

THE AWARE MAN:
Unleash Your Potential Through Self-
Development

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Preface

This text exists to kick start your journey into self development and also as a reminder to myself to follow through what I myself have found highly useful in my own personal life. This is not a magical cure. I don't believe any book can necessarily do that. It may guide you towards a certain direction, confirm something you already know, or make you see something that you have been avoiding which is useful. Not every single thing in this book might be useful to you or relevant to you, and that is okay. I have written this to show a possible way out for those who are stuck just as the ideas expressed in this book have helped me, and give them enough mental clarity for growth. My way might not be the only way. But I believe it is effective.

Many boys and men grow up without good, positive role models, causing a lot of them to become confused about their own masculinity and purpose. With conflicting ideas and beliefs being said at them constantly, they are not sure what to follow. Many men end up lonely and depressed, spending copious amounts of time on the Internet due to the social isolation and lack of acceptance in the real world (or they may even throw it away when they do have it due to a lack of guidance). There are also many men who falsely believe the only way to show masculinity is to sleep with tons of women and acquire vast amounts of wealth. Men who are successful through exploitation of women and emotionally vulnerable men end up being followed in hopes of being successful like them, although in reality they are once again being led astray.

I have been in great struggle with my surroundings and myself for most of my life being born in a foreign land, not speaking the language of a lot of my peers, not fitting into my own kind, being judged, discriminated, ignored, neglected, not listened to, abused, harassed, blamed, isolated etc. Each and every time, I have delved deep into myself through my loneliness, and have only gone into mind loops and blame games, where there was little to no way out. Movies and music offered temporary satisfaction, but eventually led me back to depression, since there was little productive being done about my environment and mindset. Plus, I might even read a book or watch a video that fundamentally changes the way that I think or feel, but I still end up feeling bad after something takes place in my life or I end up in a failure. So what was the point in reading that book or watching that video?

I started questioning why Muslims prayed five times a day, and why monks and yogis carried out meditation practices. It is not simply to have a mindset shift once, but regular remembrance of a higher being, and an awareness of one's own surroundings, as well as an awareness of one's inner world. As I read “Marcus Aurelius's Meditations”, I recognized and understood what it means to be truly mature and resilient. I understood how you can handle your emotions and memories through “Letting Go: Pathway to Surrender” and “The Untethered Soul”, as well as “The Power of Now”. Some YouTube channels I came across and have inspired this book are as follows: Clark Kegley, Hamza Ahmed, Jem Veda, ESOTERICA, Let's Talk Religion, Religion for Breakfast, & Iman Gadzhi.

Much of the topics they have discussed fall under Stoicism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Abrahamic religions. On the surface, they seem completely indifferent to each other. However, on closer inspection, there are teachings from each that give us a better understanding of the world we live in.

You reading this book might be opposed to religion or the concept of God entirely. That is why I have written this book in a neutral way to the best of my abilities. At the end of the day, you could follow whatever you want. I have not written this as a religious or a spiritual book. I am simply passing on the knowledge from the teachings which have helped me and I believe are useful to know, even if you do not believe in every single thing from those teachings. At the end, you could interpret it how you want to and come to your own conclusions.

Moreover, I am not going to divide a chapter specifically for spirituality as it's out of the scope of my understanding currently as I write this. It is too vast and complex a subject with too many different branches that could go out of and requires an amount of research that is better fitted to a different book. However, I will be including short insights and thoughts which all one way or another relate to it. You may come to disagree with points in this book, which is normal and understandable. For convenience of writing, I have mostly referred to the "he" pronoun, as this is referring to myself often. However it can be related back to you as well, regardless of gender.

There are also concepts and sayings that are repeated over the course of this book. This is not simply a matter of redundancy but as a way to remind the readers. Most readers will likely not finish the whole book in a day. So, reminding points and phrases is a way to hammer home the main points.

It is important that you read the whole book all the way through rather than just a few chapters here and there, as context is added before and later. Many different aspects and ideas are written in this book to make it as comprehensive as possible.

I hope you find value in this book the same way it has helped me gather my thoughts.

Rizwan Rahman

To be free

Of all falsehoods and illusions

Substances, visuals, fake charm and love

You will never be free of them

But awareness will make you come above all

Intro

If you really got nothing in your life right now, what do you have to lose by working out? What do you have to lose by sitting by yourself and observing your thoughts? What do you have to lose by just stopping for one day not playing a game? What do you lose by not going to some porn site and fapping for one day? What do you lose by that? I'll tell you. You lose your original identity you have stuck to for so long thinking that it is you, thinking that it is just who you are. Where is this identity even from? Who gave it to you? And why do you still care to cling on to this identity when it does not benefit you?

Because it is easy. It is comfortable. No matter how painful and grating it is in the long term, it is easy and comfortable. So in a way, you like being this way. You derive pleasure from your misery, even though it seems paradoxical. And that paradox makes you have cognitive dissonance, which further affects your mind, unable to think straight or at what is actually going on in front of you even though you think you do. Now, you do not have to change if you want to cling on to this identity. But realize that this is not really you. This is just you not being aware of yourself. You are not aware of the world around you and are stuck in your own mind, its thoughts, its loops etc. It is playing tricks. So do you really want to live in these illusions and tricks the mind plays on you? Would you rather go into the real world and see for yourself?

What if in one year, you could live a much different life than you are living right now; fit and satisfied with your life and achievements, have a wife or partner, have your own close circle of friends, have people who look up to you and respect you, have financial independence to do what you want. You think it is not possible? You think even if you tried, you cannot succeed? Who is telling you that? Yourself, in your illusion-filled mind? Really? You want to listen to that? How can you know it is telling you the truth? If that mind of yours really was telling you the truth, why would you be driven to where you are now? What good did your way of life and thinking do?

You cannot change because the environment is or was harsh? You cannot change because no one believed in you and supported you? Let's say that is true. Why do you want to prove these people right? All these people who did not believe in you and support you, you should use that as fuel to get up and do what you always wanted to do, without giving a single damn about what they are going to think or whether they will support you or not. Guess what? They never had to support you. It is you who has to do what you have to do, by following a higher purpose than mere human beings. Your purpose must be beyond just a few friends and some strangers. Your purpose must be beyond just getting a girlfriend or getting laid. Your purpose must be more than showing off expensive things to your friends and some strangers. It should be about attaining the best potential that you could ever achieve, through mind and body. And guess what? Only YOU can achieve that for yourself. Not anyone else.

Everyone's body is built differently. Everyone's mind is unique. Everyone's got their own strengths and weaknesses. And that's the beauty of the world and its creation. It is all so different and unique. There is only one you who exists. Why not get to the best possible position you can ever get to? And you know what? Even you cannot really know what your best possible position is in this world. You might never know. But you can start now. Not tomorrow. But now. Cut your distractions and make your mind and body the fittest and sharpest it can be! One year from now, you are going to pass your birthday whether you work out or not or whether you sharpen your mind or not. Might as well make the best use of it.

Mindset

What is it that you are hiding from?

What is it that you need?

Unmet needs? Addiction?

If you are making the same mistakes over and over again, change one thing about your approach to the problem, and then another, until those mistakes cease to exist. Same with bad habits.

It is most valuable to live truthfully, and express your inner life. Be vulnerable. At the same time, be emotionally resilient. The only way to do that is to become used to discomfort. Whether it's working out, trying new activities, waking up early, or approaching and talking to someone you're nervous to talk to. You can be resilient and vulnerable at the same time.

Also, do not fake it till you make it. It is one of the most cowardly things you can do. Just do the work and stop complaining about this and that. Nobody gives a damn. What matters is you do the work. Do it till you get good at it. That is not faking anything. That is just doing the actual work.

Whatever you need to do, just go and do it. Leave your emotions out of it if it really is a hindrance. Not everything is about you, your past, or your insecurities. This world does not want to screw you over. This world does not want to help you either. It is only there to just be. People screw others over. But that has been happening since the dawn of time. If you are able to be resilient, you can experience a higher realm of consciousness (which would feel like you are experiencing a new world). It has nothing to do with money or power but more to do with

perception. You could be a rich man or a poor man and still have more awareness and consciousness than the other.

Self improvement is a misleading term. There is no self “improvement”. Only self-development. You do things you need to do and that is it. Keep your emotions, and ego out of it. At the same time, if you need to express yourself, write what you feel in a diary or notebook. Do it unashamedly without being afraid of judgment as it is only you who would read it. Or if there really is no way due to a lack of privacy for whatever reason, then write what you feel or what you've been repressing, and burn it. Burn that piece of paper or pages down. At least you have expressed yourself one way or another. Burning it symbolizes the pain burning away. Sort of like a ritual but just for your mind.

Sleeping late, waking up late, sleeping early, waking up early. All these depend on the work you do. A productive mind and body would be tired by bedtime. The best way for productivity? Whatever is distraction (Internet, phone, social media, entertainment etc) must be kept away until what needs to be done is done. If you are a writer, instead of using a computer, where you can easily go on the Internet, and mindlessly scroll, go to a place with no Internet or better yet, write on a notebook (pen and paper).

Stop filters in your mind. Let thoughts and feelings come to you regardless of how screwed up or weird they are. In fact, you are not your thoughts. How can a weird thought define the nature and character of a person when a lot of it is subconscious? It is not personal. It has nothing to do with you. The man who was in war would have thoughts of torture and death. The victim of sexual assault would have thoughts of rape and assault. The victims of narcissism will think narcissistic and angry thoughts. However, none of them are you. They are merely thoughts and

memories which come and go, and you have the power to act how you want and need to.

Thoughts/feelings of pain are of the mind and do not have to come out onto reality for as surely they would be detrimental. They must be understood to be stronger than just some impulses and thoughts.

Ignoring or trying to forget bad memories? You will never succeed as they will always be there, showing up when you are down or at your lowest. Instead, you have to accept your past fully. Accept that it is in the past and cannot be changed. That discomfort, get used to it since it is still real life. This makes you stronger as most of us are stronger than we realize. If you are angry or sad, it is normal. Express it through rigorous exercise and building your body. Give your mind the strength and alertness it deserves.

Be the person you needed most when you were down (whether it be a strong but gentle father figure or a caring and supporting person who understood and accepted who you are regardless of your shortcomings in your formative years). Surely someone would need a strong person's help, and you can only do that with an alert mind and a strong body.

We are definitely not just cells and atoms. Because the sum of those atoms give life to an intelligent organism that is capable of feats of architecture, exploration, exploitation and creation. They are capable of emotions and grand expressions too, which rouse feelings and awaken something inside of other people just as it awakens in themselves. We are able to procreate and give life to more intelligent life forms (some good and some bad). What more clue do you need that we cannot simply be mere animals and that our lives are not meaningless. None of it may have come into fruition, yet it did, and it all kept evolving into more and more sophistication. Even after events of disaster or tragedy, they were able to

spring back up into life. Why should it spring back to life instead of killing itself? Because there are things more important than just some current predicaments. Generations cannot exist with no tragedy. Even after all that, you are still alive, breathing, reading, feeling, systems in your body working, organisms and atoms intelligently functioning with no input of your own mind.

Optimism or pessimism? Once you let go and accept your bad memories, negative thoughts and quit the constant living inside of the mind and its over-complications, you will automatically move over to practicality, which is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. It is simply what it is. How do you let go of mind loops and overthinking/over-complications? Understand the mind is active as it has to be. It is imagining fake/imagined scenarios for you to tackle it better in the future, yet it does not stop, torturing you more than the torture from other people. But you do not have to associate with every little thought, impulse or action. Surely you would be miserable and a slave to your own mind if you take every single thing in your mind seriously. Understand that it is a world (the world of the mind) just like the world outside. You can walk past a piece of shit on the streets in the external world and forget about it. Just like that, you can think of a piece of shit and pass by it without letting your mind be defined by it or taken over by it. It just is what it is. But beware not to ignore or suppress it. Just let it be there. Ask what it might be telling you about your inner world and possibly your past traumas/disappointments. Ask why it is there. Thank it for letting you know, as it is a valuable tool doing its job. Now let it go and do what you want to do.

Cleverly design your mind so that you can always be comfortable in your own head? Your head and the inner world is a space just like the outer

world. Both could be altered to your liking and preferences. But what is your liking? What are your preferences? Where does it come from? Just subconscious triggers from your childhood? A preference given by your peers or elders? A fearful retreat to block out any and all negative thoughts and emotions? Avoid pain and accumulate pleasure? Is that all there is? Avoiding fear and negativity. Isn't that cowardly? What is so wrong in being a coward? What is so wrong in being lazy? Well you are not expressing your aliveness and living. Why to express your aliveness and live? Because it is rare. Out of all the semen, only one sperm entered your mother's egg and formed the womb, which formed into a child and then an adult, and so on. It is literally magic, yet it is just basic biology. The basic thing is still profound. Even a tortured/tormented soul still lives and breathes life.

