I teach:

“As it is below, so it is above.”

If you're breaking down at the bottom, life won't trust you with more at the top.

It's not about life getting easier, it's about you getting stronger.

Not avoiding pressure, but becoming the kind of person who can carry it without crumbling. *That's how you rise.*

Action Items

Let's consider a few things and ask ourselves some questions. Take 30 minutes alone and write down the answers to the following. Most people go through their whole life never asking themselves these questions — so if this is your first time, be patient. Be kind to yourself. Allow your unconscious mind the time and space to give you the answers. Make sure you treat yourself with love and respect. Grab a pen and paper, and begin writing as you ask yourself the following:

Let's start with your life's purpose:

- What did God put me on this earth to do? (*This is the foundation — your divine assignment.*)
- What gifts or talents come naturally to me that I've been overlooking or undervaluing? (*Because your purpose is usually hiding in what comes easy to you.*)
- What makes me feel most alive — where time disappears and energy flows? (*That's fulfillment talking. Pay attention.*)
- Who do I feel called to serve, and what problem burns in my heart to solve? (*Purpose always involves people beyond yourself.*)
- What would I gladly do for free, just because I love it and it feels right? (*The answer reveals your true currency — joy, not just money.*)
- What do I regret not starting sooner, and what's stopping me from starting now? (*This removes the excuses and exposes the truth.*)
- What legacy would I leave behind if I died today, and is that good enough for me? (*Legacy creates clarity fast. This one hits deep.*)
- How can I create massive value for others using what I love to do? (*Purpose becomes powerful when it blesses others.*)
- What's one small step I can take today to start walking in alignment with my purpose? (*Purpose without action is just potential.*)
- If I truly believed God had my back 100%, what would I do differently starting today? (*This unlocks boldness. Faith fuels purpose.*)

While considering what your life's purpose is, set your goals accordingly. On this point, make sure you do this responsibly. If you have a family and a full-time job or career and you need to take care of them financially, your opportunity is this: continue doing what you're doing,

and at the same time, start working on your purpose and your goals every day.

Maybe you're saying, "Well Martin, I don't have time, I'm too busy."

I'll tell you — that's a story. And I reject that story for you. You need to check the internal conversation you're having with yourself.

We always find time for what's truly important to us.

So work on it during your lunch break.

Wake up 15 minutes earlier.

Work on it while everyone's asleep.

When you really want something — you make the time.

While setting your goals, I want you to consider every area that matters: family, health, finances, business or career, personal growth, fun and joy, fulfillment, and your spiritual walk. These are the pillars. Don't skip over them. Now close your eyes, take a deep breath, and ask yourself the following questions with honesty and intention:

- **At the end of this year, what needs to happen for me to call it a success?** *(Be specific. What would make you proud to say, "I did that"?)*
- **What will I hear the people I love say to me when I'm walking in that success?** *(What feedback would mean the most—from your spouse, your kids, your community?)*
- **How will I feel about myself when I cross that finish line?** *(Own that feeling. Feel it now. That's what you're chasing—identity, not just outcomes.)*
- **What will I see around me in my life?** *(Visualize it. The lifestyle. The relationships. The peace. The fruit of your labor.)*

- **What thoughts will I have about myself once I've had a successful year?** (*This is about how you view you. Confidence. Self-trust. Joy. Write it out.*)

Once you've seen that finish line clearly in your mind—once you've walked it in advance in your imagination — now it's time to reverse-engineer your life.

Write your desired outcome for the end of this year.

Then go further — write out your five-year vision.

Then ten years.

Don't hold back. You're not writing what's "realistic" — you're writing what's aligned with your highest self.

And remember, *God didn't give you the vision to tease you — He gave it to you so you could build it.*

**"Most people over estimate what they can do in one year
and under estimate what they can do in five years"**

—Tony Robbins

Most people try to cram a lifetime of goals into one year, and then get discouraged when it doesn't all come together fast enough. But they don't realize the power of *long-term focus*. They completely underestimate what they could build in five years if they just stayed consistent, stayed disciplined, and stayed in alignment.

You give me five years of your life with real intention, and I promise — you won't even recognize who you've become. The problem is, most folks quit in year one because they didn't get year five results.

Don't be that person. Play the long game. Build it brick by brick. That's how legacies are made.

Why do you want what you want?

There's an exercise I do at my live events and during one-on-one coaching sessions with my clients. I call it "finding the seed."

Because knowing and understanding your *why* is what's going to pull you through adversity and the tough seasons of your journey.

So now that you've written down what you want, the next question is:

Why do I want that?

If this is your first time doing this, I'll tell you right now, 9 out of 10 times, your first answer is surface-level. It's rarely the real reason.

So here's what you do:

After you write down your first "why," ask yourself:

Why is that important to me?

Write the answer. Then ask again:

Why is *that* important to me?

Write the answer again.

You're going to do this 7 to 8 times — yes, go that deep. But here's the key: when you ask the next "why," use the exact words from your previous answer.

For example:

- First reason: *I want to make more money.*
- Next question: *Why is making more money important to me?*
- Answer: *So I can have more freedom.*
- Next question: *Why is having more freedom important to me?*

You keep digging — layer by layer — until you hit the root.

You'll know you've found it when it hits you emotionally.

For some people, that's when the tears come. That's when the truth comes out.

What I've found over and over is this:

The real *Why* — the deep why — is often connected to something that happened in your past, most likely in childhood, usually between the ages of 0 to 9. And now, you want to create something different. You want to change the story. You want to heal the pattern.

That's your seed.

And once you find it, that's when your drive becomes unshakable.

Once you get to that place — where it's written on paper and staring back at you — you'll realize how far your original goal was from your *true reason*. That's when the emotional connection kicks in. That's when the clarity hits. This is where the magic happens.

Let me give you an example from my own life. When I first asked myself why I wanted to invest in real estate, my initial answer was, "*Because I want to be financially free.*"

And while that was true on the surface, once I went deeper and did this exercise, I uncovered the *real* why.

It wasn't just about freedom.

It was about remembering what it felt like to grow up poor.

Sleeping in a kitchen that had been split in half to create a makeshift bedroom.

That's what drives me.

That's my emotional connection.

That was the initial fuel behind that goal — not the number in a bank account, but the desire to build something different than what I came from. When you get to that level of clarity, you won't need motivation. You'll have purpose. And purpose moves mountains.

This is why setting goals has never just been about achievement for me — it's about alignment.

Alignment with who I'm becoming. Alignment with what God put me on this earth to do.

The bunk bed, the crowded kitchen, the nights sleeping on trains... that was my soil. But the seed was already in me. I just had to give it direction.

That direction came in the form of goals.

Not random goals. Not goals to impress people.

I'm talking about goals that are *deeply connected* to your "why."

Goals that pull you forward when life hits you.

Goals that are built on clarity, vision, and hunger.

That's what this is about — learning how to take everything you've been through, and build a future so intentional, it leaves no room for you to go back.

When challenges show up as I'm working on my desired outcomes, I remember my why and that becomes my emotional leverage to keep going. So begin now to uncover what is your why.

The last step is simple. It requires you to look in the mirror and ask yourself: Who do I need to become to achieve those goals? Start by sitting down and asking, *Who is it that I must become to make this happen?*

It's safe to say that if you want to create something new in your life, it's going to require a new version of you.

Here are the reasons why most people don't hit their goals

- It's not just about *knowing* something. The first thing is understanding, and modeling the mindset of the person who's already achieved what you want. I call this modeling excellence.

Find someone who's done it. Study them. Figure out how they think, what they read, how they handle pressure, and how they respond when life punches them in the mouth.

A lot of people write goals, but they don't go the extra mile. They don't ask the deeper questions. They don't do the due diligence to figure out *how to get there faster*.

Let me tell you — the fastest way from point A to point B is a straight line. And the straightest line is almost always following someone who's already walked the path.

Do some research. Read the books. Study people who've built something great. See what they saw. Understand how they processed adversity. Feel the fire they had to carry through their journey. That mindset alone will set you up for success. Because here's the truth—most people don't know what they don't know. And staying in that place will keep you stuck.

- Sometimes it's not about what you're doing — it's about what you're not doing. It's a habit. So ask yourself:

What's the habit I need to acquire to achieve my goal?

Or...

What's the habit I need to stop that's holding me back from reaching it?

Those are powerful questions. And again, most people go through life never asking themselves things like this. But taking

a hard look in the mirror, being brutally honest with yourself — that's the only way you grow. That's the only way you get to the next level.

What is your mindset around the first two points I gave you?

Because you're reading this book, I'm going to pre-suppose that you're open-minded.

But just in case, you should ask yourself:

- Am I a person that is open to change?
- Am I open to learning new skills?
- Am I open to attending an event or seminar that's going to help me learn and grow?
- Do I think I have all the answers?
- Do I believe I already know it all?

The answers to these questions will reveal your truth to you. And once you know your truth, it becomes your responsibility to act on it.

Because here's the thing: knowledge without action changes nothing. And this next story illustrates exactly what I mean.

I once heard a story about a professor teaching a photography class at a university. On the very first day, he did something unexpected — he split the class into two groups.

Group one would be graded on quantity. He told them, "The more photos you produce, the higher your grade. One hundred photos gets you an A, ninety gets you a B, and so on."

Group two? They were told they would be graded on quality. "You only need to submit one photo," he said, "but it better be nearly perfect if you want an A."

Now, what happened next is what changed the game for me.

By the end of the semester, the professor was blown away — the best photos in the entire class came from the quantity group.

Why?

Because while the quality group spent their time thinking, analyzing, and planning perfection, the quantity group was in the trenches. They were taking shots, failing fast, adjusting lighting, experimenting in the darkroom, making mistakes, learning, growing — and getting better every single day.

Meanwhile, the quality group had very little to show for their efforts— just theories and one mediocre photo.

