

## THE BIG IDEAS

### Impossible

Delete from dictionary.

### Get Tantric

& Burn the ships.

### Thoughts Are Things

They create reality.

### Faith

& Dominant thoughts.

### Self-Confidence

A formula.

### First Plan Fail?

Try another!

### Causes of Failure

Thirty-one major ones.

### Power of Master Mind

Who're your friends?

### Persistence

Persistence, persistence!

### Just Do It

Napoleon (Hill) style.



# Think and Grow Rich

The Inspirational Classic

BY NAPOLEON HILL · FREE PRESS © 2003 · 256 PAGES

“When you begin to think and grow rich, you will observe that riches begin with a state of mind, with definiteness of purpose, with little or no hard work. You, and every other person, ought to be interested in knowing how to acquire that state of mind which will attract riches... Observe very closely, as soon as you master the principles of this philosophy, and begin to follow the instructions for applying those principles, your financial status will begin to improve, and everything you touch will begin to transmute itself into an asset for your benefit. Impossible? Not at all!”

~ Napoleon Hill from *Think and Grow Rich*

Described as the best-selling success book of all time, Napoleon Hill’s *Think and Grow Rich* was originally published in 1937.

The classic has sold over 15 million copies, is known as the “Granddaddy of all Motivational Literature” and has influenced nearly every great modern self-development teacher (including Esther and Jerry Hicks—Jerry says he’s read the book \*hundreds\* of times and used it as the Bible for his businesses for decades).

Of course, when Hill refers to “riches” he’s speaking of wealth in the broadest sense—material, emotional, spiritual, and all that jazz. This is one of the more challenging books to profile because there are sooo many Big Ideas!! So, let’s get to play! :)

## IMPOSSIBLE

“One of the main weaknesses of mankind is the average man’s familiarity with the word ‘impossible.’ He knows all the rules which will not work. He knows all the things which cannot be done. This book was written for those who seek the rules which have made others successful, and are willing to stake *everything* on those rules.”

Ahhhh... “Impossible.” What a word.

(You use it often? Please say, “No!” :)

And, I LOVE the idea of staking EVERYTHING on your ideals.

Hill kicks off the book with a story of a guy named Edwin C. Barnes who “thought himself into partnership” with Thomas Edison. Cool story. Edison could sense something about Barnes’ clear, unyielding purpose and had this to say: “I had learned, from years of experience with men, that when a man really desires a thing so deeply that he is willing to stake his entire future on a single turn of the wheel in order to get it, he is sure to win.”

How about you? Do you have a \*burning\* desire for something in your life on which you’d be willing to stake your entire future?

Rule #1 of thinking and growing rich: DEFINITENESS OF PURPOSE. You’ve gotta know what you want.

“Truly, ‘thoughts are things,’ and powerful things at that, when they are mixed with definiteness of purpose, persistence, and a burning desire for their translation into riches, or other material objects.”

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Every human being who reaches the age of understanding of the purpose of money wishes for it. Wishing will not bring riches. But desiring riches with a state of mind that becomes an obsession, then planning definite ways and means to acquire riches, and backing those plans with persistence which does not recognize failure, will bring riches."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Before success comes in any man's life, he is sure to meet with much temporary defeat, and, perhaps, some failure. When defeat overtakes a man, the easiest and most logical thing to do is to quit. That is exactly what the majority of men do. More than five hundred of the most successful men this country has ever known told the author their greatest success came just one step \*beyond\* the point at which defeat had overtaken them."*

~ Napoleon Hill

So, **WHAT DO YOU WANT?!?** What is *your* definite major purpose in life?

My major definite purpose in life is: \_\_\_\_\_

Strong recommendation you write that down NOW. Once you get that, it's time to:

## GET TANTRIC & BURN THE SHIPS

"A long while ago, a great warrior faced a situation which made it necessary for him to make a decision which insured his success on the battlefield. He was about to send his armies against a powerful foe, whose men outnumbered his own. He loaded his soldiers into boats, sailed to the enemy's country, unloaded soldiers and equipment, then gave the order to burn the ships that had carried them. Addressing the men before the first battle, he said, 'You see the boats going up in smoke. That means that we cannot leave these shores unless we win! We now have no choice—we win—or we perish!'

They won.

Every person who wins in any undertaking must be willing to burn his ships and cut all sources of retreat. Only by so doing can one be sure of maintaining that state of mind known as a burning desire to win, essential to success."