Worship of a human being should be prevented as no matter how good or great a person is or becomes, he can never attain perfection (which is completely fine as he is a mere mortal being who are just humans at the end of the day and worship does not bring you anything. It only distracts you). His good actions and teachings can be followed without resorting to deifying or worship, regardless of who it is. A man, whether great or pathetic, ends up a corpse eventually. Of course the influence before death can last much longer, however deifying does not benefit the actual teachings and philosophies of that person. What are we but a speck of dust in the vast outer space. We resort to deifying a human without realizing how insignificant they too are in the grand scheme of things. In human life currently,? Maybe, but that's it. It is good to read and follow teachings, after research and understanding, with debate with oneself and others. Deifying and blind faith to a person defeats that purpose and puts us into submission.

Also, reject the cult of personality. Take ideas that are helpful/useful. Learn from them on how to keep calm, keep fit, and take actions with discipline, but do not worship them. Do not spend all your time and resources on them. They are just human beings prone to flaws like the rest of us and they could turn around to exploit you just as soon as their morals falter. Instead, look inwards.

Negative thoughts and emotions are just that. Write to express your aliveness and make yourself stronger. Not weaker. You have more power than that, especially if you can form sentences from symbols and letters, and structure them coherently. How do humans form and learn all these things if it weren't divine?

Has it become comfortable? Has it become too easy? That is when you take up the next challenge. You do not want to jump up too high but at least keep leveling up. You have to keep increasing the challenge until death or tragedy. As cliché as it sounds, it is not always about the end goal but about the process. When you love and accept the process, you would be far better and more powerful than those who have “achieved” everything but are unsatisfied/unhappy.

If it was all so easy, there would be no value to it. There would be no value to the struggle. But does struggle alone give meaning? No. It is the resilience and strength you develop that is valuable. Not the struggle.

What influences you? Is it your past or current circumstances? Is it the media you consume or your upbringing? Is it your environment? It is everything. Even seeing a green tree or a red car can influence you one way or another. A flash of a butt or a sudden sight of violence could subconsciously drive and influence you without knowing that it is influencing you.

Bored with nothing to do? Bored that you are stuck and there is nothing interesting happening in your life? You are not where you need to be? If nothing can be immediately changed, then accept it. Accept the discomfort. Accept it fully. No good thing comes out of simply being comfortable and in pleasure all the time as that only leads to emptiness, since it is empty and meaningless.

The next step after boredom is consumption of great and thoughtful works or art designed to stimulate your spirit, which will lead you to action and understanding. Do and you will be alive. Stay still or in pleasure and you will be led to a prison within yourself. Do difficult things. Not just working out for physical fitness but doing mental exercises that stimulate your brain. Living life is problem solving. A film director could not fully convey his vision most of the time, so has to make decisions both small and big until the final product is able to come out. Not all is going to be exciting and it does not have to be. It is work and you should take responsibility. If there is help, accept it humbly and respectfully. But do not solely rely on it.

Words and images have more meaning and impact than people realize. Bad words are curses. Good words/compliments are blessings. A constant barrage of images, words, phrases, and sounds? Surely it would hurt the soul and confuse it (keep it in confusion). Keep things in your house uncluttered and minimal? It is too much work? It is annoying? Mind you that it will be the most important work you do if you are stuck. Only keep your house with bare essentials. For good vibes and better mental health, keep some environmental landscape paintings (free of humans).

Have weights at home. You must keep things plain and simple. This gives you the chance to keep your mind alive when you look out the

window. Be careful of grandeur or epicness in one's own house or living space. It does not need to be and is only giving unnecessary issues. You only need a hard bed that is plain, a pillow and a blanket.

Do not be kind or give charity for validation from others or an ego boost for yourself. Your ego is petty and meaningless in the grand scheme of things. You will certainly die whether it is soon or later. Your ego will not matter. What matters is the world at large and the higher consciousness through which you will see many things greater than yourself and also people. Through this, you can make better decisions in the material world since you are looking at things from a higher awareness. However, things may seem small by that point.

Images of the person are not the person themselves, regardless of how realistic. One must be aware of the person in front of them and around them more than the person who is away in another country or another part of the world. You forget the value of what is around you and in front of you because you are enamored by memories of the past (whether positive or negative). It takes acceptance and work to make new experiences that are valuable to yourself and others. Distracting yourself with nostalgia and people outside your current proximity is not going to work (especially if you actively ignore your friends or family that are there for you. It is a different case if they aren't).

Think of yourself like a king, handling a kingdom. Your kingdom is your mind. How would a purely good and just king handle complaints and achievements in his land? Would he always have access to the resources necessary? Would he have to handle difficult paradoxical problems? After all, handling those difficult situations and bringing his kingdom to survival is what will make it stronger. There will be attackers from other kingdoms, how will it prepare for war? How can you change in case it has

new information that is better for it? What are the children (your past self or inner child) in the kingdom wanting? How would you as a king treat him and acknowledge him?

There will be self-help gurus who would expect you to buy their program and courses for you to achieve your goals and dreams but beware of those who expect you to come back again and again like a subscription model. Self development is something that is natural and as humans we grow and learn new things. That is just life. It is different for everybody. That is okay. Even if you fail today. You can get back up and try again. You do not need a course or reading 1000s of books to tell you that. If you want to learn how to trade forex, sure. Learn a few courses. Train yourself. But the next step is to start trading and learning. Not going back again and again to buy different courses with different methods. How do you think these guys make money? They trade or buy selling courses online? Beware of it. Same goes for crypto teachers and influencers, PUA artists, and other types of financial and self-help gurus. You learn the knowledge and apply it, refining what you have learnt. Go back to your notes if you need to or research for free. Do not constantly go to people who keep you at a perpetual self-improvement grind where your life is always out of order. It can come to order through your actions. Not your knowledge and theories (although it should really just work as a catalyst for your own development).

A dis-ease. A mind dis-ease. A spiritual dis-ease. When your actions are not aligning with your values, your mind develops problems.

The past does not and cannot exist. Only the present. The present moment, the reality, passes us by every millisecond as we approach death. The only way to overcome past failures and bad memories is through living in the present, and handling whatever thoughts and memories

come up in the moment. Because only the present exists. This is why many quote the phrase “live in the moment”. Surely, learn from past mistakes. Treasure and value good moments and insights from the past that made you grow. But live as things come by, be aware of your surroundings and take action accordingly.

If you are in pain, accept it. Accept the pain. Do not fight it. Do not resist it. Do not rationalize it. If there is nothing you can immediately do about it, accept it. The sooner you accept it, the less power that pain has on your psyche. The less power it has on your psyche, the better decisions you can make regarding it.

No matter what you do, higher authorities and corporations will screw it over and your life is still without impact? There are many things in life you have no control over and most likely never will. There are a lot of horrible people out there controlled by their own impulses and are steeped in sin, exploiting everybody around them while in truth being miserable themselves. It is not your job to consider these things as the bigger picture is far more complex and diverse. A higher awareness and the sufficiency of oneself will inspire others around you. Even making a small impact in another person or a few people's lives is meaningful as it again plants seeds of growth.

Think from the heart. Think from the head. Think from above. Think beyond base desires.

Those who live by their ego will die through their ego. Those who live by a higher purpose and spirituality will live a strong fulfilling life that is more fulfilling than materials.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs. You have to satisfy base desires to get to a higher purpose and understanding. The hungry man will not think/be able to think about self-actualization or a higher purpose. This is okay.

Food, water, sleep, living under a roof and living in a clean environment is important. At the same time, one can help the other. Having a higher purpose can make you clean your dirty room or move out to a better environment without constant fear. Having some good food can make you think what to do next and what is the next important thing. These all play hand-in-hand.

Value compassion, understanding, and action. Devalue passive aggression, ego and materialistic desires.

For people stuck in constant negativity: "Changing your thought patterns through positive/motivational thought loops (to replace negative thought loops) can put you into action for change. Action can put you into better fitness, opening up your body, reducing and eliminating stiffness through stretching, and increasing strength through strength training. Strength training increases your body mass/muscle mass, making you see the world more clearly (more for what it actually is than a haze/veil of your negative self-talk, pessimism which is just not the truth). When you see more clearly, you can make decisions without feeling scared or feeling weak. You will be more aware of your surroundings, making you see the world better for what it is rather than through a haze of negativity and constant thought loops.

You will develop discipline through strength training which will make you able to make decisions according to what is right rather than through mere impulses as you could exert your emotions in strength training. Change cannot be immediate. But becoming more and more aware of the world will make you take better and better decisions, and become the person that you have to be.

Expecting immediate results after starting a program or routine is like planting a tree and be annoyed it has not bear fruits the next month.

The world of the mind is connected to the body. The world of the body is connected to the mind. And both are connected to the world. In one way or another, everything is connected.

You are not you. When you realize all your desires, wants, behaviors, fears etc. are just figments of the past and are in fact malleable, you can do anything (within the means of physics).

You are not you. What you think is you is the ego. Get on board with the higher purpose and lose “yourself” to it.

Push yourself everyday with consistency. If you do it, why would you not be able to think casually and make better decisions?

How much of your problems are due to your own ego and mindset? If you free yourself from the shackles of needing outside events to work out, your happiness is endless.

Open up your heart and let everything in/out without a filter. In Chinese, the word for happiness is literally “open heart”. The only result will be freedom and happiness. It is all within. It has always been within. It will always be within. How powerful would it be when you not only fully realize this and practice it, but also teach it/inspire others to follow this? The environment around you can for sure turn better. And you will also have the strength to leave a bad environment/situation if your heart is open for the good in the world.

TIP: Do not make big decisions or spend a lot of money when you are sick or having a cold. Rest it out. Go to the doctor. You will thank yourself after your sickness ceases.

Physique

Anytime I feel down or get stuck in a rut, the first thing that brings back my confidence is going down and doing push-ups. Now, I know. Not everyone is able to do push-ups due to things like their weight, strength, health problems, etc. But in any way you can, you have to start moving your body. Get blood pumping in your heart and start sweating. It would quickly get you into a zone that puts you in action.

After you start this, everything else comes easily (or at least you would feel you have more strength mentally and physically). Make sure to not overdo the first time around. You will not get good at the first try, as with any skill. The key is to do it everyday consistently, which is a daunting task. You may fail many times, but keep coming back, and pat yourself on the back for making progress. Do more reps, lift weights, do cardio, squats, planks etc (obviously you do not have to do it all at the same time and neither do you have to feel like it is a lot to do. Trust me. You would want to do all that as you get stronger). Make sure to watch some tutorials on the right posture or ask a friend who works out to help.

As you do this, it is important to also have to get your posture right. You do not have to get a perfect posture immediately, but at least learn it as you get more used to it.

Should you sign up for a gym? It depends. I will say for a beginner, it is a great idea to join the gym (Make sure you are not paying too much. Better for beginners to join a cheap gym). This will also let you see how people do their workouts, which you can copy. Always start with lower weights. You are not going to show off to anybody just yet. And you do not have to feel embarrassed that you are not fit enough. Buddy. That is literally why you are in the gym.

Everyone's concerned about their own body and image (even those who are already buff and with six packs). You have a duty to get yourself in shape and order. Even if an experienced lifter comes to offer their advice, listen carefully. They are trying to help. Sometimes it might not be the advice you needed, since you might be trying to do a different exercise. But it's okay. Just move on and do your set.

There are many workout routines you can do (Push-Pull-Legs, Upper Body-Lower Body, Full Body Workout etc.). For beginners, Full Body Workout is good to get started. Even if you continue to do this for 4-5 days every week or for starters just 10-15 minutes in a day, you can get in shape and feel more confident. As you gain more experience in the gym, you can try other workout routines to see what fits your goal.

The slow but steady physical transformation will for sure put you in a better position in your mind as you feel you can conquer the whole world with your strength. As your chest is pumped out, as your hips are forward instead of sunken, your whole front body straight when it is relaxed, you will feel at ease and more confident when you are standing and walking rather than when you are seated or sunk down. You may still feel bad or bored or a myriad of other things, but once you get up, and get going, looking at people in the eyes, naturally smiling when you talk, you will not just feel good, but be living in the real world in the reality rather than inside the confines of your head.

If you can take either an escalator or stairs, always choose stairs. There are exceptions to this of course, like during sickness, leg pain, fatigue etc. But for the most part, if you are able bodied, you must choose something that stimulates you physically. Physical exertion can fuel mental energy and deep thought because blood flows over your body to the brain. For people whose jobs require them to think a lot, they can do physical

activities to stimulate their mind. For those who do physical labor, they can stimulate their mind to keep themselves in focus.