And that right there? That's life.

That's business.

That's the goal.

That's growth.

Too many people get stuck trying to make the “perfect” plan before they move. They overthink, they hesitate, they wait for certainty — and in the process, they miss the opportunity to evolve.

Let me tell you something: action is the shortcut.

You don't need the perfect plan. You need movement. You need momentum.

Take what you've learned in this chapter and start applying it — imperfectly.

Try. Fail. Adjust. Grow.

Do it day after day, week after week, month after month.

That's how you build something real.

That's how you build discipline.

That's how you compound progress.

And that's how you become the kind of person who not only sets goals, but crushes them.

So here's your move:

Be like the quantity group.

Take massive action now.

Not next week.

Now.

Your future self is waiting on you to get started.

CHAPTER 4

I AM

“Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, you’re right.”

—Henry Ford

“I am” are the two most powerful words in the English language.

Why? Because whatever you put after “I am” becomes a declaration to the universe. A command. A seed you’re planting in your unconscious that will shape your beliefs, decisions, habits — and ultimately, your life.

When you say “I am intelligent” while you’re running, lifting weights, or taking a walk, you’re not just saying words—you’re training your nervous system to believe it. You’re reprogramming your identity. Over time, that repetition creates a new belief system... and once that belief locks in, you move differently. Your energy shifts. Your confidence becomes unshakable.

That’s when “I am” stops being just a phrase and starts becoming your new normal.

**“The day you graduate from childhood to adulthood is
the day you take full responsibility for your life”**

—Jim Rhon

In the Bible, God told Moses to tell the Israelites when they ask what God has sent you say “I am” has sent me. It does not really matter what religion you practice, what is really important is the power of the words *I am*. To me it means one with God, one with your creator, one with the all mighty, one with the universe. The words I am throughout history have been used by very successful people to create their reality.

I remember years ago, I was driving to Philadelphia to meet with some clients when I got a call from my wife. She told me the principal had just called—our son Christopher was in trouble at school again.

Now, if you're a parent of teenagers, you know how this goes. The more you tell them *not* to do something, the more they feel the urge to do it. Christopher had been caught talking and passing notes in class to a girl he liked. The frustrating part? My wife and I had just talked to him a few days earlier about that exact behavior.

Naturally, I was annoyed. I started asking myself, *What am I gonna do with this boy? How do I teach him to become a man?* My wife and I quickly came up with a game plan for how to handle it. But right after I hung up the phone, something powerful hit me.

Out of nowhere, my unconscious mind dropped a message on me:

“Look at how hard it is to raise a man even with two loving parents, working together... and yet you still blame your mother for kicking you out at 16.”

That truth landed hard.

Tears started streaming down my face. I began thinking about how difficult it must have been for my mother to raise us on her own — without a partner to lean on, to talk to, or to help her make those tough decisions like I had just made with my wife. And she did it without the tools, without the resources, and without the support I'm fortunate to have today.

Right there, in that moment, something shifted deep inside me.

I picked up the phone and called my mom. I told her I was sorry — for being such an asshole, for holding onto resentment for so many years. I told her I was grateful. Grateful that she made the tough choices she did. Grateful that she gave me life. Grateful that she kicked me out when she did, because that decision forced me to grow up, to fight for something, to become a man.

And I meant every word.

That was the moment I went from victim to victor. That was the moment I took my power back.

I realized something powerful: If I was going to blame her for the pain, then I damn well better give her credit for the strength too. If I was blaming her for the struggle, I needed to also blame her for the grit, the resilience, the fire and the man I had become. Because whether I liked it or not, a big part of who I am was shaped by her.

That shift — owning both sides of the story — liberated me. I stopped resenting, and I started honoring. I became an equal opportunity blamer, and I chose to give just as much weight to the blessings as I had to the wounds.

And the irony? I was driving a brand-new luxury car at that moment. Living in a custom-built home I had created for my family. Giving them

everything I never had. My heart was full, not with pride, but with *gratitude* for the woman who gave everything she had to give.

That moment gave birth to one of my deepest power virtues:

“I am a wonderful son and father.”

To this day, I speak that over myself every morning when I wake up and every night before I go to sleep. That one virtue changed the way I show up for my mother... and it changed the way I show up for my children.

Our relationship is now coming from a place of love, friendship, honor and respect. I share this with you for two reasons, first, to encourage you to listen to that positive powerful voice in your head. You know the one that tells you that's the right thing to do and second is when you create power virtues with the words “*I am*” you will start becoming that person.

Gerda Walther, a German philosopher once said “In order to do something you must first be something” this drives home the point of becoming the person that achieves the goals you have set out for yourself. When creating your power virtues make sure the words you choose are powerful and are the person you want to become. For example, if you want to become a more loving person one of your power virtues can be “I am love”, Let's say you want to become more courageous a power virtue for that can be “I am courage” you get the point.

I would like to share with you how to get your power virtues deeply engrained in your nervous system and unconscious mind. How would you like your behaviors to be in alignment with your power virtues in everything you do? I will give you a strategy that will allow you to create the person you want to become. Good or good? It is good.

Most people can sing a song they haven't heard in years, but the moment it comes on, every word flows out like they just heard it yesterday. Why? Because repetition embeds it in the nervous system.

That's exactly what we're going to do with your power virtues.

Your power virtues are declarations — *I am* statements — that shape your identity and condition your mind for who you are becoming. This isn't just motivation. This is reprogramming.

Here's how you lock them in.

Start by choosing no more than four power virtues. Keep them simple, powerful, and true to who you're becoming. Once you choose them, commit to those exact four for a minimum of 12 months. You don't change them. You don't add new ones. You build your foundation with these.

Next, write them down on a piece of paper and get your body moving. Go for a walk, a jog, a hike, hit the gym — whatever gets you in motion. Then say them out loud.

"I am courage. I am love. I am intelligent. I am a millionaire."

Speak them over yourself as you move. Again and again. Let them loop like a chorus in your head.

At first, it'll feel like effort. But soon enough, it becomes rhythm. It becomes a song that plays in your mind whether you try or not. That's when the shift happens — it becomes who you are.

If you're around people and they look at you like you're crazy? Who cares. You're not doing this for them. You're creating the next version of you. Your life, your future, and your legacy are far more important than their opinions. Besides, what other people think of you is none of your business.

I dedicate half a day to this work at my annual goal-setting workshop. That's how important it is. We don't just talk about what you want — we get clear on *why* you want it... and then we install the identity that's going to carry it out.

Ever heard of runner's high? It's that euphoric state athletes get after a good run — reduced stress, elevated energy, pain resistance — all thanks to the flood of endorphins. This practice? It creates something very similar. Power virtue incantations unlock a different level of clarity, drive, and confidence.

So write them down. Say them out loud. Get your body moving. And repeat until they own space in your nervous system.

That's how you become the person who achieves your goals.

This is exactly why moving your body is so important when you're incanting your power virtues. You need to get in the *right state*. Your physical state will either amplify or sabotage everything you're trying to program into your nervous system.

There are a few ways to change your state, and when you use them intentionally, they become powerful tools.

For example, you can use your physiology to shift your psychology. Let's say you're feeling a little off, a little down. Try this: go exercise for 30 minutes — get your body sweating, your heart pumping — and then see how you feel afterward. I'm willing to bet that heavy emotion you felt earlier will be gone. Why? Because the flood of endorphins from that workout literally changes your state.

Matter of fact, I challenge you — *if you're medically able* — go for a run or hit a workout hard, and then try to feel the same way you did before. You won't be able to. You just used your body to transform your mind. That's power.

Now let's talk about language, because the words you use also affect your state. Pay attention to how you normally respond when someone asks, "How are you?"

Most people default to: *"I'm okay."*

But ask yourself — is that how you really want to live your life? *Just okay?*

Now do this with me. I want you to pay attention to your body — specifically from your heart down to your belly. Feel the shift. Now say out loud, *"I'm okay."* Notice how that lands in your body.

Now say, *"I'm outstanding."*

Feel that shift? Now try, *"I'm amazing."*

Every single time you change the word, it changes the feeling. Even if it's just for a few seconds — it matters.

Your language shapes your state. Your state shapes your decisions. And your decisions shape your life.

My point is simple: with enough training, you can learn to change your state at will. Whether it's your body, your breath, or your words — you have the tools. You just have to use them on purpose.

Now look, James Clear says it like this: *"Outcomes are about what you get. Processes are about what you do. But identity is about what you believe."* And I respect that. Because I lived it.

When I first learned this for myself, I was in one of the lowest places of my life. I had just come out of a really dark season in my marriage. I was out of my house, sleeping on a friend's couch for three months — cold nights, springs digging into my ribs, guilt eating away at me. Every night I'd pray for forgiveness, asking myself, "What was I thinking?"

How could I be so stupid?" I was beating myself up with words like *"I'm not a good man... I'm not honorable... I messed everything up."*

But God was doing something in me. He was stripping me down to rebuild me. And in that process, he sent me a mentor. That's when I discovered the tool of "I Am." I started doing my incantations every day. I started declaring *"I am a good man."* Not *"I want to be a good man."* Not *"I'm trying to change."* I said it like it was already true, because that's how identity gets built. I stopped saying *"I'm trying"* and I started saying *"I am."*

And guess what? Within a few months, everything started shifting. My energy changed. The way I walked, the way I talked, the way I carried myself — it all started aligning with that new identity. Annie looked at me differently. The past didn't change, but my internal belief system did. My internal conversation changed. And when that happens — when your identity shifts — your whole life starts to shift with it.

If I had kept saying *"I'm just a man trying to get better,"* I'd still be stuck in guilt and shame. But when I declared *"I am a good man,"* my brain, my spirit, and my reality had no choice but to catch up.