Wow. Love that.

Puts things in perspective, eh? Now, you may be thinking to yourself, *"That's a little extreme."* And, well, yep. You're right. It's extreme. That's the WHOLE point.

Weak desire will get weak results. INTENSE desire will get intense results. Of course, in the process of learning to manage that kind of intense flame of desire, we often burn ourselves up and burn up those around us. That's part of the deal.

When that happens (and it will), you have two choices: read the *Gita* learn to meditate, renounce all desires, and strive to be like your guru who's dead from the neck down and just kinda smiles and bobs his head OR learn to MANAGE the intensity. (And, of course, while managing your intense desires we can (and should!) still do stuff like meditate, read the *Gita* and all that, but then we learn to make a distinction between NO desires and ATTACHMENT to desires... but that's another discussion. :)

Ken Wilber and John Eliot come to mind here.

First, Eliot—a leading expert on "Overachievement" who wrote a book by the same name (see Notes). He's also the descendant of a bunch of Harvard Presidents and the great T.S. Eliot who said, *"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go."*

In his great book, Eliot likens the idea of trying to turn your desire/stress down to a race car driver swapping out his v12 engine for a v4 because it "rides smoother." Well, sure, it rides smoother. But it \*definitely\* isn't going to win any races. Of course, if your ultimate goal is to serenely watch life pass by then a v4 (or just not driving at all, really) would be a good bet. If, however, your ultimate goal is full and complete expression of your divine gifts in the greatest service to the world then keep the v12 and learn how to handle it. :)

Now Ken Wilber.

He has a \*phenomenal\* passage in *One Taste* where he's addressing this same issue from the perspective of transcending one's ego. He makes the SUPER important distinction that as we transcend our egos we need to make sure we don't EXCLUDE them. We need to go beyond a merely egoic sense of self but NOT get rid of the individualized expression of God that makes us who we are.

*"There is a difference between wishing for a thing and being ready to receive it. No one is ready for a thing until he believes he can acquire it. The state of mind must be belief, not mere hope or wish. Open-mindedness is essential for belief. Closed minds do not inspire faith, courage and belief."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Faith is the head chemist of the mind."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Through some strange and powerful principle of 'mental chemistry' which she has never divulged, Nature wraps up in the impulse of strong desire 'that something' which recognizes no such word as impossible, and accepts no such reality as failure."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Faith is the 'eternal elixir' which gives life, power, and action to the impulse of thought!"*

~ Napoleon Hill

Wilber talks about the fact that the great sages we admire were INTENSE (imagine Jesus walking into a TEMPLE with a BULLWHIP (gives me goosebumps) and then tell me he wasn't an INTENSE dood). He offers this in his remarkable prose:

*"The great yogis, saints, and sages accomplished so much precisely because they were not timid little toadies but great big egos, plugged into the dynamic Ground and Goal of the Kosmos itself, plugged into their own higher Self... they opened their mouths and the world trembled, fell to its knees, and confronted its radiant God..."*

*There is certainly a type of truth to the notion of transcending ego: it doesn't mean destroy the ego, it means plug it into something bigger... Put bluntly, the ego is not an obstruction to Spirit, but a radiant manifestation of Spirit. The integral sage, the nondual sage, is here to show us otherwise. Known generally as 'Tantric,' these sages insist on transcending life by living it. They insist on finding release by engagement, finding nirvana in the midst of samsara, finding total liberation by complete immersion."* [from "One Taste: November 17"]

Wow.

So, uh, you want to get rich?

Burn your ships. Plug into source and shine!

## THOUGHTS ARE THINGS

*"When Henley wrote the prophetic lines, 'I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul,' he should have informed us that we are the masters of our fate, the captains of our souls, because we have the power to control our thoughts."*

*He should have told us that our brains become magnetized with the dominating thoughts which we hold in our minds, and, by means with which no man is familiar, these 'magnets' attract to us the forces, the people, the circumstances of life which harmonize with the nature of our dominating thoughts."*

*He should have told us that before we can accumulate riches in great abundance, we must magnetize our minds with intense desire for riches, that we must become 'money conscious' until the desire for money drives us to create definite plans for acquiring it."*

Brilliant. EVERY great teacher tells us how important it is to control your mind. Something powerful happens when we lock our minds on an idea (good or bad, btw).