Naturally sculpting your body (without the use of substances like steroids or drugs) through rigorous exercise and diet is one of the most spiritual endeavors you can take. Exercise is prayer to the body. Reading, building knowledge, practicing new skills (or even a skill you have already refined over the years), meditating to a still mind, are also spiritual endeavors. An exercise of the mind through concentration and problem solving. You do not do it for the result. You must do it for the process and experience, no matter how hard. Do not simply look at it that it is hard. Look at it that it is a part of life, that must be experienced, and eventually you can conquer it. And if not, then it is still fine that you have tried something new. You can come back to it later with a fresh set of eyes and mind to take it on and you might be much better at it.

Physical exertion does not automatically lead to complete mental wellness. There are many murderers and unsavory individuals who work out and keep fit, yet their mind is polluted and damaged. They might lie to themselves to show a calm veneer, and act like there is nothing wrong with them, while not knowing what normal even is as they have never experienced it. The best way forward for any person is complete wellness (physical, mental, and to give an overall meaning to the previous: spiritual). Even atheists believe in a higher power/ideal to follow. They might not believe in “gods” or “God” but will be captivated and moved by ideals of a higher nature.

Physical alignment goes hand-and-hand with mental alignment. You physically train yourself to be strong and healthy so that your mind is able to act out and do what it needs to do without opposition. A weak mind spoils a strong body. A weak body spoils a strong mind. Both are important. Exceptions exist. But you cannot just live through exceptions. Remove all stiffness in your body. Front. Back. Left. Right. Top. Down. But you may say you are not an athlete or a gymnast. But who asked you to stick to one identity/self-image that is temporary and changes all throughout your life? It is unimportant. Do what you have to do everyday. Your bones and muscles will last long and healthily.

What to do when you are tired and sleep deprived? You are tired, irritable, and lack serotonin. One way to quickly regain this is through water. Wash your face. Breathe in and breathe out to fuel your system.

Breathe from your belly (diaphragm). If you want to be successful and great, you have to put in the work of changing your usual physical behavior. Sit up straight, look straight at people, straight in the eyes (even if you are uncomfortable). Once you are used to it, you unlock a huge amount of potential.

Pull your shoulders back and push your chest forward. Walk with long steps (not too long) and fast.

When working out, make sure your form is right (nothing wrong in doing small weights when you begin, only go to the next one when you are fully able to do reps with the right form). Right form can give you the most effective results regardless of what workout it is.

When you start working out, you will not be able to lift heavy weights (much less do many reps with it). But with time, the weights feel less and less heavy since you are gaining strength. The same can be said about any other skill. It takes time to build strength (in any field). Your mental strength is built through decision making, concentration, and gaining maturity.

Just like avoiding foods you are allergic to and reducing/eradicating unhealthy habits so that you can become physically stronger quicker, you can remove mental barriers like removing distractions, cutting contact with toxic people (of course you have to realize toxicity in yourself as well if you have any).

You do not fully understand what you're missing out by not pushing the limits of your strength or even just doing one exercise everyday (10 push-ups everyday, 20 squats everyday without weights). One day when you wake up, your body will feel fresh and eager to move. You will feel like you can do anything and everything. And you will not have constant body pain or fatigue.

Remember as you go along that your body's strength and aesthetics can be a good motivator as you work out and build up strength (especially at the start). But be cautious not to over-indulge in the pleasure of seeing yourself. It is not the goal. Your objective should be to move past your outward appearance and into the surroundings/outer world, and go beyond your outward appearance.

Distractions

Distraction distraction distraction. Why? Why do you have to distract yourself? Why do you have to watch that video? Why do you have to listen to that song? What value does it bring to you other than temporary pleasure that distracts you from the real environment and the world? What is so boring and dreadful about the real world? Why is it like that? Ask yourself that. But do not go into a mind loop asking the same questions over and over again, blaming him and her, finally achieving nothing significant. See the reality for what it is and what you have to do (if you can put your emotions aside for a short time). What would you do if you were a strong person? Do that bit by bit without faking. Your heart will give you courage as time goes by as you practice it. As said before, do not fake it till you make it. Do it till you do it well.

Music is a mind altering tool. It can be there like background sound but has the power to significantly affect your living in the real world. Constant and excessive media consumption has made many of us impotent in this modern world as we are barely able to just be (accept the real world and its senses as it is rather than filling it with artificial sounds to drown everything out). This consumption may cause us to miss nuances and moments that appear in the real world that might give us more time to think or notice things that might actually help us live better lives.

Romantic music can make you feel in love and then leave an empty void if you are unhappy in a relationship or single with no contact with the opposite gender. Angry music can make you more angry. Songs with sexual lyrics can make you subconsciously horny, and make you do things you are embarrassed to do. If you really are going to listen to

music, understand the effects it can have on you rather than simply being a blind consumer. Do not consume any media blindly. Question it. Question why someone would make it.

Associations of music and movies with positive and negative memories, people and places. It is natural and it is how we remember/make memories. However, be fully aware of what and why it is there. A love song might bring back memories of a person. But it is not the person. Do not attack or hate the song. It is not the person. Do not attack the memories of the person as it will only be hurting your own mind. Accept it for what it is. Just a song.

Look how music videos, advertisements, and media in general try to get your attention using your base desires (hunger, lust, anger, etc). How do you think your mind will be when you're constantly exposed to these materials day in and day out? As much as possible, avoid them to protect your subconscious. And if you cannot, at least look at it critically and understand/be aware of your own emotions as you engage in this. You will realize how meaningless and pointless most of it is. Much of this is just using you as a money-making machine for you to spend on the artist/corporation. Even when an artist dies, the corporation uses the artist's works to make money for themselves. Sometimes this is just unavoidable for you. We live in a profit motivated world after all and it is difficult to escape corporations. However, as much as possible, we should be aware of the effects they try to have on our minds and be ahead of them.

Be aware of mind associations. How it associates a certain smell with someone, a certain facial feature with someone, a personality with someone, a piece of music/song with someone etc. It is how the brain makes memories. It is natural. At the same time, do not let it control you

or sway you too much. Always think critically before making the final decision.

Reject porn and sex (they stem from the same need but are different since one is real and the other is voyeurism). Humans have all kinds of desires and impulses. It does not mean all should be experienced with no restraint or control. If you just hook up constantly, what difference do you have with animals? Yes. Humans are mammals. But we have higher consciousness than mere animals, which give us power to do more sophisticated things in the world (which involve things more than just food, and sex, like building complex structures, languages, systems, transportation etc). Same can go for porn, which are nothing more than weird horny people engaging in positions for your entertainment. That voyeuristic tendency prevents you from living in the real world. Representation of something is not the real thing. It bleeds into movies and media (although not to the same extent as porn but still can be negatively effective when constantly indulged with no further thought).

As many times as you watched porn or engaged in other unsavory activities, has it ever made you satisfied afterwards? You keep wanting it again, and again, and again. And it only makes you feel worse and worse and worse. There is no real achievement from jacking off in front of some pixels. Neither is there any pleasure from sleeping with someone you do not care about, or someone who doesn't care about you. There was nothing achieved and done with these as immediately an emptiness and darkness fills in. But it is not something that fills in. You were simply blinded by your own seeking of pleasure. So the emptiness was always there, and will always be there, unless—you center yourself in a true ideal, a set standard and a love of nature.

When you have unmet needs, you will not be able to stop an addiction or a toxic thing you do. If you are constantly watching porn even though you want to quit, you have to dig deep into what it is that you are lacking or need. What is it that you feel when you don't watch it? What are your thoughts? As the haze and memories of these images subside, you come into the reality of what you feel. Is it loneliness? Is it depression? Congratulations. That is the reality. You are not trying to live in some illusion with these images and sounds. Who is the "you" who feels this loneliness and depression? Is it really you or is it just one aspect of you that feels emotions? Who is the "you" who feels empty?

Vicariously living through others' experiences is never the same as living and being the real thing. You can watch someone traveling around the world, eating exotic food, working out, having a "well put together" life. But watching them or hearing them is a different experience than actually living them. Nothing wrong in hearing of others' adventures and tales. But if your whole world revolves around escaping into others' stories (which with only a few senses stimulated can only exist as a fantasy in your world), then you got a problem. Go out into the wilderness, prepare yourself for danger, climb trees, life heavy, build furniture, create expressive art. Do what unleashes your aliveness through both physical and mental prowess (even if you might have some limitations you can do what you can in your capacity rather than giving up altogether) which will awaken your spiritual prowess as well.

The power of even a bad/boring film should not be discounted. Everything you sense can influence you subconsciously, which means you will not even realize you are being influenced one way or another. It is cute to think it will not affect you at all, but usually the people who think like this are the types of people who are influenced the most and

are run by subtle subconscious influences in daily life. Why put candles and incense in rooms/places? Why decorate a home in a certain way? Why put all these advertisements and billboards of a barrage of brands and media? Why take a break from social media? Why to paint a room a certain way or play soft background music at a coffee shop? It is all to subtly alter your mind. This is not always a bad thing and it is nearly impossible to weed out everything that is subconscious. What one can do is to listen to books, videos or podcasts about peace and mindfulness instead of simply consuming anything that they feel. Surely this can subconsciously influence you to see things a better way and be aware of your own surroundings. Eventually you can become motivated to do what is necessary.

Even things made purely for entertainment can unintentionally carry the artist's ideology or desire (which is not wrong of course, but you must at least know it and know where it is coming from). There are some things the artist will do and will not do, which inevitably leads to the entertainment being a certain way, which can subconsciously affect the viewer. And if there is an art which really has no effect, then that is not an art that is worth your time.

This does not mean you cannot have fun. You should have fun fully understanding what it is you are doing and why. Understand the effects it can have on you (positive and negative, meaningful and meaningless).

Alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs are all there to avoid the reality. It forms a haze around your perception to give temporary satisfaction (which might be what you crave or think you need). But it gives no real benefit to discipline or reaching a higher realm of consciousness. Coffee or tea on the other hand makes you more alert and aware. However, when consumed with no real work being done, it can have the same types of

hazy deterrent effects like drugs, making you energize in undisciplined, unsavory activities due to the subconscious taking over.

What is meditation? Why to meditate? It has more to do with living a real life than most want to know. You are put in contact with all your thoughts, traumas, and feelings. You are forced to come to terms with them as you try to concentrate on your breathing. Eventually you accept them as just a part of life rather than something you must try to forget through constant entertainment, substances, or other people. Nobody can do it for you. Only you can do it yourself. Do not deny the power within yourself.

The digital screen is a drug too wherever it is. Whether it is billboards, TVs, phones, or computers. There is a purpose to it and there is a way to use it in moderation as it is inevitable in this age. But admittedly, the way they are designed is to keep you hooked. They make you enraptured by the images & sound, wherever they are. Advertisements, music videos and movies seek your eyes and ears, hijacking your mind, making you think and remember what the entertainers and CEOs want. Your mind is not even yours anymore and instead just a money-making machine for the company or the artist.

Again, having fun is not inherently wrong and there might also be an educational aspect when you are using it in moderation. But you cannot let it control you, your life and your mind.

The mind is a temple. Do not pollute it with unhealthy images (at the very least whatever is in your control). Same with the body. Do not go out of your way to consume sugar and processed food, unless there is no feasible choice available.

If you are going to distract yourself due to one thing or another, at least take in long form information that is related to higher forms of consciousness and awareness like self-improvement content or something for learning a set of skills. Listen to it and understand it. You do not have to follow it or believe it. But it will help you understand yourself and the world around you in a more mindful way, leading to an overall satisfaction in life and a higher purpose.

It is so easy to become obsessed with the images of people, their faces, and materials, whether it is from paintings, photographs, films, posters, etc. However, the image is not the actual person, neither is the material the most valuable. They are all just symbols and tools. It can have innate essence but it will not be the same as the person themselves. Actors and models dressed to look attractive for your entertainment and show off attractive clothing and lifestyles. It is only a representation that is not helpful or valuable as much as you might think. Where there is full and complete value, obsession ceases and what you are left with is a deep understanding of the ideas and values (not the set dressing like cool-looking cinematography and music). Those are mere tools to capture your senses and convey ideas.

Stop with the overnight movies, videos and podcasts. Can't sleep? Caught up in thought? Overthinking? Realize it is not you. They are mere thoughts. Plus, you are in the real world. Not the matrix. Be happy that your mind is not cluttered by voluntary outside noise, that you know well is unnecessary to your life. You as a human being cannot and will not know everything and most likely you will not use that knowledge you gain from that podcast or video (at least most of the time). Watch one or two good videos here and there in your free time. Perhaps watch a movie. That is enough. It is not necessary to go onto forums and

community blogs as there isn't more value to be had through endless scrolling. It gives you the illusion of keeping up with the community and trends while in reality you are only losing your productivity. Could it be used in moderation? Sure. But for most people with no self-control, moderation is an invitation to scroll without boundaries.