"The future depends on what we do in the present"
—Mahatma Gandhi

CHAPTER 5

SEE IT FIRST: HOW VISION SHAPES REALITY

“All things are created twice. First mentally, then physically.”

—Stephen Covey

Everything created by a man or woman in this world has happened twice — first in their imagination and mind, second in the physical world. Anything great ever created was first thought to be impossible by the world with exception of the person that created it.

Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb, would sit hours at a time in a room alone visualizing & asking himself questions. Finally, after ten thousand attempts later, his unconscious mind gave him the answer and he created electricity and the light bulb.

All great leaders that have created great things in history have one thing in common; they were all visionaries. Martin Luther king with his I had a dream speech. That was a clear vision he had when he said “I have a dream that this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal” Earl Nightingale said in the strangest secret in the world, “a man

is where he is because that is exactly where he wanted to be whether he admits it or not.”

The interesting thing about life is that everything happens in two places: first in your mind, and then in your reality. That’s why it’s so important to take control of your thoughts, because your thoughts are what shape your life. Have you ever had something happen to you, good or bad, and found yourself saying, “I knew that was going to happen”? If you’re honest, you’ll admit that somewhere along the line, you saw a vision of it in your head first.

Let me share a powerful study. Years ago, Dr. Biasiotto at the University of Chicago split a group of basketball players into three groups and tested each group on how many free throws they could make. The first group practiced shooting free throws for an hour a day. The second group didn’t touch a ball — they only visualized making free throws. The third group did nothing at all. After 30 days, the first group improved by 24%. The second group, who only visualized, improved by 23% — nearly identical results. The third group, as expected, showed no improvement.

Now pause and think about that. If the players who only *visualized* improved almost the same as those who *physically practiced*, imagine what would’ve happened if they combined both? We could reasonably say that kind of commitment could have led to nearly 48% improvement. That’s not woo-woo — that’s science.

So why don’t more people apply this? Simple. Most people don’t value what they didn’t have to pay for. The greatest gifts — your mind, your health, your energy, your love — are free. And because of that, most people neglect them. But not you. You’re reading this book. You’re doing the work. That tells me you’re different.

I once heard someone say that people spend more time planning their vacation than they do planning their life. Don’t let that be you. What

would your life look like if you just spent a few minutes a day in silence, visualizing exactly what you want? What if that one habit boosted your results by 10%... 15%... maybe even 30%? You'll never know unless you start. And the time to start is now.

One of the most powerful ways to set the tone for your day is through visualization. Every morning, I take just 3 to 5 minutes to visualize how I want my day to go and set my intentions. I've found this to be one of the most effective parts of my entire day — it sets my focus, my energy, and my standard. So I want you to try something with me right now. Close your eyes and open your mouth. Now imagine squeezing half a big, juicy lemon directly into your mouth. Feel that? Your mouth probably started to salivate, and you might've even tasted the bitterness of the lemon. But here's the truth — you didn't actually drink anything. You just *visualized* it.

That's how powerful your imagination is. Your unconscious mind doesn't know the difference between what's imagined and what's real. That's why visualization boards and mental rehearsals are such powerful tools — they keep your mind focused on what success looks like for *you*.

Now think back to a time in your life when you achieved something meaningful — something you really wanted and worked hard for. Maybe it was buying your first property, starting a business, earning a degree, or building your dream body. Go there for a second. What was your inner dialogue like at the time? What did your attitude feel like? What was driving you? Who was around you? What were you reading, listening to, or focused on? How committed and disciplined were you? What kind of energy were you bringing to the table?

Now ask yourself this — if you could tap back into that version of yourself... What would be possible for you now?

The truth is, if you can recall that emotional state, then you can *duplicate* it. All you have to do is reverse-engineer the attitude, mindset, and actions that helped you win back then, and apply them to the goals you have now. That's how you create momentum again. That's how you start showing up on a whole new level.

Let me give you a real example from my own life. When I was 19 years old, I got the opportunity to start my career in the insurance business. I'll never forget it. During the interview process, they told me I wasn't qualified because I needed to attend an English grammar school before I could even sell insurance. But I had scored so high on the IQ test they gave for salespeople that they had no choice but to give me a shot.

And just when I cleared that hurdle, I faced the next one — the state life insurance exam. One of the hardest tests out there. I remember the pressure. My girlfriend was pregnant, and I kept visualizing a better future for us — owning our first home, going on vacations, living life on our terms. Every time I picked up those books to study, I wasn't just reading words... I was *seeing* what passing that test would mean for me and my family. I didn't just study — I *saw life*. I *felt* it. I *lived* it in my mind every single day.

I failed that exam three times. But the vision pulled me through. On the fourth try, I passed. And within five years, I had achieved almost everything I saw so vividly in my mind — earning six figures, buying our first house and then building a home, providing for my family. Why? Because I didn't give up on the vision. I let it *pull* me. I embodied it.

That experience taught me that *your vision has to be bigger than your current circumstance*. You may not realize it, but if you've ever achieved something against the odds, you've done this before too. You just didn't know you were doing it.

So now, it's time to do it *consciously*. On purpose. With clarity. Go back and channel that energy. Take that blueprint and build the next level of your life with it.

I want you to try something powerful with me right now. This is a visualization exercise I teach often, and when done right — it can literally rewire your nervous system for success.

Close your eyes and imagine walking into a dark movie theater. You come in through the back door, and the room is completely black. All of a sudden, the screen lights up, and what do you see? *You*.

You're watching yourself up on the big screen doing all the things you've been dreaming of. You see yourself accomplishing your biggest goals. You see yourself surrounded by the people you want to be around. You hear your loved ones — your friends, your family — telling you how proud they are of you. You hear the applause. You feel the love. You feel the deep pride and power that comes from becoming who you were created to be.

Now intensify that feeling. Let it get bigger. Let it flood your body.

And now — step into the screen. Step into your own body. Look through your own eyes. Hear through your own ears. *Feel* that moment as if it's happening right now.

Then step back out of the screen. Shrink the movie down to the size of a quarter, and place it all the way across the theater on the far-right wall.

Now count to three. On the count of three, launch that mini screen at 1,000 miles per hour straight into your heart. Ready?

1... 2... 3... BOOM. Feel it enter your body. Breathe into it. Do this whole process again, at least three times.

What you just did is *program your nervous system* with your life's vision. That's no small thing. And when you do it consistently, your body will begin to align with your vision. Your decisions, your habits, your confidence—they'll all begin to change, because your body now *believes* what your mind has created.

You won't need to force it. You'll start being *pulled* toward the future you saw on that screen.

That's the power of this work.

Once you've created your vision, you've got to back it with action. Not just any action — disciplined, commitment, massive action. That's the formula I teach and live by:

$$\mathbf{D + C + MA = R}$$

Discipline + Commitment + Massive Action = Results.

This isn't a theory. This is a law. This is the truth. And it all starts with vision.

Let me share a story to show you exactly what I mean.

One day, a woman was walking down the street and came across three men laying bricks. Curious, she asked the first man, "What are you doing?"

Without even looking up, he snapped back, "Can't you see? I'm working."

She walked over to the second man and asked the same question. He replied, "I'm building a wall. It's going to be 120 inches long and 10 inches thick."

Finally, she turned to the third man and asked, "And you?"

He looked up, smiled, and said, "I'm building the most beautiful cathedral in the world."

Just then, the second man told the first, “Hey, you know we added an extra brick back there.”

The third man overheard and calmly replied, “That section will be covered by a curved wall anyway. Keep building the cathedral.”

That third man wasn’t just laying bricks. He wasn’t just building a wall. He had a *vision*. And that vision changed how he approached every single brick. He had clarity, purpose, and belief. And that made him unstoppable.

That’s what vision does. It gives your effort meaning. It gives your life direction. When you know what you’re building, you don’t need motivation — you’ve got fuel.

When your vision is clear, and your formula is locked in—Discipline + Commitment + Massive Action = Results — you can’t be stopped.

So here’s the real question:

Are you laying bricks? Or are you building a cathedral?

Because the moment you see what you’re truly building — that’s the moment your life begins to change.

CHAPTER 6

MENTAL MUSCLE: HOW TO CONDITION A CHAMPION MINDSET

“Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.”

—Lao Tzu

Successful people have a habit they’ve mastered — most without even realizing it. They’ve trained themselves to wire their brains so that achieving their goals feels exciting and pleasurable... and holding onto limiting beliefs feels uncomfortable, even painful. This isn’t magic — it’s a skill.

They know how to silence the voices that creep in with lies like, *“I’m not good enough,”* or *“I’m not smart enough.”* And when those voices do show up — as they always will — they’ve got strategies to shut them down fast.

What I’m about to share with you are the exact tools and mental conditioning techniques that will help you do the same. These strategies are

designed to keep you focused when life throws distractions your way, and motivated when that inner critic tries to talk you out of your potential.

Have you ever woken up thinking, *“Today is going to be an amazing day,”* and it is? Or have you woken up thinking the opposite, and sure enough, the day turns out just like that? That’s the power of your unconscious mind — the most powerful part of your brain. It’s the same part that keeps your heart beating about 70 to 75 times a minute, over 100,000 times a day — more than 35 million times a year — without you ever having to think about it. It’s the part that sends signals to roughly 177 different muscles and nerves just to raise one hand.

Your unconscious mind is not only powerful — it’s highly suggestive. Jim Rohn used to say, *“Stand guard at the door of your mind every day.”* Think about it like this: if you’ve got long hair and you hang around a barbershop every day, sooner or later, you’re getting a haircut. If you hang out in the gym every day, eventually you’ll start working out. And on the flip side, if you spend your time with four people who have a victim mindset, you can bet who the fifth one will be.