Thoreau: *"If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary: new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or old laws will be expanded and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with license of a higher order of beings."*

W.H. Murray: *"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness concerning all acts of initiative and creation. There is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans; that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen events, meetings and material assistance which no one could have dreamed would have come their way. I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets: 'Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!'"*

Paulo Coelho (see Notes): *"When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it."*

*"Somewhere in your make-up there lies sleeping, the seed of achievement which, if aroused and put into action, would carry you to heights, such as you may never have hoped to attain."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"There is one weakness in people for which there is no remedy. It is the universal weakness of lack of ambition"*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Temporary defeat should mean only one thing, the certain knowledge that there is something wrong with your plan. Millions of men go through life in misery and poverty, because they lack a sound plan through which to accumulate a fortune."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"We see men who have accumulated great fortunes, but we often recognize only their triumph, overlooking the temporary defeats which they had to surmount before 'arriving.'"*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"No follower of this philosophy can reasonably expect to accumulate a fortune without experiencing 'temporary defeat.'"*

~ Napoleon Hill

So, how about you? What are *your* DOMINANT (magnetic) thoughts? Set your major definite purpose. Go for your biggest dreams. And pass through an invisible barrier, move with Providence and watch the Universe conspire for your success.

## FAITH & DOMINANT THOUGHTS

"Every man is what he is because of the dominating thoughts which he permits to occupy his mind."

Again, what thoughts do you allow to dominate your consciousness?!?

As Hill says: "It is essential for you to encourage the *positive emotions* as dominating forces of your mind, and discourage—and *eliminate* negative emotions."

\* echo! \*

EVERY great teacher echoes this sentiment.

## SELF-CONFIDENCE FORMULA

"First: I know that I have the ability to achieve the object of my definite purpose in life; therefore, I *demand* of myself persistent, continuous action toward its attainment, and I here and now promise to render such action.

Second: I realize the dominating thoughts of my mind will eventually reproduce themselves in outward, physical action, and gradually transform themselves into physical reality; therefore, I will concentrate my thoughts for thirty minutes daily, upon the task of thinking of the person I intend to become, thereby creating in my mind a clear mental picture."

Brilliant.

Let's be clear by recognizing the fact that before the "first" in this self-confidence formula, you MUST know your major definite purpose.

(Did you fill your major definite purpose in above? If yes, sweet. If not, *what are you waiting for?!?* Even if you don't have 100% clarity, write SOMETHING (anything!!) down and churn the idea until it really has deep resonance for you that can stoke your fire of burning desire... In fact, perhaps the most powerful purpose you can have at that stage is to figure out what your definite purpose is! THAT is a HUGE step forward. Get a burning desire to really figure out what you're here to do, refuse to see failure as an option and take consistent action toward your objective and voilà! You'll be pleasantly surprised at the results. :)

OK. So, you have your definite purpose.

Now, DEMAND of yourself "*persistent, continuous action toward its attainment*" and promise to take such action.

And, *knowing* that your dominant thoughts WILL manifest in your reality, why not spend 30 minutes imagining your ideal self. Super powerful way to rock your confidence.

(Also, you might dig Kelly Howell's 30-minute guided meditation called "Destiny." Check it out at BrainSync.com. I've done it 125+ times in the last several months and love it. :)

## FIRST PLAN FAIL? TRY ANOTHER!

"If the first plan which you adopt does not work successfully, replace it with a new plan; if this new plan fails to work, replace it in turn with still another, and so on, until you find a plan which does work. Right here is the point at which the majority of men meet with failure, because of their lack of persistence in creating new plans to take the place of those which fail."

*"In your search for the secret of the method, do not look for a miracle, because you will not find it. You will find only the eternal laws of nature. These laws are available to every person who has the faith and the courage to use them."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Those who reach decisions promptly and definitely, know what they want, and generally get it."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"Those who have cultivated the habit of persistence seem to enjoy insurance against failure... The hidden Guide lets no one enjoy great achievement without passing the persistence test. Those who can't take it simply do not make the grade."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"One thing we all know, if one does not possess persistence, one does not achieve noteworthy success in any calling."*

~ Napoleon Hill

*"The day of the 'go-getter' has passed. He has been supplanted by the 'go-giver.'"*

~ Napoleon Hill

Wow. I love that.