Watch, read, consume, again and again and again. What good has it done so far if you have not put it into practice? It is too difficult? Too much of an effort? Start slow. Bit by bit. Do not give up just because you do not see results right away. That simply is NOT how it works. You cannot expect to plant a tree and it grows to full length and get fruits out the next day. You plant it for the sake of planting. You do push-ups for the pain it inflicts upon you, letting your anger out, and making you stronger, bit by bit. You eat healthy not to feel good immediately but to do what is right, and that in and of itself should give you satisfaction. Not pleasure. But satisfaction. That is way more long lasting than pleasure which leaves as soon as you are done, only existing again in memory. But satisfaction makes you stronger. Strength will not only set you free from your own mind, but gives you the chance to live in this world according to reality.

Distractions do not only exist in the digital world. You can get distracted in the real world as well, never looking inwards and being in touch with your emotions. Both the real world outside and the inner world within are important for a healthy life.

Understand how people use all these smoke screens and tactics to distract you, get you to buy their products, get you to follow what they want etc through playing with your innate desires like hunger, lust, money and a sense of purpose. Rise above all that by letting go and understanding yourself. You should be guided by a higher purpose beyond yourself and those of others. Your life will be much simpler.

In a world of distraction, how do you not consume content? At the very least, consume self-improvement content. It can eventually make you take the actions you need. If you are someone who has wasted a lot of time playing video games, taking drugs etc., watching and listening to self-help content is much better than stuffing yourself in those other things.

How to use your free-time without using digital things or watching or consuming content? Build tactile things. Draw, write, buy a Rubik's cube, solve puzzles, and play sports. You should stimulate the five senses through means other than your phone or computer. Even if you are stuck at home, playing with a small Rubik's Cube can stimulate your brain. You are not really missing out on anything important. You can always check your inbox or notifications the next day just for 15-20 minutes and be done with it.

Protect the subconscious as much as possible. Do not throw rubbish into your ocean. Regularly unload and clean it. Take brakes if you have to. When you watch porn, your subconscious gets polluted. When you consume meaningless or mindless content, your subconscious gets polluted. When you watch or consume depressing stories or content, your subconscious gets polluted. When you are traumatized, your subconscious is polluted. As with all things, it may take a lot of work and effort to clean your mind, but nothing, and I mean nothing feels better than feeling free from all this pollution. Let that clear, un-fearing mind that you very much could achieve guide you and drive you to quit any polluting activities.

Appreciate great beauty in people and in art. But do not get too caught up in it. It is also a great distraction when not moderated. And those who simply cannot moderate, don't even bother. Stop it fully and do what needs to be done.

You become what you consume and do. Be mindful of what you consume so that you can control your actions towards what your highest self will be.

If you do have to make content and be on social media due to your business or something truly important, use it mindfully. Know what you are getting into. Know what you need to post. Know who you need to interact with. And leave after a few minutes. Do not waste time checking out unrelated posts because it seems vaguely interesting. Your time is your most important resource if you are a content creator. Use it wisely.

If creating content cannot be escaped, create and spread content about emotional resilience and productivity. It is like a small diamond within the rough or a mine where there is a lot of mindless content. As said before, ideas are resilient. A good idea just needs time to marinate and develop. Even if one or two people catch on to it, you have a positive impact.

It is so easy to get caught up in numbers, likes and comments. Realize that at the end of the day, it does not matter. All roads lead to death. Even if you are super famous or someone nobody knows or cares about, it doesn't really matter in the grand scheme of things (because it might only be a problem in the short-term). How many celebrities from the past have already been forgotten? How many of them right now will be able to survive the test of time with their relevance and impact? How many of them are truly living meaningful fulfilling lives and not simply indulging in base desires? How many are actually true to themselves and

those around them?

When you see that you do not *have* to become like the top 1%, that it is not needed for satisfaction, it frees you up to what is more important and harder to achieve. It is rigorous self-discipline and emotional resilience. Very few people can actually achieve it. Once you strive for it, you will not have to worry about anything too much as you will have the strength to handle adversities.

One bad day over the course of 30 good days? It is better than not having any good days. Do not lose hope just for breaking a streak once or twice. Look at the long game. You break the streak today. But you can get back on track right after. Life is full of obstacles and difficulties. Accept this. You are not perfect. Nobody is perfect. Whether this is about being consistent at the gym, being productive, staying away from substances, quitting porn, or even staying consistent at the gym, look at the bigger picture and not just the streak breaking once. All you have to do is to go right back to the streak with a drive stronger than ever to beat it.

What does it mean to truly relax yourself? It is not going on video sites and social media. Your body and mind must be fully relaxed with no responsibility to work, think about work, what to do next, what to watch, how to get back at someone or something etc. Whatever it may be, you must be totally free of all mental holds. And you know what happens? Your mind is able to relax. It is able to regenerate. It could finally take its long overdue rest from this content and that video and that song, this memory, this thought etc. Your mind can regenerate and come back stronger than ever. More times you relax, take your mind off of everything, you give your mind a chance to give you a better life. Your mind is your employee. Treat it well with break times and vacations. It

will serve you loyally.

When you get your body and mind in order, even the simple act of using a computer or using your phone is from a different perspective. When you are small and weak, the computer looks like a big machine that gives you endless entertainment and happiness. When you get stronger with more muscles and your shoulders are back with your chest forward, the computer looks like a mere tool to be used to get things done. It does not look as imposing, making it harder for it to have a hold of you. In both instances, the computer did not change. It is the same computer. But you have changed. You have transformed. And that is what this whole book is about. The world looks imposing, confusing and scary when your mind and body are small/weak. Granted, you can be small and still be strong. When your body is big and strong, and your mind is stronger as well, you would be more driven to take on the challenges of the world. It will not look as imposing and controlling as before.

One of the effective ways to deal with addictions? Have responsibilities. Take on responsibilities that are more exciting than whatever that addiction can give. And also do whatever you can to make it difficult for you to get over that addiction (putting block apps on your phone, talking/calling family/friends, working out as intensively as possible). Remove yourself from the triggers as much as possible, especially in the early stages of quitting (whether it's the music/media you might consume, the people you are with, the place you visit).

Find out what are the reasons for the triggers and come to terms with it, no matter how painful. Remember that your past self is not you currently. You can change and grow like everyone else. Even if others do not care or others do not forgive you, you should do it for yourself and your own good. And in fact, the new people you meet in the future

would be seeing the current you, not the past you. So you must come to terms and accept the problems you faced and the mistakes you made.

Remember. Whether you get stuck somewhere or not, the world keeps moving. You keep getting older. You might as well accept yourself, your past, and your current state completely, and do whatever you have to do to get back up.

Better to sit and do nothing (when I mean nothing, not checking your phone, computer or TV, thinking of past and present), then engaging in addictions or bad habits to kill time or not feel lonely. Even if you do not have work, do not engage in things that would make you weaker. Stop giving exceptions.

What is the best way to have fun? What is the best way to relax? When you know you are working towards making your life better, it would be the most exciting and fun thing to do because you know what? You do not know what is going to happen. You have no idea how far you could go. So do not consider all these things as putting too much effort and that they are exhausting. They are freeing up your mind and body. You do not have to be shackled to negativity and fast pleasures. You are free. It is liberating. Then, you can go and try having any type of fun. But you will be much more aware of what you do and why you have to do it.

Relax your mind by not distracting it with stimulation. Do nothing. That would make you think clearly. Relax your mind by not identifying with intrusive thoughts. Just let them be, as random subconscious distractions that barely serve a purpose. Relax your mind to only the bare essentials. It would clear up the routes and pathways in your mind for making clear decisions.

TIP: Give yourself the permission to be bored and literally not do anything. Do not even think of reminiscing about the past or future. Even if you do unavoidably, you could fuel some new ideas and thoughts. Some new awareness and consciousness. Isn't that better than just not ever actually thinking or putting your mind to rest?

Awareness

What are you so afraid of truly? Ask yourself.

What are you passionate about? Ask yourself.

What is the background of these things?

Beyond fear. Beyond pain. Beyond base desires. There lies treasures beyond comprehension of most people. Those treasures don't have anything to do with money.

Understand yourself and you can understand the world. Understand the world and you can understand yourself.

Awareness. What does this actually mean? Awareness is acknowledgment of your existence, your mind, your body, the people surrounding you, the environment, the time, the air etc. These are all things to remind yourself about. You cannot exist as a singular entity as the environment, its people are a part of the world you exist in. The people you see everyday and the people do not see are also a part of this world you exist in. This awareness first starts from being aware of yourself in the present moment, that you are a living breathing ever-changing human being who exists.

Awareness of yourself. Awareness that you exist. Awareness that you are a conscious being. But who is it that is aware? Are there two people?

What is meditation? Going into a flow state while working or cleaning can be a way of meditation as well.

You think you are angry. You think you are sad. You think you are excited. No. You experience these emotions. You are not the emotions themselves. You cannot live with yourself? You cannot live with what you have done? You cannot live with what has happened to you? So,

who is the person you cannot live with? Isn't it just yourself? This is why you are not your past actions, emotions, or thoughts. You experience these things.

Go out into the sun often. Go outside often even if you're working from home. Even if you're not meeting anyone. Just go outside.

Whenever you are stressed or obsessive about something, take a second to breathe and look intently at the wall or something blank (perhaps even a plant or a tree). Realize that it does not matter at the end of the day, that it is all going to pass, and that it is all just temporary.

When you are tired and exhausted, nothing matters. Not your past achievements, failures, problems, assets etc. Your mind shuts down for a while as it cannot comprehend anything. Why? Because it does not need to be on all the time. It is only concerned with rest.

There is no such thing as a wrong thought. Thoughts come from your upbringing, knowledge, experience and current environment. Change your environment, change your actions and thoughts will follow, which will fuel your actions.

There is no such thing as a wrong thought or wrong memory. Only wrong action.

Be focused on the process. Take the results (whether positive/negative) as one step in the process and not the ultimate goal.

When you are addicted to something, and you come to it with awareness due to the amount of work you put in on yourself, there is a higher chance you would cease to do that act, midway even. Doubt enters your mind and you would see the activity as pointless, doing nothing beneficial to you.

It is okay to be upset or angry in the face of failure. It really is. It is what makes you human. What I am saying is that short term failure is only that. It hurts in the short term. So realize the vastness of the universe that is bigger than all of us, and realize that what you fail in the short term can still be compensated tenfold in the long term.

Life is not about avoiding or not having any problems at all whatsoever. It is about having the emotional resilience and stress tolerance to handle whatever comes up, and being able to solve it. You have to handle problems as they come and go, staying in the present.

Things you used to think are big deals when you were a child or a teenager would seem minuscule when you grow older. Remember this.

If you are able to fully separate yourself and watch your life like a movie, with different characters and settings, you would probably be able to get a much clearer picture of who you are and what you should do. Although you cannot do that, you can try looking at your life like an RPG character that you level up and increase in skills. How cool is that? The best game you can play is your own life and the world. There is nothing more satisfying than truly building your life in the real world. No matter how many great films you watch or games you play, you cannot really replace the real world and people with it. Representations of reality and reality itself are two different things.

TIP: A calm camping trip over the weekend, alone, unbothered by the worries and responsibilities of the world. How calm will it be to go and sit with your thoughts and feelings for a while without distractions of any kind, writing down your worries about the past, and then burning them. How calming would it be?

Mental Health

Let go. Let go of those desires. They do not bring you real satisfaction. If all it does is make you feel good in the moment and then makes you feel empty pretty much immediately, it is useless.

What does it mean to be a responsible adult? It is not scary or boring. Once you accept the responsibilities and independence, there is so much that you can do and be capable of.

The key to every success story is mental health. This is the area where many people fail miserably (even if they become externally successful on all counts), but you do not have to. There are two loops we can go through; the positive feedback loop, and the negative feedback loop.

Let's meet Jack. He grew up in a nice house with great parents who cared for him since he was a child. He had a caring environment which looked after him when he was upset and appreciated him when he accomplished something. This made him confident and happy, making him easy to approach. Naturally, he had a lot of friends, and he was known as a great guy to be around. This also made him attract girls who wanted that positivity, making him a ladies' man. The extra confidence made him have the guts to pursue different activities, jobs, and challenges. Even when he failed, he had built enough connections and trust with those around him, who pushed him to greater heights, even after failure. When all else fails, he still had his family to turn to, who were still proud of the son they had.