This is a perfect example of just how suggestive our unconscious mind really is. There’s a study that shows if you take your five closest friends and average their income, chances are you won’t earn much more than that average yourself. That’s why who you surround yourself with matters so much. Your environment matters just as much — the books you read, the people you listen to, the voices you allow to influence your thinking. Whether we like it or not, these things shape our perspective — unless we stay hyper-vigilant about what we allow in. And even more powerful than outside voices are the conversations we have with ourselves in our own heads. Those internal conversations shape how we feel, the actions we take, and ultimately, the results we get.

Really successful people have found a way to manage their negative thoughts and manage what they are allowing their unconscious mind to accept and or reject. What achievers are really good at is managing their mindset by looking for opportunities and lessons in the midst of challenges and chaos. Think about how most of us behave and what we think when something we perceive as bad happens?

In November of 2019, I got a call from my property manager. One of my tenants wanted to break her lease because she didn't like the new neighbor we'd moved in next to her. My property manager explained that this wasn't legal grounds to break a lease; she'd have to ride it out until her agreement ended in March 2020.

That's when she decided to stop paying rent altogether. We filed for eviction, and the judge ruled in our favor.

Then, on December 23rd — just two days before Christmas — I got another call. There was a suspected broken pipe in her unit, and water could be heard gushing into the basement. I immediately sent my handyman to check it out.

When he got there, the heat was off, several pipes were frozen, and the water had to be shut off. The place was already mostly empty — she'd moved most of her things out. We asked for the keys back, but that's when things got wild.

That night, she called the electric company claiming the lights were flickering and water was leaking into the electrical panel. They showed up and pulled the meter. Then she called the gas company saying she smelled gas, so they shut off the gas. And just to top it off, she called the town to report — falsely — that we were renting without a license.

All of this... on Christmas Eve.

Now, if something like that happened to you, how would you respond? Most people would be furious — and trust me, I was. I was angry and frustrated... but only for about 20 minutes. And that wasn't something I planned — it happened instinctively.

Somewhere in those 20 minutes, my unconscious mind flipped a switch. A question popped into my head: *What is there for me to learn from this experience?*

I asked my property manager the same thing. I also remembered something Napoleon Hill wrote in *Think and Grow Rich*: “In every adversity lies an equal or greater opportunity.”

So I asked myself — *what's my opportunity here?*

I reframed the whole situation. I reminded myself that life is happening *for* me, not *to* me. And that's a big difference. When life is happening *for* you, you believe everything is ultimately working toward your greater good and aligning you with your goals. When life is happening *to* you, you're stuck in victim mode, and when you're in victim mode, your brain shuts down. You stop looking for lessons and opportunities.

Two weeks later, that vacant apartment was rented again — at a higher rent than before. And a few months later, in April 2020, the other tenant in that duplex decided to move out. If “drama lady” hadn't caused the mess she did, both units would have been vacant at the same time, which would have meant zero cash flow for at least a month. But because one side was already rented, the property stayed profitable.

That's the power of managing your mindset. Next time life throws you a curveball, ask yourself: *What else could this mean? What's the lesson here? What's the opportunity?*

Because life is always happening for you — if you choose to see it that way.

Let's talk about how you get to the point where you can recognize when a negative conversation is happening inside your head.

This takes me back to a night in the winter of 2019. I was driving to a real estate investors meet-up, about an hour away from my house. It was freezing outside, and by 4:30 p.m., it's already dark in Pennsylvania.

On the way there, I pulled up to a stoplight and thought to myself, *I could just turn left right now, be home in five minutes, cuddle up in bed with my wife, and call it a night.* No awkward small talk in a restaurant with strangers, no long drive back in the cold.

But then, another voice cut in. *(God's voice) Martin, you made a commitment. You do what you say you're going to do. Show up. There's something for you to gain at this event. And remember — you beat 50% of people in life just by showing up.*

I decided to listen to that second voice *(God's voice)*. And man, am I glad I did.

That night, the first person I sat next to was a young lady who had just seen one of my online ads for a house I was wholesaling. She and her husband ended up buying that contract from me for \$7,000.

Next, I met the host of the event, who became not just a great friend, but also shared a tool with me that has earned my business hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years.

But the most important thing that happened that night was meeting one of my future coaching students — a medical doctor looking to learn how to invest in real estate. I invited her to my annual goal-setting event, where she met her future business partner.

They hired me as their mentor, and within 60 days of joining my program, they purchased their first cash-flowing property. Today, they own over 25 apartments and have a net worth north of \$2 million.

All of that — lives changed, wealth created, futures secured — because I listened to the voice that told me to show up instead of the one tempting me to take the easy way out.

I know it's not always easy to tell those two voices apart, but that's exactly what I'm going to show you how to do. In this next section, I'm going to teach you a neuro-conditioning strategy that, over time, will train you to manage your mindset and choose the right voice every time.

The first thing you need to do is get a thick, sturdy rubber band and wear it around your wrist. We all have two voices in our head: one is empowering, the other is limiting.

The empowering voice says things like, *You can do it. Keep going. If they can do it, I can do it. I'm smart enough. All I have to do is figure it out.*

The limiting voice says things like, *I'm not good enough. I'm not smart enough. I'm too young. I'm too old. I didn't go to college. I don't have the money.*

Our goal is simple: turn down the volume of the limiting voice and crank up the volume of the empowering one. Remember the formula from the last chapter: $T + F + A = R$. Your thoughts create your feelings, your feelings drive your actions, and your actions determine your results.

Let's say you're trying to lose weight and you see someone jogging. A thought pops up: *I wish I could do that, but I don't have what it takes.* The moment you catch that thought, stretch the rubber band as far away from your wrist as you can, let it snap back, and then give your mind a firm command out loud: "Thank you for sharing — I reject that."

Over time, this conditions your body and your unconscious mind to associate pain with negative, limiting thoughts, and pleasure and empowerment with positive thoughts. Eventually, the moment a limiting belief shows up, your mind will instinctively lower its volume while

automatically raising the volume of your empowering voice. Is that good or good? YES! IT'S GOOD

Let me break down what's really happening here. As human beings, our first instinct is to protect ourselves and avoid pain — it's wired into our DNA. Every time you have a limiting thought and you snap that rubber band, that sting sends a message to your brain: *This thought equals pain*. Over time, your mind starts connecting negative, self-defeating beliefs with discomfort.

The goal is simple — quiet that limiting voice until it barely shows up, and in its place, amplify the voice that builds your confidence. At first, you'll be snapping that band a lot, and that's okay. Just like building muscle in the gym, you're training your mindset. The more you do it, the stronger and more disciplined your thinking becomes.

One day, you'll realize you're snapping it less and less — not because you've stopped trying, but because your mind is now wired to reject the garbage before it even takes root. *And then, one day, you might snap that rubber band so much it finally breaks from overuse... and when it does, you'll smile — because you'll know you've broken something far more powerful: the grip of your limiting beliefs.*

This exercise isn't complete without the second half — training your mind to celebrate wins. The same way you're conditioning yourself to reject limiting beliefs, you also need to feed your mind proof of your progress, no matter how small it might seem. For this part, grab a dedicated journal or notebook. Every night before bed, write down the date and list three to five wins from your day. Then add one to three areas where you've improved.

It doesn't have to be earth-shattering. If you walked a mile — that's a win, and it could also be an improvement. If you created a business plan, closed a sale, or finally had that focused conversation with your spouse,

those are wins. If you played with your kids for 30 minutes, meditated for five, or read a book for ten, that's both a win and an improvement. The point is, you're teaching your brain to look for progress.

Here's why this works: you find what you look for. If you focus on wins, your unconscious mind will start creating more of them. If you focus on improvements, you'll naturally find ways to get better. Over time, this practice becomes incredibly powerful because it directs your mind exactly where you want to go, and puts you in the driver's seat of your thoughts, your emotions, and ultimately, your results.

Now, I'll be honest with you — some days will be easier than others. But the real power of this exercise is in taking just five minutes to focus your brain on what's good in your life. Right before bed, or when you get home from work, grab your journal, write the date, write "Celebrations," and start with this sentence:

"I am happy and grateful that today..." and fill in the blank.

Some days this will flow effortlessly. Other days, you'll need to dig a little deeper. Let me give you some examples of what I've written:

- I am happy and grateful that I am healthy.
- I am happy and grateful that I took the time to listen and really understand Katherine's perspective.
- I am happy and grateful that I worked out today.
- I am happy and grateful for my wife and our love.
- I am happy and grateful for my mother and my children.
- I am happy and grateful that I was able to serve my neighbor today.

The point is simple: this exercise shifts your focus to gratitude. Where your focus goes, energy flows — and results show. God, the universe,

whatever you believe in, will give you more of what you're grateful for. Over time, this practice compounds. It rewires your brain, changes your perspective, and trains you to see the blessings and opportunities that are already in your life.

When it comes to the power of words, it's not just about *what* you say—it's about the signal you send to your brain every single time you say it. Your words are commands, and your brain is always listening. If your language points your mind toward problems, it will find them. If your language points your mind toward solutions and possibilities, it will find those instead.

Think about the most common question we hear every day: "How are you doing?" Most people answer with, "I'm fine," "I'm okay," or "I'm hanging in there." Harmless, right? But here's the problem — when you use low-energy words, your nervous system stays in a low-energy state. Don't just take my word for it — try it right now. Say, "I'm fine," and notice how your body feels. Probably not much change. Now say, "I'm amazing" or "I'm outstanding," and really pay attention. Your body responds. Your energy shifts. For some, "amazing" will light them up more; for others, "outstanding" will hit harder. The point is — words matter.

Now, let's say you're in the middle of what you've been calling "a rough day." Maybe deals have fallen through, plans have been canceled, or nothing seems to be going right. Someone asks, "How's your day going?" and you answer, "I've had better days" or "It's been terrible." Whether you realize it or not, you've just given your brain instructions to keep scanning for problems, which means you're setting yourself up to stay stuck in that same negative momentum.