So, once you have your purpose lined up, see that thoughts are things and know how important your faith is, Hill gets into the importance of "Organized Planning."

Of course, if you want to make God laugh, tell her your plans.

If you want to laugh WITH God, however, just keep on trying new plan after new plan—never allowing the seed of doubt to take root as you remember Winston Churchill's wisdom: "Success is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm."

## THE THIRTY-ONE MAJOR CAUSES OF FAILURE

"Success requires no explanations. Failure permits no alibis."

Hill has a bunch of sweet lists (from the causes of failure to the causes of fear and others).

How about a few of the major causes of failure?

- Lack of a well-defined purpose in life.
- Lack of ambition to aim above mediocrity.
- Lack of self-discipline.
- Lack of concentration of effort.
- Lack of enthusiasm.
- Inability to cooperate with others.

How do you stack up and how can you grow in these areas?

## POWER OF THE MASTER MIND

"Men take on the nature and the habits and the power of thought of those with whom they associate in a spirit of sympathy and harmony."

Tony Robbins (see Notes) shares the wisdom of his mentor, Jim Rohn, in an even more powerful way. He says: "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."

Think about that.

Write down a list of the five people you spend the most time with and do the math. If you consistently hang out with people who are less inspired than you, you'll be pulled down. Consistently hang out with people more inspired than you and you'll go up.

Powerful stuff.

So, GET YOUR AVERAGE UP! Ahem.

And remember this as you wisely choose your company: "Without doubt, the most common weakness of all human beings is the habit of leaving their minds open to the negative influence of other people."

On a personal note: As I write this on my sabbatical in Bali, three of my closest "friends" right now are God, my Highest Self, and the great teachers. I hang out with God every morning for an hour when I wake up with the sun and do my AM meditation. I chillax with my Highest Self when I'm journaling and with the great teachers throughout the day as I read/study/contemplate/write.

(Plus, I once took a year off of dating and would go to Starbucks on Saturday night and pretend like I was hanging out with a best friend as I read Nietzsche and Rand and Rumi. Fun. :)

"The ladder of success is never crowded at the top."

~ Napoleon Hill

"Anybody can wish for riches, and most people do, but only a few know that a definite plan, plus a burning desire for wealth, are the only dependable means of accumulating wealth."

~ Napoleon Hill

"Love is, without question, life's greatest experience."

~ Napoleon Hill

## PERSISTENCE

"The majority of people are ready to throw their aims and purposes overboard, and give up at the first sign of opposition or misfortune. A few carry on despite all opposition, until they attain their goal. There may be no heroic connotation to the word 'persistence,' but the quality is to the character of man what carbon is to steel."

Now, I'm not a steel authority, but last time I checked, if you removed carbon from steel, well, you wouldn't have the steel. Same with persistence. You remove persistence from your character and you've lost ANY and all hope of living with material, spiritual, emotional riches. Period.

And, know this, according to Hill: "The ease with which lack of persistence may be conquered will depend entirely upon the intensity of one's desire."

You may want to re-read that. Lacking persistence? That's ENTIRELY b/c your DESIRE is weak. You want to increase the persistence, START by getting a BURNING DESIRE.

Hill continues: "The starting point of all achievement is desire. Keep this constantly in mind. Weak desires bring weak results, just as a small amount of fire makes a small amount of heat. If you find yourself lacking in persistence, this weakness may be removed by building a stronger fire under your desires."

## JUST DO IT - NAPOLEON (HILL) STYLE.

"Tell the world what you intend to do, but first show it."

As Hill says: "Deeds, and not words, are what count most."

Echoes Emerson's genius: "What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." :)

So, you have a lot of exciting plans/visions/etc. AWESOME.

Now rock it.

B

**Brian Johnson,**  
Chief Philosopher

## About the Author of "Think and Grow Rich"

NAPOLEON HILL



Napoleon Hill (1883-1970) began at an early age to study great achievers such as Andrew Carnegie, Thomas Edison, and Alexander Graham Bell. He became the world's foremost scholar and thinker in the science of human success and the author of *Think and Grow Rich* and several other books. (adapted from the book)

## About the Author of This Note

BRIAN JOHNSON



Brian Johnson is a lover of wisdom (aka a "Philosopher") and a passionate student of life who's committed to inspiring and empowering millions of people to live their greatest lives as he studies, embodies and shares the universal truths of optimal living. He harts his job.

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