Now let's meet Drake. He grew up in a household where his biological parents resented each other and he was stuck with a single parent, who was too busy thinking about his/her own problems to look after him. Due to the lack of love in his house, he looked for validation from his peers, who saw him as desperate. However, he found friends. But those friends were more than happy to push him around and take advantage of his desperation and naivety. This only pushed him further into his desperation, before going full on depressed. He refused to make eye contact or talk to people since he could not trust anyone around him. He felt like the world rejected him (and he had all the reason to). Since he was desperate and annoying to be around, this made him a low self-esteem guy who girls hated. Some girls did find it cute, but they ended up taking advantage of his naivety since he had no backbone to truly stand up for himself. All this made him lack motivation to pursue new challenges. Every short lived success was followed by a long failure, which immediately put him in a pit of darkness (even if it was not actually that bad). When all else fails, he has no one to really turn to. And he goes into substance abuse, homelessness and might even have an early death.

So with these two (admittedly exaggerated) examples, we saw the positive and negative feedback loops (from Jack and Drake respectively). With both, we can see how positive and negative loops from childhood affected them to their respective points in their lives. Now both of these are malleable. You do not have to have a shitty life just because you were treated badly in childhood (or any other point in your life). This book is about taking control. As with fitness, when you control your body, you would start to look different in front of others, and it would immediately get you to be treated differently than before.

With mental health, it is one extra step. Some of the things you can do are looking up at people's eyes when they talk. This helps the person you are talking to (or if anyone is talking to you) to know you are interested in talking to them. This can be difficult at first, but with consistent practice, it will become second nature, and people would be more receptive. This also shows confidence. The person who looks people in the eyes when they talk and is not shy to look away shows a strength of character. It means you are ready to face anything life throws at you.

How do you start this positive feedback loop into your life to get it on track? Do things consistently, build discipline, and have clear boundaries. If you got a workout at 9 am, then you might have to reconsider going to that party at 10 pm. This does not mean you cannot enjoy it. But make sure you keep your discipline and prioritize fitness and health. Parties come and go. You can go once every month, while the rest of the time, you are on your grind. Parties and late night events/gathering also disrupt your sleep cycle, which might sometimes even take a few days to recover from. As you workout and get on that fitness lifestyle, you would naturally feel better keeping your fitness rather than going to parties. And even if you do, you will not want to stay long into the night.

Consistency starts with small things. Waking up and not checking your phone first thing in the morning. Instead, you can look outside the window, or go outside for a small walk. You could try meditating, writing a diary showing gratitude for your life that you are still alive, doing push-ups or lifting weight, hitting the gym, or just drinking water will be better for you than immediately checking your phone. Your mind will immediately feel different, and will start giving you a different set of thoughts than usual.

As you move further into your day, there are always triggers. These triggers can be anything. A location, a person, a smell, a time of the day etc. What do you do when these happen? First step is to notice this thought. Notice that you are going into a negative thought loop. Negative imaginings that quickly put you into an angry or sad cycle that makes you irritable. It might be out of nowhere but only due to one small branch of thought that related to a past incident or event. Notice these thoughts as soon as you can first. Once you notice it, you can stop giving it power to take control of your mind. Call it a funny name. Like "Bob". Oh Bob's here again with that negative thought. Would you take something like that seriously if it has a funny sounding name, and is just there to make you feel bad? Remember: (Your mind works for you. Not the other way around. Tell that thing to take orders from the master, which is you. Do not apologize for it.)

A lot of our lives have been spent on suppressing these negative thoughts whenever it props up. We try to flush it down with movies, TV shows, social media, drugs, alcohol, sex, and porn to forget about that/those incident(s). But it never goes away. These addictions are a symptom of trauma and bad environments that further fosters negativity. The hard fix is the ultimate fix. As mentioned above, catch those negative thoughts whenever you have them, and cut them down.

As you do this, you could also see what you can cut out, whether it is bad diet, bad friends, bad environment, bad habits etc. Bad diet is something that is a symptom of a bad lifestyle. When you are working all day at a shitty job, or you are depressed and unemployed, you will not want to spend much money. You just want a quick fix of cheap junk food. What can you do to stop that?

Everyone has an inner child that needs reassurance and understanding in order to reach your highest self. Even if you become successful, if you do not meet your inner child and confront the past, you will always regress back to your lowest form. Yes. It is harsh. But that is just how it is. If you have had a bad experience or trauma, it will stay in your subconscious mind. It resurfaces every time there is a trigger and drives you back down. Of course, you can distract yourself as much as possible, through drugs, alcohol, sex, video game addiction etc. But it will only be a short-term fix, and would create new problems in your lives like health problems, your dopamine receptors getting fried, lack of ability to concentrate on important things etc.

So, what are we supposed to do? Is there anything you can truly do? After all, you can never truly live the lives of someone who had a good life from the start with good family and upbringing. So what? You are going to have to do harder work than them to pull yourself up. And I believe you have the strength to do it. Everybody has the strength to do it. Regardless of your trauma, pains, or current circumstances, you can build up strength. There is always a healing that is possible. And then you can live any life that you want in a satisfactory way.

Hell, even the previous steps are only a small part (especially if you cannot begin to work out or work on your mental health consistently or have some serious problems starting). This will be the most important work you can do.

It's not going to be easy. But it is possible. One of the best ways to cure yourself from going back to the hole is shadow work. Addressing the pains of your past selves without judgment. Feelings and emotions are a weird thing. It can take place whether it is logical or not. This should be acknowledged first and foremost. A good way to start is to pick up a pen and paper/notebook. Or if you do not use it, it is okay. Use your computer or phone's notes app and start typing.

Questions Prompts:

1. What is something that other people do that annoys you? How does this reflect a part of you?
2. What is an embarrassing memory you got? Why was it like that?
3. What is something that triggers you? And why?
4. What is a promise to yourself that you have broken or continue to break? Why?
5. If you had everything you wanted, what would your life look like?
6. Do you hate someone? How do you show that?
7. If you could write a letter to a person who screwed you over, what do you want to say?
8. In what ways do you feel guilty/ashamed? Why?
9. In what ways do you get jealous of others? How can you start embodying those things that you get jealous about and turn it into something positive?
10. How do you show up for others but not in showing up for your own self?

These are all questions that you can ask to begin the shadow work process. Is it going to solve all your problems immediately? No. But it will absolutely be something that will change your mindset to look at your problems from an objective point of view and solve them without an overload of anxiety and stress. And again, this is not going to be easy. But it will be a VERY important. And guess what? After you do it, it might be one of the most valuable things you did which will make you stronger than ever (it is only bringing out what was always in you but got hidden due to trauma and bad experiences).

Now do not lie to me. I know some of you will cleverly skip this part over so that you can do it later and get to the main part of how to get be the most aware man possible with maxed out potential. But truthfully, you can only get there if you work on this. Otherwise, you will only be hitting a brick wall and take ten times longer to reach your end goal, while being miserable in the process. Think of it like fixing a gaping wound. You can put on a small plaster (sex, drugs etc.) on the wound (trauma), and you could go around like it is fine. It will be fine until the plaster falls off and starts bleeding all over. People around you will be creeped out/weirded out. The people who would be okay with it are other people who are wounded one way or another and may even like to take advantage of your wound to get what they want.

Now if you go to a doctor (psychiatrist/psychotherapist), or at least learn to stitch up the wound (self-help and truly take action), you would be in a far better position. Yes. The scar will be there. But do you want an open wound or a scar? The wound may not be your fault most of the time. But the scar, stitching it up, will be and it WILL make you stronger. If you are expecting the person who hurt you to admit their mistakes and reassure you, it might solve your issues, but the pain will still be there.

You will have to fix it no matter what. There is no other alternative. Plus, you would also be respected more if you overcome a difficult situation or trauma and build yourself up. But for that, you gotta do it.

While a chiseled physique and a strong mind might give pleasure in the short term and a slight ego boost, it is the process which gives you the power and will, which will make you achieve more important tasks, which lead you to be stronger, wiser and more mature. You will realize again and again that this is all not just for you but for the world at large. You have to be more in line with the universe by healing yourself. And through that you help the world as well.

You are constantly so swayed by emotions, waiting for that text, that validation from a like from this person, that person, a follow back, a subscribe, a connection. Where has that brought you so far? Has it given you something more meaningful than real interactions with real people in front of you? And all this time you spent alone with your thoughts as you walked aimlessly, stuck in mind-loops which lead you to great anger, resentment and sadness. Where has that led you? And still you come here to understand yourself and free your mind. Because it is not them. It is not completely you either. But change should start from within. And only from within, that fire can fuel you, which can start a fire in others around you, and they may give it back to you, and plant it in others. It grows and grows to light up as much as it can. You will be better off for it.

What happened in the past cannot be controlled. We do not have any time machines. Constantly preparing for the future and stressing about it will not do us any good. It may even hamper our natural progress. Instead, handle issues, stresses and problems in the present moment as they come along (whether it is external or internal). If it is some traumatic memory from the past, come to terms with it and handle it at the present

moment. It will not necessarily get easier to handle later. Most effective is always letting things go as it happens.

Whatever emotions, inner conflicts, etc, are important to be passed through as it goes on rather than waiting for the moment. When you do it later, resentment and sadness builds up, until it bursts out in a way you did not really hope for or want to. It is not healthy, but too many of us are guilty of it. For it, you must be honest with yourself but also handle it with grace. If you did not have the strength or ability in your past, beating yourself up in the present will not do you any good (especially things that you had little to no control over). In fact, it might further scar you if it is done prolongedly, leading to addictions and distractions that do not lead you anywhere meaningful or good.

Learning to let go and not hold onto either positive or negative experiences will enrich your life.

Many live their lives with the sole goal of avoiding any and all kinds of pain and suffering (especially around certain mental scars from the past) that their whole life revolves around it. The man who got rejected multiple times in harsh and embarrassing ways by women may become so afraid of rejection that he refuses any and all interactions with women he likes to not infuse romance in them. He ends up getting friend-zoned and frustrated, not realizing his own belief and fear preventing him from so many romantic opportunities. The man who is not afraid may still get rejected a lot but it does not prevent him from other encounters with other women who reciprocate to him.

The man who was rejected or neglected by his community may say and do things which further isolate him since he was rarely accepted. The man who got betrayed by his friends might develop trust issues and might become overly vigilant, which causes him to avoid even potentially

fruitful/worthwhile friendships, because he is revolving all his interactions based on those negative experiences.

For starters, it may seem reasonable and fair to do this. But it would only lead to loneliness and bitterness down the road. Humans have always been social creatures. We are meant to interact and have different experiences to make ourselves grow and potentially impact the lives of others around us. Living in this world, you are bound to meet all types of people. Some are good. Some are bad. It might be hard to gauge. But with experience and wisdom, you simply stop caring about it. If someone is rude to you for no reason or cheats you after you trusted them, it is on them and not you. You simply cannot control how others react or behave. However, you can control your reactions and emotions. With deep emotional understanding and peace within yourself, you could react to situations with grace.

If in case you have to get violent to protect yourself or those around you, you should not simply act out of anger but through a trained impulse that is not simply emotional, as it can blind you in dangerous situations. Fear and anger are natural emotions, but when unchecked, can lead to worse consequences than necessary. You should not simply be driven by anger and pain but driven by a higher conscience, of doing the right thing. The one who is at peace with himself fully even at difficult times will not simply lash out but would act in accordance with what has to be done at that particular time to solve the issue at hand.

Stress tolerance. Much more important than you think. It is what it takes to become powerful inside. You do not simply ignore your emotions. You do the right thing in spite of your emotions. There is a huge difference. You must be able to look at yourself honestly and reflect on your emotions, why you feel a certain way and what it is that you want.

Afterwards, you come out and do the task at hand. You obviously cannot always be positive or always make the right decisions. It is not practical. Mistakes are natural. But when you sway towards doing the right thing and being emotionally regulated as your goal, things become easier.

Apathy and passiveness really come from unprocessed grief and fear. Understanding oneself, accepting situations as they are and taking action is necessary.

There are low vibration emotions and high vibration emotions. Let's be honest here. Even though the most ideal is an overall happy and enlightened state, it is not possible/practical to always stay like that. It is just not how we work as humans. Instead, recognize the emotions that you are feeling and do not suppress it/lie to yourself. Whatever you are feeling, let go as it comes. Accept the emotions, and let it go. Why? Because you are not your emotions. You are the experiencer of emotions. Do not identify with it. When you identify with one or two emotions, you let it define you. You still accept it and feel it, but you don't cling on to it.

When you identify with it, you are not being honest with yourself. How can you be identified with a temporary state that comes and goes? Even past mistakes and behaviors and achievements or hobbies. You are not that. You are the experiencer of that.

Let's say you really like football and want to be a football player all your life. How many of us could actually truly achieve it? And how do we feel when we fail? But is it really useful in life to be tied down to just one identity and be obsessed with it, and missing out on various other experiences?