Flip it. Same day, same circumstances, but this time, when someone asks, you say, "I'm doing fantastic." Even if it feels a little forced, you've planted a seed. For a moment, your brain gets the signal that you are

doing fantastic, and it starts looking for proof. That tiny shift opens the door for your state to change.

I call this a “state swap” — choosing words that reflect the state you *want* to be in rather than the one you’re currently experiencing. It doesn’t magically erase the problem, but it changes your posture toward it. You engage differently. You think clearer. And over time, you train yourself to respond with possibility instead of resignation.

Here’s the truth: most people unknowingly reinforce their worst days with the words they choose. But when you change your language, you change your lens. And when you change your lens, you change your life

This reminds me of the story of the wise teacher and his pupil.

One day, the teacher was walking through the forest with his student when they stopped in front of a small sprout just breaking through the soil. “Pull that up,” the teacher said, pointing to the tiny sapling. The boy bent down and, with barely any effort, plucked it from the ground.

“Now pull that one,” the teacher said, gesturing toward a slightly larger sapling, about knee-high to the boy. It took a little more effort, but the boy still managed to yank it up, roots and all.

The teacher nodded toward an evergreen as tall as the boy himself. “Pull this one.” The boy gritted his teeth, pushing and pulling, even grabbing sticks and stones to pry at the roots. After a lot of work, he finally managed to free it from the ground.

Then the teacher turned and pointed to a massive oak tree that towered high above them, its trunk wide and its branches stretching into the sky. “Now, pull that one.”

The boy looked at the oak, then back at his teacher, shaking his head. “I’m sorry, but I can’t.”

The teacher smiled. “My son, you’ve just shown the power of habits. When they’re small, they’re easy to uproot. But the longer they’re allowed to grow, the deeper their roots go, and the harder they are to remove. Some grow so deep and wide that you might even be afraid to try.”

“We are what we repeatedly do.” —Aristotle

CHAPTER 7

FULFILLMENT

“Fulfillment isn’t a feeling you stumble into; it’s a skill you train. If success impresses others, fulfillment feeds your soul, and without it, the win is empty”

Fulfillment is an art form. It’s the difference between living a life that’s full and alive... and one that looks good on paper but feels empty inside. Ultimate failure is success without fulfillment — climbing the mountain, reaching the top, and realizing you’re standing on the wrong peak.

The art of fulfillment isn’t something anyone else can hand you. It’s something you have to discover for yourself by asking the hard questions and being brutally honest with your answers. What truly fuels you? What drains you? What fills you with energy and what leaves you feeling hollow?

It’s paying attention to the subtle cues your body gives you—the lift you feel when you’re alone in nature, the heaviness you carry after spending time with certain people. It’s looking at your relationships, your work, your habits, and asking: *Am I truly fulfilled here? Or am I just going through the motions?*

Because here's the truth — success will impress others, but fulfillment will feed your soul. And if you want a life that's both rich and meaningful, you must master this art.

The greatest athletes in the world are the greatest because they know themselves very well. They know exactly when to push themselves and they know exactly when to rest.

This reminds me of the story of a man in a small rowboat out in the middle of a vast ocean. He's rowing hard, sweating, muscles burning, determined to keep moving. From the outside, you'd think he's on a mission — maybe headed toward some great destination. But when another fisherman rows by and asks, "Where are you headed?" the man pauses, looks around, and says, "I'm not sure... I've just been following the current."

This is how most people live their lives — working hard, burning energy, chasing busyness—but never stopping to ask *Why am I headed this way?* or *Does this even fulfill me?* They let the current of other people's opinions, habits, and expectations decide their direction.

But fulfillment doesn't happen by drifting. You've got to grab the oars of your life with intention. You've got to decide where you're going, what fuels you, and what you need to leave behind. Only then can you row with purpose — and know that every ounce of your effort is taking you exactly where *you* want to go.

I remember a time in my life where I would do things just because that's what my spouse wanted me to do with no regards to what I truly wanted to do. Being married for 23 years I know that to have a successful marriage it takes honoring and doing some of the things that make your spouse happy. What I am suggesting here is that I would only do the things that made her happy in those days. I was not confident enough to say I don't want to do this or that I would like us to do this or that instead.

It took me a long time to truly understand this concept. I remember one day, I was in the pool when my wife came over and said, “I’m not happy.” She looked me in the eye and asked, “Why is it that you always do everything I want to do, but you rarely say what *you* want to do?” I was confused. I told her, “I do it to make you happy.” My intentions were good, but my wife — being more emotionally intelligent than I was at the time — said, “That’s nice, but that’s not what I want for my husband. I want you to tell me when you don’t like something. I want you to share when there’s something *you* want to do, something that makes you happy, instead of always doing only what I want.”

Let me tell you, that felt like a dagger straight to the heart, but it was exactly what I needed to hear. That moment became a turning point in my marriage and the start of a major breakthrough in my own self-discovery. A few years later, I made a decision that would change everything: I would work harder on myself than on anything else. That’s when I realized that when I’m doing the things that fulfill me — when I’m happy and energized — I show up as the best version of myself in every area of my life.

So what does that mean to you? Understanding what you like, what you don’t like and being able to state them clearly is something that we all must come to in order to have self-confidence and gain fulfillment in our lives. I’d like to suggest you sit down in a quiet area and ask yourself a few questions. What do I really enjoy in life? What are some things I say yes to or do for others that I don’t really enjoy doing? If there is some habit or behavior that you are doing but are not happy with, ask when did I first decide that? Go back as far as you can remember, go back to your childhood.

Oftentimes, we make decisions at a very young age without even realizing it — decisions that end up shaping how we react to the world as adults. Let me give you a personal example.

When I was about seven years old, if I did something my mom considered disobedient, the punishment was harsh. She'd make me kneel for an hour with my hands on my head, then lock me in a closet for thirty minutes. That's when, without knowing it, I developed claustrophobia.

Fast forward twenty years. I'm at an amusement park with my kids, and we get on a roller coaster. The safety bar comes down on my chest — and instantly, I lose it. I can't breathe, I feel trapped. My heart is racing. I start yelling, "Let me out! Let me out!" My kids had never seen me like that before, and I could see the fear in their faces.

Another time, I went in for a routine CAT scan after a minor car accident. As the bed slid into that tight, enclosed machine, my mind went wild. It felt like I was being buried alive. I couldn't move, couldn't breathe. Panic took over. I screamed, "Take me out! Take me out!" And that's when it hit me — these reactions weren't random. They were connected to something buried deep from my childhood.

After those experiences, I took a hard look inward. I traced it all the way back to that seven-year-old boy locked in a closet. Back then, I decided — without even realizing it — that I hated enclosed spaces. But here's the thing: I'm not that seven-year-old boy anymore. I'm a grown man. I have different tools, different resources, and a different perspective.

I want to be clear — I don't blame my mom. She did the best she could with the resources she had. I share this because it's proof of how early experiences can create unconscious decisions that follow us for decades. But just because something happened to you doesn't mean it has to control you. You can make a *new* decision, consciously, right now. For me, that decision was this: I will not let the past put limits on my present — or my future.

Maybe you do something in your life that you really don't like doing but you do it because it pleases others but it doesn't really please you. What

is that for you? get really clear on what and or who you need to start saying no to and start taking better care of yourself?

Fulfillment is something that comes from within, its understanding what fuels you, what drains your energy. Take account of your circle of influence, who are they? Are they people that are striving to create a better future or are they people that are constantly complaining and gossiping? When you are around these people do you feel empowered, energized or drained? If you take a person and you average the income of the top five people that they hang out with, you will find that they won't make a cent over the average income of the group. You have to take full responsibility for every area in your life.

Over the years, I've found that living a fulfilled life isn't about chasing more — it's about living by a few simple rules that keep you aligned with who you really are.

1. **Know your purpose.** You've heard me talk about clarity before — if you don't know where you're going, you'll drift wherever the current takes you. Purpose is the anchor that keeps you steady.
2. **Set a few rules for yourself.** Make it easy to feel good about who you are. If one of your values is integrity, don't wait for someone else to validate that in you. Decide that when you keep your word, when you show up, when you take care of what's yours—you're in integrity. That's yours to own.
3. **Align your rules with your values.** Don't say honesty is important to you if you bend the truth to avoid conflict. That's living with internal friction, and it will slowly drain you.
4. **Seek the opportunity inside adversity.** Life will test you. The question is — when challenges hit, do you retreat, or do you lean in and learn? Your behavior in those moments will define you far more than the challenge itself.

5. **Play the long game.** Stop trading what you want most for what you want right now. Success without fulfillment is empty, and fulfillment takes time.
6. **Understand the rules other people live by.** Everyone has their own values and boundaries. If yours don't match theirs, don't try to force it — just choose carefully who you let close.
7. **Don't take yourself — or life — too seriously.** Laugh often. Enjoy the process.

I can tell you from experience — when you live by a small set of rules that actually matter to you, fulfillment stops being something you chase, and it becomes something you carry with you every single day. That's when life stops feeling like survival... and starts feeling like it was meant for you.

I'll leave you with this...

A man once visited a master craftsman who was building a massive ship. The man noticed the craftsman was working on a small wooden peg, sanding it with care and precision. Curious, he asked, "Why put so much effort into something so small? It's not even visible once the ship is complete."

The craftsman smiled and said, "This peg will help hold the mast in place. Without it, the ship can't sail. The storms will come, and the winds will blow, but this little peg will keep everything standing."

Fulfillment works the same way. It's not always about the big visible wins — the awards, the titles, the milestones. It's about the small, intentional choices you make every single day that hold your life together and keep you moving toward what matters most.

When you live by your values, when you understand yourself, and when you make decisions aligned with what fuels you — you become unshakable. The storms will still come, but you'll sail through them with purpose. And that, my friend, is the truest form of success... a life built not just to win, but to mean something.

CHAPTER 8

THE SCIENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT

“We are all self-made, but only the successful will admit it.”

—Earl Nightingale

Achievement is a science, not an accident. While fulfillment is an art that comes from within, achievement follows specific formulas and principles that can be learned, measured, and replicated. After decades of studying successful people and experiencing both spectacular failures and remarkable successes, I’ve discovered that achievement requires two fundamental pillars: the right mindset (80%) and skill mastery (20%).

Let me share with you the most expensive lesson I ever learned about achievement, and how a \$50,000 pizza restaurant failure became the foundation for building a multi-million-dollar empire.

The \$50,000 Pizza Lesson

In 2013, I made what seemed like a smart business decision. A pizzeria came up for sale just a few blocks from my office for only \$22,000. My wife and I had always romanticized about owning a restaurant. I love to cook, and it seemed like the perfect opportunity to do something different while making money.

The moment I signed those documents and handed over that certified check, my spirit immediately knew it was the wrong decision. Sometimes you make choices that your gut tells you are wrong, but you go through with them anyway because you're already committed. That's exactly what I did.

For the next eight months, I ran that restaurant with my family. My wife managed it during the day, my son and his girlfriend helped out, and every evening at 5 PM, I would close my insurance office and go work in the restaurant until closing time. I remember standing there at night, mopping floors, cleaning ovens, and absolutely despising every minute of it.

The restaurant was making maybe \$200-300 a day with a monthly rent of \$2,700. The math didn't work. More importantly, I felt like I had lost my freedom, one of the values I hold most dear. This wasn't the same as cooking for friends and family that I loved; this was a business that was slowly killing my spirit.

But during those long, quiet evenings in the restaurant, I put on audiobooks and began my real education in achievement. While I mopped floors and prepared for the next day, I was feeding my mind with the principles that would eventually transform my life.

One night, while listening to a book, I heard the phrase "as above, so below", meaning you'll face challenges at every level you reach, but how you handle them determines your success. That moment of insight, gained during one of my lowest points, became a cornerstone of my achievement philosophy.

I eventually closed the restaurant and took a \$50,000 loss. But I kept a painting that a customer had drawn of the restaurant, and I hung it in my office with words above it: *"If you want to fly, Let go of everything that weighs you down."*

That failure taught me the first principle of achievement: Never make decisions based on emotion alone. Achievement requires data, logic, and alignment with your values.

The real transformation began when I stopped playing the victim and started taking full responsibility for my outcomes. This mindset shift was the foundation of everything that followed.

I stopped saying things like:

- “These leads are terrible”
- “People don’t want to buy”
- “The market is bad”
- “I don’t have enough time”

Instead, *I started focusing on opportunities rather than obstacles. I began asking different questions:*

- “How can I create more value?”
- “What do I need to learn to get better results?”
- “Who do I need to become to achieve these goals?”

This shift in perspective changed everything. I went from seeing problems to seeing possibilities. From feeling like a victim of circumstances to becoming the architect of my success.

The next major breakthrough came when I made a bet on myself that terrified me. I was at a seminar, \$160,000 in negative net worth, when I heard about a \$38,000 real estate investment education program.

Every logical part of my brain said “no.” I was already drowning in debt. But something inside me said, “If you learn this skill properly, imagine what you could accomplish.”

My wife looked at me and said, “I know we’re in debt. I know we have financial problems. But I believe in you. I know that if you do this, you’re going to kill it.”

We took out four new credit cards to pay for it. I couldn’t sleep for weeks. But I made a commitment that would define my approach to achievement from that moment forward: I will do everything they tell me to do, exactly the way they tell me to do it, and I’ll do even more.

The results were immediate. My first deal after learning their system allowed me to pay off half of my \$70,000 home equity line of credit. But I didn’t stop there. I invested another \$15,000 in one-on-one coaching because I knew I needed personalized guidance to accelerate my growth.

That \$53,000 total investment was the best money I ever spent. It didn’t just teach me real estate, it taught me the science of achievement.

The Two Pillars of Achievement

Through my journey from bankruptcy to building multiple million-dollar businesses, I’ve identified the two fundamental pillars that support all achievement:

Pillar 1: Mindset (80%)

Your mindset determines:

- How you interpret challenges
- What opportunities you see
- How persistent you are
- What risks you’re willing to take
- How you recover from setbacks

The restaurant failure taught me that mindset isn’t just about positive thinking, it’s about making decisions based on data and values rather

than emotions. It's about focusing on your destination rather than your departure point.

Pillar 2: Skill Mastery (20%)

Once your mindset is right, you need to develop the specific skills required for your chosen field. This includes:

Zone of Genius: Understanding what you're naturally gifted at and what energizes you. I discovered that my zone of genius is empowering others to become the best version of themselves while building wealth through real estate.

Modeling Excellence: Finding people who have already achieved what you want and learning their systems, mindsets, and daily rituals. I studied successful real estate investors, coaches, and entrepreneurs to understand their approaches.

Creating Repeatable Systems: Achievement isn't about lucky breaks; it's about developing systems that produce consistent results. Every successful business I've built follows proven systems.

Continuous Improvement: The C.A.N.I. approach (Constant and Never-ending Improvement) means you're always getting better, always learning, always growing.

Measurement: What gets measured gets improved. I track everything, deals, income, personal development activities, health metrics. You can't manage what you don't measure.

The Compound Effect of Investment

One of my first students was a truck driver with five kids who reminded me of myself. He was tired of driving trucks and wanted something better for his family. He invested \$7,000 in my coaching program when I was just starting out.

I remember him calling me from his truck while he was driving down south, truck noise in the background, telling me about his first lead from a Craigslist ad. He was so committed, so hungry, that he'd call me every step of the way asking, "What do I do next? What's my next move?"

Today, that truck driver is a millionaire. A \$7,000 investment transformed his entire family's future. *That's the power of combining the right mindset with the right skills and taking massive action.*

I've now helped create multiple millionaires through my coaching programs. The principles I teach them are the same ones I share in this book. But here's what separates those who achieve from those who don't:

The achievers don't just learn, they implement immediately and consistently.

The Investment Mindset

Here's something that might shock you: I've invested more in my personal education than most doctors spend on medical school. Between seminars, coaching programs, masterminds, and skill development, I've easily invested over \$300,000 in myself.

People will spend \$100,000 on a college degree that gives them no specific skill, but they're afraid to invest \$10,000 in a program that could make them wealthy. They'll avoid spending \$100 an hour on therapy to deal with their issues, but they'll spend thousands on things that don't move them forward.

The wealthy think differently about investment. They know that the highest ROI comes from investing in themselves.

Taking Responsibility for Your Financial Freedom

I believe it's every person's responsibility to become financially free, to create enough passive income streams to cover all monthly living expenses without having to trade time for money.

This isn't about getting rich quick. It's about understanding that achievement follows specific principles:

1. Develop a skill that creates value for others
2. Build systems that work without your constant presence
3. Continuously improve your craft
4. Model others who are achieving at higher levels
5. Measure and track your progress consistently

The Real Secret

After helping hundreds of students achieve financial freedom, I can tell you the real secret: Success is 80% mindset and 20% skillset, and that gives you 100% success.

The mindset work, dealing with limiting beliefs, developing discipline, learning to focus on opportunities rather than obstacles, is the hard part that most people avoid.

The skillset, learning real estate, marketing, sales, whatever your chosen field, this is the easy part that most people think is the hard part.

When you get both pillars in place and you're willing to take massive action over an extended period of time, achievement becomes inevitable.

The pizza restaurant that cost me \$50,000 taught me that achievement isn't about avoiding failure, it's about learning from failure and using those lessons to build something better.

Every setback, every challenge, every apparent failure is actually data that helps you refine your approach and get closer to your goals.

That's the science of achievement: measurable, repeatable, and available to anyone willing to pay the price in personal development and skill acquisition.

Your success is not determined by your circumstances, it's determined by your commitment to growth and your willingness to become the person who naturally achieves the results you want.

The question isn't whether you can achieve your goals. The question is: *Are you willing to become the person who does?*

Action Items

1. **Identify Your Current Achievement Level:** Rate yourself 1-10 on mindset and skillset in your chosen field
2. **Find Your Models:** Identify three people who have achieved what you want and study their approaches
3. **Create Your Investment Plan:** What specific skills do you need to develop? What will it cost to learn them properly?
4. **Set Up Measurement Systems:** What metrics will you track to monitor your progress?
5. **Make the Bet:** Like my \$53,000 investment in real estate education, what significant investment in yourself are you avoiding that could transform your results?

Remember: The most expensive mistake you can make is not investing in yourself. The most profitable investment you can make is becoming the person who naturally achieves the success you desire.

CHAPTER 9

QUIET THE MIND

“The quieter you become, the more you are able to hear.”

—Rumi

When I ask people if they meditate, I often hear “I can’t quiet my mind.” News flash: everybody has a busy mind. That’s the point. You start with small steps of sitting still for 3 minutes at first and gradually increase your time.

But let me tell you what meditation has really done for me, because it goes way deeper than the typical benefits you hear about. It’s been the foundation that ties together everything we’ve talked about in this book... from self-discipline to visualization, from goal setting to managing your mindset.

The Compound Effect of Strategic Thinking

People want me to point to one specific moment where meditation saved me from making a bad decision. But that’s not how it works. What meditation has done is created a compound effect over time, not one dramatic moment, but thousands of small moments where I became more aware, more intentional, and more strategic.

Meditation strengthens your prefrontal cortex, that part of your brain that allows you to anticipate moves ahead. Let me give you a real example. I was on a call with a banker about a \$3 million office building deal. He said, “You check all the boxes except for this size deal. Since you’ve moved up to another level, the lenders want to see more liquidity.”