When you are not controlled or weighed down by anxiety, constant negative & intrusive thoughts, the only place to go is up. Remember. They are just thoughts. It's you who controls what you do.

It is always good to take a break after a ton of stress. It is always good to stop thinking too much (through doing a totally unrelated activity). And then you can come back to tackle the problem with more clarity.

If you have been in a difficult place for a long time, you might go towards thinking the most negative outcome for every situation, or even think yourself into a tired and hopeless feeling, feeling even worse than how you were before. Even though it might seem true, realize it is only a feeling. No matter how bad you were screwed over, not taught what you were supposed to be taught, or neglected, it is only a stepping stone in what you have to do instead because you have the knowledge and power right now. There is nothing being done or achieved by blaming others or the environment other than hurting your own self.

Look how so many put on pretty words and a fake character just so they can get the approval of people and get material wealth. How weak do they end up in the end? How much inner peace could they instead get when they let go of these temporary pleasures and desires. Look how strong one can be when un-phased by manipulation and mental abuse. The only way to do that? Let go. The past? Let go. Nothing could be done about it. Only thing that exists is the present and you have to do what is best in that (without desire for materials). Those people who chase and acquire material wealth and status may seem happy on the outside but there is no guarantee whether they are truly satisfied with their lives.

Constantly look and observe people, materials, and ideas, and break it down. Break them down into their ingredients until you see the bare essentials. This is an effective way to get a greater understanding of the world around you (especially for things you are addicted to or want to get rid of).

Misinterpretation is bound to happen when not seen in full context/watching the whole movie/reading the whole piece of work etc. The people who put in the effort to take in the whole work will come to a greater understanding. Those who do not will miss out. Do not worry about those who miss out. Focus on your own understanding first.

If you put your mind and body to its limits, getting stronger and learning new skills, why would anyone “neglect” you or not care about you? And why would you need their help in the first place if you are self-sufficient? Be a master of yourself. If you are able to live with uncomfortable emotions and feelings without being swayed and controlled by them, you can do anything.

Do you not realize your problems start with you seeking happiness over your inner peace? Happiness is always and will always be temporary. Inner peace is greater than mere happiness. Happiness is a mere high where once you come down, you will feel worse, which is not ideal (and defeats its own purpose). You must strive for inner peace through doing difficult things, getting used to it, and building up emotional resilience. It does not mean you ignore your emotions. It is the opposite.

Understand and come to terms with your emotions. Be an observer of your painful emotions rather than identifying with it. It is not you. When you do this, you can experience a wider range of experiences that go beyond your comfort/discomfort. You can come to a greater understanding of your surroundings and the world, which can in turn

lead you to material wealth, success and status, but at that point, you will be able to handle it with awareness and not let it control you as you will realize that they are not the most important things in life.

What is the quickest way to get through a difficult phase in life or come out of a rut? Imagine a person who has not gone through the things you have gone through mentally. Imagine what that person would be like and what he would be doing. Imagine what habits he will have everyday. And then, imagine yourself as this person. Forget the past and do what this person will do in the present. This sounds simple enough but it is not easy. As you imagine yourself as this person, you can get through it. You will get through it. You can still come back to face what you feel and get over it, but perhaps you need to get going as soon as possible. So, this is the way.

Why are you forgetful? Why are you clumsy? Why are you unable to concentrate? You are using your mind and its thoughts to its maximum capacity thinking and thinking about things that are in the past or in the future which you have no control over or avoiding thinking thoughts which simply cannot be done. Why? Because you are in the present. It is impossible to solve a problem which has already passed or has yet to be in place. Therefore, your mind is fighting over itself, unable to solve a problem it simply cannot have the power to solve. Let it go. No matter how painful it is, accept it and let it go. Nothing can be done. Live in the present. That is all you have whether you live to tomorrow or in the many years to come. You are always constantly experiencing the present here and now, whether you can be aware of it or not. You can be, but you have to choose to be. Does it mean you just ignore very real problems in the world and in your life? No. You simply prioritize it according to where you are and what you have to do.

If you are going to buy some oranges, you are going to buy oranges. You weigh it, give the cash or payment to the seller, and take it home. This is what you have to do. In the middle of it, other thoughts may come up naturally which are unrelated to the task at hand. This is okay, as long as you are able to bring back the focus to what is being done. If your mind is distracted constantly in this scenario, thinking about those who wronged you in the past or some movie you watched etc, guess what happens. You might go to the wrong shop, you might drop the oranges, you might lose the money or lose the change, all because you were not focused on the task at hand that is right in front of you. These kinds of tasks will come up again and again and again. Today it may be buying oranges. Tomorrow it might be handling your own shop or making an important payment. It could even be meeting an important person. The principle of focus stays the same. You do the task at hand by focusing on what has to be done.

Mind is constantly going to the most painful and negative no matter what you do? Get some sleep. Get back and realize it is not you. Your mind has thoughts of its own. You do not have to bother with it, fight it or care about it if you do not agree with it. Just ignore it like some crazy guy on the streets.

When thinking back at past events you normally think back, try seeing from an observant but non-judgmental perspective, where you are not harsh on yourself and you are not blaming others. You just see and let it be, fully accepting what happened. Look back as if you are seeing someone who is not you. Understand the full context and scenarios. This will not give you immediate release but will be important as you go along. The more you look back observantly, the more you will be set free.

If you are constantly in fear and anxiety, how can you decide so quickly whether this is not for you? If you could see that there is a path beyond this where you would not just be living a better life, but you would also see things completely differently, and you might even be confused in the future why you thought the way you do right now. That awareness, until you get it, you must trust the process.

Einstein said doing the same thing over and over again is insanity. Do not be insane. You have been emotionally addicted and stayed in your comfort zone for too long. You have to take risks and be uncomfortable, fail, get embarrassed, be laughed at, be not taken seriously, be ignored, but also potentially be listened to, be taken seriously, be respected, be looked up to, if you want to change your situation. In the short term they are painful and might seem threatening, but always look at the long term. You fail today but you can always try tomorrow.

Feel your emotions out. It is okay to feel bad or angry. But think about this. When you first pick up a dumbbell, it hurts. But the 10th time, 50th time, 100th time? Is it still going to hurt? Just like physical muscles, there are also mental muscles and social muscles. All of these are skills you can develop. If you cannot develop them at all for whatever reason, fully accept it and do the next thing you can do, whatever it is. Do not simply give up just like that. You at least get experience and new awareness through trying or even getting good at something. When you don't do it, you get nothing. And for sure, if you are reading this book, you obviously do not want "nothing". You want to make a change, which is possible for everyone.

Socializing

Having low social skills and being shy is not necessarily a bad thing since a lot of it has to do with your environment and context. It is all about where you are and who you are surrounded by. At the same time, if it really is a problem, it will reduce as you take risks and cut out your bad habits. Once you have achieved something (even if it is small like finally doing one push up or 10 push-ups), you will build momentum.

Personally, I learnt to make friends and socialize through making amateur short films (asking peers like cousins and friends to help me to be part of my film, even though I was still shy). When they were impressed by what I was able to put on screen, they got curious and helped me. Through this, I met many folks. Obviously, there were downsides to this as well. It did not always work out and it stopped working as much as it did as I entered mid to late teens. Most of my original friends got uninterested or left the city. There were a few who even resented being a part of my films. But that comes about with anything in life. There even came a point where literally nobody wanted to be part of my films or even watch anything I was putting out. Thus, I could not socialize, meaning I ended up having no friends.

This is why you do not get stuck to just one hobby or identity. Do different things. People are weird. They would complain that everybody is the same and does the same boring thing. When someone comes along and tries something different, and that person does not fit into their perfect mold of what that difference should be, they will reject it, and essentially isolate that person. In the end, they get nothing. No one gets anything of value. Some constructive feedback and positive reinforcement could have encouraged that guy to continue and do better

things for that group/community. But due to the alienation, that guy is only going to resent those people for not supporting him. Or he might just move on and not look back.

However, you do not have to be that guy and you also do not have to be that group. Reject this regular consensus and actions. Do what you have to do, take risks. As expected, taking risks comes with failure and rejection. There are 7 billion people on this Earth. Do not die for the approval of 10-100 people. It is going to push you to madness, or the herd which forces you to just be like one of them. Back in the caveman era, small tribes were important and if you were ostracized after doing something the community does not approve of, you were pretty much dead. It does not work like that nowadays. You can live alone and be at peace with it. You can also befriend different people who are outside your community or general location. You are not restricted anymore. Understand that. Everybody is different. No use in hating. Talk to people you vibe with and that is it.

A tip for socially anxious people. If you are surrounded in a room full of people you don't know or don't know that well, relax. Tell yourself that it is okay if you only talk to the people you know there. Tell yourself that it is okay to feel nervous, shy or afraid. Keep your body relaxed and your mind clear. Then, with less effort, you would not really feel intimidated to go and approach people. First, approach the people your friends are talking to or know. Then, approach new people who are sitting by themselves with more relaxation in your mind. Remember that it is okay if you cannot approach people at all or feel too afraid. Nothing good comes from being hard on yourself. Instead, relax. Do it without pressure.

There are a lot of things I'm afraid to say in public. But who is this public? What am I afraid of? Why am I afraid of what they have to say? It is not like they like or care about me anyway. Why should I hold onto this tiny chance that things would change and everyone will accept me one day as their own? After all, I am only going to be on this Earth for some time. Same could be said about everyone else. In the end, all these materialistic achievements in this world are temporary (fame, land, money, sex, respect). You are going to die one day and so are your children and grandchildren.

Look at all these people. Trying to constantly get validation from others. Do you truly think they are happy? Truly, the one who constantly relies on validation of strangers and people they barely know will be miserable from their rejection and have temporary pleasure from their likes. It is so temporary that there is almost no real value.

Accept people as they are, and if opposition has to come, fight for yourself, not to change the other person but to protect yourself and those close to you.

Forgive your enemies. Learn from mistakes. Accept your circumstances. Take responsibility. Be free. Take control of yourself. Do not give control to random individuals. Do not give control to base desires.

This person thinks this. That person thinks that. This person hates this. That person hates that. This is the best ever. That's the best ever. He is the greatest of all time. She is the greatest of all time. This is the worst thing of all time. He is the worst. She is the worst. All of these are noise. Unnecessary to engage. Engage for a short time if you are curious but quickly leave before it takes up more time than your real work or passion. There are always different opinions and discussions going on in real life

and on the Internet (mostly the Internet). Only very few are valid and productive.

Stop the gossip immediately as it only makes you and your mind weak, and you give power to other people's happenings and surroundings rather than your own. If jealousy is there, question why it is there and accept it. However, realize it is subjective. What is outside has nothing to do with you personally and everything to do with the outside world. Your inner world is what matters in these situations, as surely the person with a peaceful mind and heart will not need to feel jealous (even if he does, he will not let it control him). If jealousy does arise, it is a temporary feeling which passes away as soon as it comes.

Bad habits are not just drinking and smoking. Talking badly about others all the time is also a bad habit. Gossiping and assuming unnecessary things about people is also a bad habit. Wallowing in self-pity and hating the world constantly and past events that are long gone are also bad habits. The present is what you got. Do not waste anymore time on activities which don't bring yourself to growth (mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually).

Stretch out and pump out your chest instead of looking down all the time. Stretch your arms and shoulders back as naturally as possible and look up at people's eyes, even if it is hard. Breathe in and out fully. Eventually it comes naturally, and will not be intimidating. For sure it is the way of the world, and you will be better off for it. Speak with a cleared throat and voice, help those in need while keeping to yourself what is personal. Be free of gossip.

Breathe in fully and breathe out fully. Eventually it will come naturally to you and fuel your system. You need that for both physical exertion and mental exertion.

Do not ever look down upon those with less awareness than yourself. Looking down upon others is again borne out of insecurity which comes from the ego. Let them be, for your purpose and path in life is different than theirs. You have no idea what is in store for them. Neither should you be worried, unless their behavior directly affects yours, by which case you must act and speak in the way they will understand. You have to be focused on your own path first. Worry about others afterwards, where you can help people from a higher awareness.

Learn to say “yes” and learn to say “no”. Both are important. If something is not truly bringing you to your ultimate goal, say “no”. If something does not align with your values but is “fun”, say “no”. If some opportunity that aligns with your value comes and you're able to take it, say “yes”.

Beware of people who say, “I'm not taking advantage of you” and “I'm a nice guy” or “I'm a funny guy” etc. Normal healthy people do not have to say that to you. They will be proven through their actions and natural character.

Self-praise is insecurity. Self-pity/degrading is also insecurity. Do not fall victim to it and also do not listen to people who constantly do this. It is not your responsibility to help them. If they see your strong character and actions, there is a chance they get influenced by that for good. But do not bet on it. Only help those who want to be helped. Those who constantly complain but don't appreciate help are better to be left alone.