Instead of getting frustrated or defensive (which would have been my old pattern) my brain instantly shifted into strategic mode: “You’re now playing at a new level. This new level requires a different mindset about money and finances.” I got off that call thinking, “What can I do today so this challenge doesn’t happen again? How do I prepare for the next level so it becomes easier in the future?”

This is what I mean when I talk about asking better questions. This is visualization in action - seeing myself operating at the next level. This is goal setting with purpose - not just wanting the deal, but becoming the person who effortlessly handles deals at this level.

Life is a lot like a video game — you don’t just wake up one day and skip to the final level. You have to work your way through the levels. Each one has its own challenges, its own skills you need to master before you can move on.

Imagine your niece or nephew calls you over and says, “Come play this videogame with me.” You sit down, grab the controller, and within 30 seconds... you’re destroyed. Game over. You’re frustrated, thinking they must have some kind of natural gift for this. But the truth? They didn’t get good by magic. They mastered Level One, then Level Two, then Level Three. Each stage prepared them for the next.

That’s exactly how life works. Every challenge you face — every “level” you beat — equips you for the one that’s coming. The problem is, most of us get so frustrated with where we are that we forget to learn what this stage is trying to teach us. We want to rush ahead, skip steps, or cheat

the system. But there are no shortcuts. You either develop the skills here, or you'll keep getting sent back until you do.

It reminds me of the story of a farmer and a baker. Every week the farmer would sell a pound of butter to the baker. One day, the baker got suspicious and decided to weigh the butter, only to find it was less than a pound. Furious, he dragged the farmer into court. The judge asked the farmer if he had scales or proper measures. The farmer said, "Your honor, I'm a poor man. I don't own a measuring tool. But I do have a scale. You see, the baker has been selling me a one-pound loaf of bread long before he started buying butter from me. So every time he brings me bread, I put it on the scale, and I measure my butter against his loaf. If he's not getting a pound of butter, it's because he hasn't been giving me a pound of bread."

That story hits deep, because life is the same way. You can't cheat the scales. You can't fake the levels. What you put in is what you get out. If you keep cutting corners, life will measure it back to you the same way. That's why mastering Level One matters—because it sets the weight for Level Two. And if you don't carry your weight here, you won't be ready for what's coming next.

Meditation has made me more aware of this than anything else. It's given me the mental clarity to see exactly which level I'm on and what I need to work on before I can reach the next one. It's like pausing the game, zooming out, and realizing, "Ah, this is why I keep getting stuck here." Once you see it, you can stop taking it personally and start playing with purpose.

From Chaos to Peace: The Ultimate Transformation

This awareness didn't happen overnight. I come from chaos: poverty, noise, dysfunction. For years, I thought that to achieve, I had to constantly move, constantly fix, constantly do things. I used to seek chaos

because that's all I knew. Remember, I'm the kid who slept next to garbage and rats in a New York basement, paying \$30 a week for the privilege.

Through meditation, I realized that to get what I want, I have to be calm. I have to be peaceful. I have to think clearly. This was a complete mindset shift from everything I'd been conditioned to believe about success.

I no longer move just for the sake of moving. I only do things that bring peace and move the needle forward. If it doesn't bring me peace and doesn't move the needle, it doesn't make my schedule. I'm after peace. I'm after tranquility. I'm after doing only what matters.

The other day, I was riding my bike and I thought to myself, *"Man, I'm so blessed to wake up to this every single day."* I live in an environment that feels like a resort. When I step outside my door, I see these beautiful big homes with perfectly cut green grass, new cars parked in every driveway, people jogging, walking their dogs, riding their bikes. The sun hits just right, and I'm filled with this deep sense of gratitude. I get to live here. I get to wake up here. But here's the truth—it didn't just happen. I created this reality in my mind years ago, long before it became my physical reality.

I think back to when my wife and I were just starting out. We had our first little home, and to be real with you, we were struggling. I was trying to figure things out as a brand-new insurance sales guy, still learning the ropes, trying to make ends meet. My three kids were all babies, and life felt heavy. I remember sitting in our living room, bills on the table, stress in the air. Things got so tight at times that I literally broke open my kids' piggy banks just to scrape together the mortgage payment for that month. That's the kind of pressure we were under.

So when I ride my bike today through these beautiful streets, I can't help but think of those days. The contrast is powerful. Back then, I didn't have the house, the neighborhood, the lifestyle. But I had the vision.

I saw it in my mind first. I put it on my vision board. I prayed over it, worked for it, believed it. And now, as I sit in my home office — looking around at the desk, the wood, the layout—I realize it looks almost identical to the picture I cut out and pinned up six years ago on my vision board. I created this unconsciously at the time, but it started with intention. It started with a vision.

That's the power of visualization. That's the power of holding on to a picture of the future in your mind even when your present looks nothing like it. Back when I was breaking piggy banks to keep the lights on, this life I'm living now felt a million miles away. But it was planted in my spirit. And today, when I feel that gratitude swell up in me on a simple bike ride, I know none of this happened by accident. It happened because I believed it before I saw it.

And here's something else I've learned along the way — peace and vision without purpose can still feel like hell. There's this old story from Europe about a man who died and found himself in a beautiful place. The moment he arrived, a waiter appeared and said, "Sir, you can have anything you want here — delicious food, endless entertainment, beautiful women, every pleasure you could imagine." The man was shocked but excited. For days, he feasted, indulged, and enjoyed. But after a while, he got bored. He asked the waiter, "Can you give me a job? Something meaningful to do?" The waiter shook his head and said, "Sorry, sir, that's the one thing we don't have for you here. There's no work and nothing for you to do" The man grew frustrated, waved his hand, and shouted, "Then this place is terrible! I'd rather be in hell than here!" The waiter looked at him gently and replied, "Sir... where do you think you are? This is hell. Hell is a place without purpose."

That story stuck with me. Because it doesn't matter how much peace, wealth, or comfort you have — without purpose, it all feels empty. Vision alone isn't enough. Peace alone isn't enough. You need purpose to give everything weight. Purpose is what keeps you from drifting, what

gives you direction when life is calm, and what gives meaning to your victories when they come.

This is what happens when you combine all the tools in this book with a daily practice of quieting your mind. The magic isn't in one technique — it's in how they all work together when your mind is clear, your vision is alive, and your purpose is locked in.

From Chasing to Attracting: The Natural Evolution

This transformation led to something even more powerful. I am no longer chasing; I am now attracting.

I used to chase everything: opportunities, money, success. I was constantly grinding, constantly in motion, constantly using the self-discipline strategies we talked about just to keep up with my own chaos.

Now I move less and get more. I move like a grandmaster. Things that used to take tremendous effort, I now handle with precision. This isn't about being lazy - it's about being strategic. It's about operating from a place of clarity rather than desperation.

There's absolutely time for grinding. When I was selling insurance, I worked 16-hour days to get out of that hole. I would still work 16-hour days today if needed. That was my season of massive action. But now I move with more intention and power. I have a team. I have systems. It's different because I built the foundation during those grinding years.

But meditation taught me that there comes a point where you stop chasing and start attracting. When your mind is quiet, you can hear the opportunities. When your thoughts are clear, you make better decisions. When you're at peace, you operate from abundance rather than scarcity.

The Ongoing Work: Staying Humble and Growing

Even with all this growth, there's always something to work on. That's the beauty and the challenge of personal development - it never ends. Right now, I'm in a new chapter - I have adult children and grandchildren.

This new phase of my life has also brought up unconscious patterns — things that were projected onto me, that without realizing it, I then projected onto my kids. The truth is, we all carry projections from our parents, and they carried projections from theirs. It passes down, generation to generation, unless we become aware of it and break the cycle.

Let me give you an example. Growing up, we were poor. Survival was the priority — working, hustling, making money. That was the focus. So when I had my own family, even though my circumstances were different, I repeated the same pattern. I prioritized work and money above everything else. I told myself I was doing it for them, but what I didn't realize at the time was that I was sacrificing the very thing they needed most — me. My presence and time. I was chasing money and success, because that's what had been modeled for me. That was the projection that was handed down.

I didn't have an example to show me balance. The only example I knew was: *work hard, survive, push, grind*. I had to learn differently. And let me tell you — it didn't happen overnight. It came from reading books, going to seminars, years of therapy, and most importantly, lived experiences that forced me to stop and reflect. Those things gave me perspective.

And that's the thing about perspective — it doesn't come cheap. You don't get it by simply hearing someone talk about it. You get it through time, through trial, through falling down and getting back up. As I've gotten older, I've realized it's one of the most valuable gifts life gives us — if we're willing to pay attention.

It's why it can be so hard for young people to truly grasp advice about things that might impact them 20 or 30 years from now. It's not that they don't want to listen — it's that they simply don't have the life reference points yet to understand. Wisdom comes when you have enough experiences to look back on and connect the dots. If you're reflective, those dots turn into lessons. And if you're intentional, those lessons turn into wisdom.

That's how I've learned to break some of those unconscious patterns in my own life. Not perfectly, not all at once — but step by step, with awareness and a commitment to grow.

This is where the real work happens - not just in achieving external goals, but in becoming the person who can handle success, relationships, and legacy with wisdom and grace.

If I Could Go Back: My Advice to My Younger Self

This ongoing work has taught me something crucial, and if I could go back and tell my younger self one thing, it would be this:

Get Help Sooner. Go to Therapy.

I know, I know — especially for the men reading this. I used to think therapy was for the weak. For years, I ran from it. I thought, *“Real men don't go to therapy. We deal with it. We push through.”*

But if I could go back and sit with that 16-year-old version of me — the homeless kid sleeping next to rats, making \$4.10 an hour — I'd put my arm around him and say: *“Hey kid, take \$50 a month and go to therapy. Work on those unresolved issues. Deal with the resentment. Process the anger. Heal the pain. You'll get further, faster.”*

At the time, I was full of anger toward my mom. I carried so much resentment that it poisoned how I saw her — and how I saw myself. I remember my dad, in his wisdom, telling me, *“I know you're angry*

at your mother. I know she's done things that hurt you. But she's still your mother, and she will always be your mother."