Listen, but do not comment. Perhaps they really are in a horrible situation, and they simply want to vent. Respect that. However, if you do not feel comfortable, do not hesitate to reduce the interaction. Certain people require professional help. You cannot help them all the way through as help might not be in your hands.

Learn to listen. You learn so much through listening to someone's life, experience and stories. The moment you cut someone off while they are talking (or just ignore that you cut them off and never bother to listen to them), you lose that opportunity and a chance of deeper connection. Obviously, you cannot be friends with everyone as not everyone will be your cup of tea. And certainly when someone is saying the same thing over and over again, they must be interrupted to not waste time.

Quit the constant commentary and advice. Not *everything* needs your comment. In fact, most things do not. The world operates beyond mere words, a few observations, and emotional reactions here and there. Certainly, they have power, but not exactly in the way you think. You have to live beyond it in order for a higher understanding.

If someone comes to you with what they do or an idea, understand where they are coming from and ask questions. It is much wiser and a sign of character when you ask insightful questions to make them think where they might be wrong rather than simply cutting them off and giving advice. Through questions, you have also demonstrated that you are listening and are giving them the attention they deserve (which would make them more interested in listening to your advice/they could show some idea that they have which you can learn something from).

Do not simply impose your ego on this world. Instead, impose your love and be aligned with the world and your true self.

Be careful of those who use their looks and charisma to get what they want. See beyond their beauty. See beyond their words. How would you feel or react if that same person did not have that charisma or beauty? Would you take up that person's offers if they were a machine? Or if they were just a regular person? Do not be influenced so easily by looks and charisma. See what is being said and asked of you. See who that person is

when you ignore the looks and charisma. If you think those are more/most important, be prepared for a rude awakening, or even constant/repeated suffering.

You can have real conversations and deep connections with people when you are not constantly trying to impress the other person. Do not try to impress. Be the real thing. Show your real self. If people do not like you for that, then it is good they let you know. Move on.

Best way to convince people? Make sure the person has something to get from it (whether it is money, or something they are looking for). And make sure you are actually giving them what they want. Otherwise, expect a strained relationship. Not everything in life is transactional (friendships should not be transactional, family should not be transactional). But most things are whether you realize it or not. It does not mean you keep your guard up all the time but you gauge it in the back of your mind. The quicker you realize and accept this, the better.

Do not look down or criticize those who live by material wealth and status, for they do not know any better. You live your life and they live theirs.

In this world, whether you realize it or not, everyone has some value and purpose. It would be hard to see, but once you come to a better understanding, the value would become visible. They might not be valuable to you, but they might be valuable to someone or something. Not everyone can be a monk. Not everyone should. Not everyone can be a social butterfly. Not everyone should. There is value in everything as we all give signals and help each other one way or another.

Learn and understand the social games people play. Without understanding them, you might get played in the way you do not want. It is just part of being aware of the world at the end of the day. You do not have to play any of these games since you will have to be above it. But through understanding them, you will be able to do what is necessary, and make the right decisions.

Understand the context of the place you are in and the event you are in. Do not expect to relax and have fun at a funeral. Do not expect a serious/thoughtful conversation at a place where everybody is drunk (although that is a rare possibility). Do not expect people to talk and get to know you when they are all caught up with their own lives & friends. Do not be afraid to keep your circle of friends small. You may not agree 100% with your close friends on everything. But mutual respect goes a long way.

Loose lips sink ships. Do not go telling your deepest darkest secrets to everyone you meet or sometimes even your close friends. It is only going to come back and bite you later when something you built comes crashing down because a person you told your secret to spreads it with no context (and even with context it might still be bad). See, everyone makes mistakes, and everyone has had moments and instances which were out of their control, which caused mental and emotional scars whether small or big. This is okay. It might not be normal. But it is okay. You have the power to process it and deal with it to make your life better. Write down diaries and notes, and keep it safe. Or you may even write stuff and throw it away. I am not advocating for not being vulnerable. But there is a time and place for it. There are so many who would take advantage of your failings and dark parts of yourself. The way to come out of that? Own up to it. Accept it. Rise above it. Process it to

become a better version of yourself.

If you are constantly interacting with people only in the hopes of getting something (whether it be food, money, sex, fame etc), then you are not being genuine. You are not being pure. Interact with people because it is fun, and because it is important to socialize (to a certain degree). It is nice and cool to know and learn about people and their unique lives and backgrounds. This might seem impractical for some due to business or certain restrictions in their environment. However, you have to be at least genuine and honest within yourself, and it would certainly come out honestly.

You as a human are always changing, growing, evolving, whether you realize it or not. You are more than just some atoms and cells. You are a conscious being with the power to alter your mind, become the master of your cells, and eventually your surroundings. The best way to do that? Understand your mind front and back. Your fears, insecurities, strengths, abilities, weaknesses, traumas, repressed memories & you have to be able to process it. Everything. When you understand yourself and master yourself, no one and I mean no one can manipulate you or control you as you are fully aware of yourself. You could also see holes in people's arguments and the games they play to get what they want. If it truly benefits your true goals and self, play along. But if it does not, respectfully walk away.

When you speak, speak clearly and with a full voice. Breathe from your belly, look up into the eyes, keep your chest forward and your shoulders back, and stand/sit up straight. This will make you speak with confidence. Do not repeat the same thing over and over again. Recognize it in yourself if you have this problem. Listen more than simply interrupting or speaking your mind. When you are listening, do not look

away ignoring the person as if he/she is not important. Look into their eyes, and understand what is being said. If not, ask questions and try to understand. The amount of richness in your conversations will be tenfold. The other person might not do this, but that is okay. You might be able to inspire them to be as confident as you, or they would trust you, coming to you for help.

The constant craving to be validated and liked by others is the cause of so much suffering and pain in the world. Think about it.

If you are constantly afraid to speak your mind and just be your true self, then they are not your true/close friends. This is okay most of the time since you cannot be friends with everyone in a deep way (and let's be honest. You really do not need to either). But if you consider someone your true/close friend, you have to be your true self with your mask off and your true personality. Personality does change over time and you express yourself in different ways at different times, but you have to see the now.

Who are you now? What do you want to be now? How do you truly want to be now? Be assertive in what you want. If you do not agree with what your friend says or does, call him/her out. Do not please people like this by putting on a fake persona, and get upset that they do not respect you or walk all over you. What did you even expect?

Nothing wrong in having an opinion. But it is a massive waste of time and lack of character to have an opinion on things you barely know (which is most things). It is better to research and understand what it is. Otherwise, do not talk about it and have strong opinions about it as if you know everything about that topic. Also do not take the opinions of people who do not know much about the topic seriously.

Listen as much as you talk. Talk less than you listen. Walk away respectfully when you are constantly being interrupted or ignored (unless it is work related). At the same time, gauge what people are talking about and what the actual room is. Do not be surprised to be ignored when you are bringing up things that are out of the tone of the place. You have to do what you believe in and what is in your values. Nothing wrong in standing up for yourself when you are an adult. If you do not stand up for yourself, someone else more powerful/assertive than you will make you stand up for them. Do you think that is a good way to live in any capacity? Obviously, if values align fully, you can follow the leader. It is natural. But set who your leader is. Realize who your leader is. Do not just follow simply due to peer pressure. And when you do, do not be surprised when you get screwed over.

This person ignores you now? This person does not take you seriously now? It is all a matter of time. You develop yourself and then talk to people or approach people. Things would seem a lot less intimidating. Remember. Do not be afraid of anyone. You have the courage within you. You can bring it out through discipline and building emotional resilience.

Do not pass judgments before you know the whole story. Do not pass judgments on a person you barely know. It might feel emotionally satisfying in the moment but it is merely a waste of time. However, if it directly affects you, then you can make judgments in order to affect change. Even then, do not get into emotionally charged decision making or comments. Think before you act. See from an overall perspective before making decisions.

It is natural to follow the behavior and actions of those we see everyday, whether it's in real life or the screen. If you have a role model, there is

nothing wrong in imitating him or her. It is good in fact. You are not copying anyone. You are not cringe. It is good. However, try to find a role model in real life that you can see everyday or most of the time. You do not have to idolize that person. You just have to learn and follow what they do, mainly the mannerisms and behaviors. Things will also quickly start to make sense why they do what they do and why people react a certain way with them. You may not be able to do it exactly like them, and you might even make some mistakes. It is okay. Take what you see and do it in your own way in the way you feel like, and learn along the way. Obviously, be respectful and mindful of people around you (this is why you should follow those who are in fact respectful and mindful).

Career And Wealth

The drive will drive you to drive more and grow more and that growth will drive you to even more drive and even more growth. The only end to growth is if you don't want to do it anymore.

Do not expect real results from fake actions and behavior.

Consistency is always better than sudden bursts of motivation.

Put in the work. The full work of that day. And then do what you feel like doing in your free time.

Work in the modern world is not exactly ideal for what you want to do. Dream jobs are few and far between. Long hours are expected and no free time is left to do anything else as we are exhausted. What is the best course of action then? If money is there, then move to a different job. If not, accept fully your circumstances as a part of life and do whatever is possible to increase your understanding of your surroundings and your world, not to increase productivity necessarily but to be more fulfilled.

It is wise to fail a lot at the early stages and learn from the mistakes rather than getting too caught up in your comfort zone. Try everything that you need to try, make mistakes, keep doing different things and different methods until you figure out what sticks. Remember. Mistakes and failures are part of the process. Not the end.

What value am I providing that company when I work for them? And how is that valuable to the world? Does it matter? What matters if you sell drugs and never get caught as opposed to the person who does legitimate business but is not respected by those around him?

Can AI take over humanity? Will AI become smarter than humans? What benefit does an AI get from doing that? In any case, we humans are always humans and AI will always be AI. We cannot be the same. Even if they hypothetically take over, they will not and cannot be the same as us. We humans have souls. AI does not.

There are times when I consider the bare essentials of human beings and what is really the most important. Who produces the most value. And I come to the conclusion that those who produce essentials like food, clothing, and foster/bring in communities produce the most amount of value.

The Pareto Principle is very important to remember. 20% of your day, you will achieve 80% of your productivity. 80% of your day, you will achieve 20% of your productivity. This is normal and there's nothing to be ashamed of. Definitely plan a routine/schedule for your work (even if you're working yourself/freelance). This can be the same for other aspects of life.

It is very damaging to set a rule/standard that you have to have everything set during your early 20s. Let's be honest here. People do not go through perfect lives. Not everyone has or has had the right role models/mentors to guide them when they were going in the wrong direction in life when they were young. Nobody can predict a sudden illness or disability within a family. Nobody can predict abuse or trauma, which sets people back in ways that are sometimes unthinkable. Even if they manage to become successful, there is this expectation before and during that they need to deal with and hold up in front of others. What for? What is the point? Life is not a race. Everyone's journey is unique and that is okay. In fact, it is boring to be successful without much hard work. People who did not work hard will not see the value in their

achievements or success.

Be very wary of those who claim to be millionaires and flash a fancy lifestyle. Be wary when they ask you to join a course so you can be just as successful as them. This world is filled with illusions and smokes/mirrors. You do not know 99% of people's real backgrounds/stories or what they have been through.

Having perspective goes a long way. No matter how successful someone is or how well put together they seem, they all have some kind of insecurity.

Young success should be the exception. Not the rule. When you are young, it is the age to make mistakes, take risks and learn. Even the young millionaire or a millionaire of any age might be jealous of the billionaire and wonder how to get there. And the cycle never stops. Do not be controlled by greed. Let rich people be rich. You carry on and do the hard work. There is no such thing as easy money. Even passive income (that is legit) takes time and effort (and a bit of money most likely) to set up. Do not be discouraged by hard work. Willingness to work hard and learn difficult things sets you apart from the general population.

Look how Hollywood celebrities divorce multiple times, getting into addictions, and falling off. Look at the young millionaire pop artist becoming a drug addict when they grow up and some even quitting their supposedly successful careers altogether for a peace of mind. They are still more successful and happy and could do a lot more things with their time? Do you still not realize it is all in the mind? Regardless of wealth, it is you who decides whether to be satisfied or happy. Nobody will ever do it for you. Everyone is concerned about their own lives and problems at the end of the day and those who constantly bring up and talk about

other people in the way of gossip are not people you should be concerned about in the first place (their opinion should not matter as they themselves are not people of character).

If you want to be productive truly, realize that you cannot be productive every hour of your workday or even work week. Do not beat yourself up for procrastinating or essentially doing nothing for a little too long. It does not help. Instead, be conscious of your brake time. Be conscious and accept fully that you are having fun. Do not attach arbitrary negative emotions and adjectives to it. It is not helpful. After that time is up, get back to work and only do the work.