Those words should have hit deep, but at that point in my life, my immature emotions couldn't handle them. My mind would instantly fire back: *"I don't care. I'll never talk to her again. She hurt me. What kind of mother kicks her own kid out of her house?"*

Looking back now, I realize what I didn't know then — that my mom, just like all of us, is human. She made mistakes. She did the best she could with the resources she had. That doesn't erase the pain she caused, but it does shift the perspective. And it was only through therapy that I was finally able to hear the words I wish I'd understood years earlier:

"We are all fallen human beings, living on a fallen planet, and we're all just doing the best we can with the resources that we have."

Therapy helped me stop carrying the weight of old anger. It helped me see my parents not as villains, but as people — people who were shaped by their own struggles and projections. And in doing that, I became more aware and started having more compassion and empathy for others.

So let me say it to you the way I wish someone had said it to me: Don't wait. Don't carry those unresolved wounds for decades. Don't let anger, shame, or pride rob you of peace. Get help sooner. You'll still make mistakes, but you'll make them from a place of healing instead of hurt.

I remember sitting with Dr. Gina, a Christian therapist. I was in my early thirties when she looked me in the eye and asked, *"Why should your wife love you?"*

That question hit me like a brick. My pride flared up. I started rattling off everything I provided for my wife — the house, the car, the lifestyle,

the freedom of not having to work. I said it with the confidence of a man who thought he had it all figured out.

Dr. Gina paused, looked at me, and said, “*There’s that nine-year-old boy again. Does a real man need to list what he does? Does he need to pound his chest and say, ‘Look at me, look at what I provide’? Isn’t that just your duty as a man — to protect and provide for your family?*”

Her words cut deep. I remember walking out to my car that day fuming, thinking, “*I’ll never come back here again. I’m paying this woman a lot of money just to be offended.*”

On the outside, I looked polished — well-groomed, driving a luxury car, living in a beautiful home. But on the inside, I was exposed. That moment revealed just how off my perspective was.

And yet, something inside me wouldn’t let it go. As I was driving home, I remembered the very first book that ever changed my life — *The Magic of Thinking Big*. I started recalling lessons from that book that I hadn’t fully understood at the time but that later shaped me in powerful ways. Right there in the car, I asked myself: “*Could there be some truth to what this lady is saying? Could she be seeing something I can’t see?*”

For me, just the possibility that the answer might be *yes* was enough. That little crack of curiosity pushed me to swallow my pride and keep showing up for the next session.

That single question brought me back the next week. And today, I can tell you with certainty — it was one of the best decisions I ever made. Dr. Gina was the woman who helped me finally step into manhood. She taught me that being a man isn’t about pounding your chest and listing what you do. It isn’t about the car you drive, the house you own, or the lifestyle you provide.

Being a man, she showed me, is about who you *are* when all of that is stripped away. It's about presence, honesty, integrity, and love. That shift in perspective changed my marriage, my leadership, and my entire life.

This is the ultimate self-discipline — investing in your mental and emotional health. This is the most important goal you can set. This work requires all the tools we've discussed, and it's supported by a quiet mind that can face the truth without running away.

The Practice That Ties It All Together

If you can only practice one thing from this book, make it meditation. Start with 5 minutes every morning. Link it to something you already do — after coffee, before your shower.

This isn't about emptying your mind. It's about training your mind to focus on what matters. It's about developing mental discipline to direct your thoughts rather than being victim to them. It's about creating the space for all the other tools in this book to work effectively.

In business, I make million-dollar decisions. I can't afford to be reactive. I need clarity, focus, the ability to see the bigger picture. Meditation gives me all of that. It makes my self-discipline easier. It makes my questions better. It makes my goals clearer. It makes my visualization more powerful.

The greatest athletes know themselves intimately. They know when to push and when to rest. Peak performers use this skill masterfully. Take time alone and figure yourself out. Ask deep questions. Pay attention to your body and journal about it.

Human beings need to grow continuously to feel alive. If you're not growing, you're dying.

LOOKING BACK THE ONE THING THAT MATTERS MOST

Throughout this book, we've covered self-discipline, the power of questions, goal setting, power virtues, visualization, neuro-conditioning, fulfillment, and achievement. But if you can only take one thing from this entire book, remember this:

It doesn't matter where you are in life. Life is long, especially if you're young, and it shifts in an instant.

I was a poor kid with no running water in the Dominican Republic, I came to live in New York with English as my second language, had drugs being sold outside my bedroom, and lived in the streets with nothing. If I can do it, so can you.

Your destiny changes in a moment's decision - when you decide you want better and commit to becoming the person who deserves better. Nothing else matters - not your circumstances, not your past, not what other people think - if you make that decision and commit, no matter how long it takes you will get there.

You see it in your head first. What you see in your mind becomes your reality. But don't just sit and visualize - write it down, project into your future self, feel it, embody it, then get to work as hard as you possibly can.

Taking Control of Your Life

The mind is everything. What you think, you become. Make sure you're thinking thoughts that serve your highest vision for your life.

You have all the tools now. You understand the 80/20 rule — that success is 80% mindset and 20% skillset. You know how to develop the disciplines that matter. You know how to ask better questions, set meaningful goals, and condition your mind for success.

Start slow. Start today. But start.

And as you step into this next chapter of your life, I want to leave you with a story.

When the central and western United States were being settled in the 1800s, there were two types of people brave enough to venture out into uncharted territory: the pioneers and the settlers.

The pioneers were the ones who rode out first into dangerous, unmapped lands. They were skilled in crossing rivers, hacking through forests, and fighting off angry wolves. They weren't the most polished, but they had something settlers didn't — raw courage. Their gift was discovering what no one else had yet seen, finding access to water, timber, and shelter. Their reward was the chance to go first.

Once the land was opened, the settlers came behind them. They didn't ride on horseback; they came in wagons. Their job was to build towns, establish trades, survey the land, and bring structure. They were the blacksmiths, the merchants, the craftsmen, the bankers. Their lives were more stable, their skills more refined. They made the land livable.

But here's the truth — without the pioneers, there's nothing for the settlers to settle. And once the settlers arrive, the pioneers often feel cramped. Crowded. Restless. They get bored. Why? Because their soul

isn't wired to maintain — it's wired to create. So they push forward again. They blaze new trails. They go where no one else dares to go.

That's what I believe you are. You're the pioneer in your family, in your circle, in your lineage. Nobody has been here before. Nobody has done what you're about to do. That means the land is wild. It means the wolves are out there. It means the nights might get lonely. But it also means this: you are making a way where there was no way before.

And when you do, when you break through, when you claim new territory — you won't just be changing your life. You'll be changing the lives of everyone who comes after you. You'll create a path for your kids, your community, and even generations you'll never meet.

You are the pioneer. So gather your courage. Mount up. Take the reins of your life.

Don't wait for the perfect conditions. Don't wait for the settlers to show up. Get out front. Leave a trail.

Because years from now, when people ask how the legacy was built, they'll point to you.

So here's the call: do the thing that's never been done in your family before. Become the one who changes the story. Leave the trail. Build the legacy.

That's how you win. That's how you lead.

MY NEXT MOUNTAIN IMPACTING A MILLION LIVES

Speaking of goals, I want to become a bestselling author and have a massive impact - changing at least a million lives in the coming years. I have other business ventures, but they're just business. What fulfills me most is the thought of running into someone who says, "Your book changed my life."

That's what I was called to do. That's what God put me here for. The money is just a reflection of the value I'm bringing. This is what happens when you align your purpose with your actions - success becomes inevitable.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank my mother and father, Mercedes Bello and Martin Perdomo Sr. for giving me life. I especially honor my mother, who had the courage to leave everything she knew behind in the Dominican Republic at just 22 years old, pregnant with me, so I could have a better future in the United States. *Your bravery is the reason I'm here.*

To my grandmother Celeste Jaime, thank you for teaching me what real work ethic looks like. You planted seeds in me that I didn't even understand until years later.

To my beautiful wife, Annabel, thank you for standing beside me through every stage of my growth. Your patience, loyalty, and strength over these 28 years together have been the backbone of our family. I know it wasn't always easy, but you never gave up on me, and for that I am forever grateful.

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I don't take lightly the impact others have had on my life. This book stands on the shoulders of many. Thank you for helping me become the man I was called to be.

With deep respect,

Martin Perdomo

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Martin Perdomo, also known as *The Elite Strategist*, is a self-made real estate investor, speaker, mindset coach, and family man who's transformed pain into power — and built a multi-six-figure real estate business from scratch. Born in New York City, Martin's story is one of grit, discipline, and unwavering belief in what's possible.

After growing up in a one-bedroom apartment with seven family members and sleeping in a kitchen-turned-bedroom, Martin went on to discover the life-changing power of personal development at just 20 years old. He turned a \$50K/year insurance job into a six-figure career by shifting his mindset, and that became the foundation of his lifelong mission: to teach others how to master themselves and design the life they deserve.

Today, Martin mentors ambitious men and women ready to break generational cycles and claim financial freedom through mindset mastery and strategic investing. He leads real estate acquisitions and coaching operations between Stroudsburg, PA and Tampa, FL, where he and his wife Annabel are building legacy wealth for their family, and showing others how to do the same.

Martin is the founder of the Wealthy AF Coaching program, host of the *Elite Strategist Podcast*, and an unapologetic believer in radical self-discipline, faith, and service. When he's not closing deals or speaking on

stages, you can find him journaling, spending time with his four sons, or leading vision-building workshops for high performers.

**“The future belongs to those who take responsibility
for their mindset. Change your thoughts,
and you’ll change your life.”
—Martin Perdomo**