Even those with neurotic problems like ADHD and OCD are able to find ways to understand themselves and be productive, and eventually come to a peace of mind. Nothing is impossible. Accept your condition fully and then do what has to be done.

If there is no greater goal to be achieved through your material wealth, then be prepared to crash and burn. After you make that amount of money and show off to your peers who doubted you, then what? Nothing was achieved other than a temporary boost to the ego that will be gone as soon as it entered.

If you want financial freedom, ask why that is deep down inside. It is a great goal but each have their own interpretation of it. Some want to live without being controlled by their family, some want to do unethical illegal things freely, some want to contribute back to the world.

Age is arbitrary when it comes to understanding and success, especially after 17 or 18 or even more than that. Age also does not determine maturity. You have to let the past die and do what needs to be done presently. However, wrong understanding of the past can have drastic consequences (especially if it's ego based).

How to stay productive and with a calm mind? Stay out of your house as much as possible, or at the very least outside your room. You cannot be at the same place all the time and expect to feel different. It is insanity. You must do new things in new places to reinvigorate your mind and body. This is why people travel. You do not have to travel to another country as not everyone can afford it. However, you can go to a new place in your city or town. You can try an activity you have not tried yet. You can try learning a new skill. Even if you fail, you will think from a new perspective and see new things that you haven't thought of.

Your success is predicated on how much you are able to focus on one thing at a time and complete it. Do not try to multitask even if it looks productive. Do one thing at a time in the best way possible. It is always easy to get distracted. No doubt. However, if you have systems in place to bring back your focus, you will not have to worry about it. It is not wrong to lose focus once in a while. However, you have to bring back that focus. Once it sways, bring it back. It will happen often. Do not worry. Just bring it back and do what you have to do.

You will feel much better in the end after you complete the task than when you lose the focus and go off on what seems interesting in the moment. Remember. It's probably not important or useful to go do that "research" or experience that high from that "song" or "movie clip". It is not important to what you are doing right now. Do not beat yourself up over having these ideas and thoughts though. Just let it be. You just do not engage with it the way you normally do.

Talk less. Do more. Show yourself through action. Stop saying "I will do this" and "I will do that". You do not need opinions and validation from everyone. It is counterproductive. Unless you are actually doing that thing, you are wasting your time. Do first. Make mistakes. Learn from the

mistakes and course correct. Keep doing it until you do it right and with skill level that you have increased through experience.

Those who expect to be great at something in a single day are bound to fail. It might be easier to have started when you were smaller or at least a long time ago. But time is not going to go back. It can never go back. It is always going forward. What are you going to do right now? That is the only thing that is important. Do you feel jealous of someone's success? It's okay to feel certain emotions. But do not look at them for some time. Just do what you have to do and need to do. Stop watching them, seeing their posts and stories on social media. It does not matter. If they are enjoying themselves, let them enjoy themselves. Their life and achievements do not and should not matter to you. Only thing that matters is you and your life. You want to reach YOUR potential. Not THEIRS. So, do what you have to do.

Completely ignore others who are more successful than you or having more fun than you. Also ignore anyone who does not have a care in their lives, and are living aimlessly, or are all-talk-and-no-show, even if they are your best friend. You only got this life. Make the decision now to do what has to be done, regardless of how hard it is. If it is difficult, it is good. The challenge will force you into growth, and you will be more than satisfied with it.

You do not need the perfect business model or idea. You need one that works and one that you can test out with a low cost. Start as small as possible and scale up.

Sell cheap or used products that you own at lower than the market price. You will quickly learn what works and does not work and why customers buy what they buy. Trying to sell expensive products from the start to make money might not be the easiest. Sell cheap things first. Get used to

selling (whether it is locally or globally). Then you will be more tuned to selling when it comes to bigger and bigger stuff.

Do not look at the result. Look at the process. Most people's processes are boring. It is not sexy or fun. That is why most do not succeed. They go into business, becoming an athlete, or an artist, expecting it to be all fun and games. It is not. It cannot be. It is work. Hard stressful work. If you happen to be an artist, you have to believe hard in your purpose for singing and performing (that is more than simply your talent or making easy money), that you will go through all the trials and errors to get to the biggest position. If you want to be a filmmaker, no matter how much time it takes and whatever lack of support and funding you go through, you must believe so much in the story you are telling that you are more than happy to make these sacrifices to get the story on screen, since the story is bigger than you and is more important than your difficulties today (whatever they may be).

Consistency might seem boring on the surface or even when you start out. But when you have good days or even achieve flow state on a regular basis, nothing can beat that satisfaction.

Let's be honest. You don't actually need to become a millionaire to be happy. You don't need to be in a relationship to be happy. You don't need tons of friends to be happy either. When you are doing something meaningful and purposeful everyday, that will give you satisfaction automatically.

“I don't have this. That's why I'm not successful.” “I don't have the support of this specific community. That's why I'm a failure.” Please stop these kinds of sentences and words! Do you really think your complaints will end when you are successful? You will just be complaining about other things. Imagine you do have all you think you need and you have

the community support, whose success is it? Theirs or yours? Nobody gives a damn and nobody needs to. Give what people want/need. Understand what people want/need. If you don't know, find out. Do not assume. Talk to different people about their passions they have and what difficulties they face and solve them/help them in the ways you know how to. It does not align with what you want to do? Then do not be concerned with becoming "successful" or "famous".

Motivator for success? If you were traumatized or had a difficult upbringing, why not use that anger and sadness to do the right thing? Why not use that deep pain to build up your body to its maximum strength and flexibility? Why not use it to understand your mind and come to terms with the dark aspects of it? Why let your trauma win? Why let the bad people from your past win? That is cringe. You are a warrior whether you realize it now or not. You will not even do anything to prevent whatever happened to you or your loved ones if you give up and stay weak. Pain is a powerful motivator. Use that pain of living a mediocre and passive life to avoid it as much as possible.

Do not do it for applause or claps. Don't. Just don't. Always always ALWAYS do it for a higher purpose. If you get claps in the middle, accept it. But do not hold on to it too much. Just as you should not hold on to defeat and failure. Keep moving forward.

Lastly, you are not a failure in life until you give up. There are so many different opportunities passing you by everyday. It might most likely not be what you were originally passionate about or envisioned, but you will not know whether it works for you unless you try. You may be surprised how good you are at it and that might keep you going.

Relationships

Why do you have to be so afraid of what one girl is going to say? You do not know her and she does not know you. If you asked respectfully, you did not act so called creepy. If she said no, you accept it and never press on further. Do not spite or frown as that shows a lack of character and weakness on your part, which makes her more happy she did not like you or date you. If she said yes, you continue with alertness and reality. Assess whether she is the right fit for you but never criticize harshly those whose values do not align with your own. You respectfully state your disinterest and walk away. It is called being the bigger man.

Choosing a good life partner would be the most important decision in your life (if you are the marriage type, which is what I would recommend). A partner might either bring you to the next level in life and awareness or wreck it apart for the next 20 or so years. Looks fade quickly so do not just choose based on looks. Also do not choose based simply because that person is literally the only person who is available. If the values and personality align, then good. If not, then you are better off as single. Choose someone with similar values and sense of humor. At the same time, do not be discouraged by having to work hard to be the best version of yourself. Having a good life partner is not the end goal. You have to continue to learn new skills, stay healthy and make sacrifices in your marriage. You could only be fully aware who fits right with you when your mind is clear.

If your goal in your love life is to just find one good partner, why does it matter if you have been in a relationship before or not? So what if you have always been single and have not had any romantic or intimate experiences? It should not matter. Mutual respect and understanding

goes a long way.

Do not take problems you have with your family and project it onto someone else. It is counterproductive and only causes further problems. Either you talk it out with your family, or if they do not listen for whatever reason, just let them be and be the best that you have to be. You do not get anything through trying to change every person who hurt you. You only transform by getting over and gaining strength, no matter how hard it is. The road is brighter than you can imagine on the other side when you work through your issues. You can help people just like yourself who never got the love they needed. It is the most empowering thing in the world.

There is no such thing as an incel (unless in rare circumstances like disability or serious mental issues). Even those people have ways. With some money, you could groom yourself well, you can ask girls out, you can ask your friends if they know someone who is single. For some, they might even go to prostitutes, but this is highly inadvisable due to the fact that many virgin/love starved men want relationships/companionship and not casual sex). You can almost never get it from prostitutes.

Just like the movie or story you vicariously lived through which you are sad is over, but in fact it is because you know deep down it is not your life and is in fact a fiction/figment of the author or filmmaker's imagination, or the filmmakers living a perceived much better life than you and having more fruitful/interesting experiences.

Players and cheaters lie and manipulate to enjoy sex (however they are as bad as misogynists who cannot get laid as they can never show their true selves to the women). How could these players call themselves anything more than actors hiding behind a mask? How are they that much different than the virgin misogynist online who is desperate to get laid?

The only difference between these two are their success with women, with both ending up as human wastes whose lives are miserable without putting on a show.

The so-called nice guys and incels have forgotten or never realized that sex is simply an impulse that can be controlled (not ignored totally but accepted and controlled). You could live your whole life never having sex or even masturbating. Religious people do it. Monks do it. Ones who truly follow through their celibacy are able to transform that energy into productive activities and go inwards. Sex is a tool for creation. Sexual energy too is a tool for creation. As a person, a human being, you have everything you need. You can live without sex. Food, water and sleep are a must. Friendships and social contact are important to mental health. But sex can be controlled. However, be careful. It is not that you should never engage in sex or relationships. It simply means you should not merely be controlled by it, and not finding it currently has no alteration in your inherent value, which can always be put into other hobbies, interests and work.

It is not sexual repression. It is sexual protection. Images of nudity and flesh are sacred. Images of sex are an attack on the psyche. Sex might sell. Does not mean that it is a good thing. It is everywhere? Do not look at it. Avoid it. But accept that it is there. Do not hate the players. Hate the game. Temptations are everywhere to distract you from your real self and goals. I am not asking you to reject sex (which is very different from pornography and sensitive images of beautiful men and women). Just reject the images of sex and commodification of it. It is an attack on the psyche.

Engage in casual sex? Tell the honest truth. What good does it bring you other than pleasure within that particular moment or a few minutes? A

boost to your ego? A validation of your body? A validation of your character? An appreciation of the mask you cowardly wear if you are a liar? It is meaningless isn't it? If sex for you was so natural, why wear an unnaturally produced plastic condom made from crude oil? Why take birth control? Why take the morning-after pill? And if done without protection, why risk the chance of AIDS, syphilis, HPV, Hepatitis, yeast infection etc? You could ask me why I should care if consenting adults do it. However, my question is for you to truly consider why you actually have to do it and what good it really brings, other than a waste of time for some minutes of pleasure and pathetic ego boosts?

The commodification of people as if you could throw them away, not care about them is an inherently beastly act. Sex should be done with respect and consideration to the individual (mutual respect and emotional understanding). One would for sure not be sleeping around with tons of people if this was done.

After that ex, after that hookup, after this or that girl, what did you really achieve? What value did you bring to the world? Some lame overpowered memories for yourself? You are going to die one day the same as the virgin who is deathly afraid of having any kind of contact with the opposite gender. None of this matters after death as it equalizes all. So quit bragging with that false sense of achievement. We are all equal in death.

The Art And The Artist

Where is value coming from? Especially with art and media? Who is giving that money? Where is that money coming from? What value does what someone does provide? What use is money and why does it make people so emotional or apathetic? Where does it all go? What is the point of it all? An oil barren drills from the land and sells it to people who want to use that oil for fuel, which is then sold to homes and other factories or work. All those people need entertainment and leisure to live in peace and have something to talk about to their friends or family. They see entertainment and leisure which itself becomes a huge business with a profit motif. If it benefits somebody, there is nothing wrong, right?

What if there is corruption and scandals in that? What if powerful people take advantage of artists just like they take advantage of workers? What is this exactly and who exactly is this benefiting? What is the money that is earned for the people at the very top going to be used for and for what purpose? How is the everyday man related in all this and can he even do anything? Why bother? It is unnecessary to think. But money, work, and value provided, value taken, all become an arbitrary mess in the vast scheme of things in outer space.

An idea is resilient. Because an idea can form and grow in your mind long after you have heard it. Even if you initially dislike or disagree with something, you might eventually come around to it, because an idea stays and is just waiting for the right time to manifest itself. Do not worry about not being the best version of yourself right now. Because the idea is like a seed that needs time to grow into a flower, or even a tree.

Write and express yourself in order to make yourself stronger. Not weaker. You should feel empowered and enlightened by your own art. Not a prisoner to your own thoughts and ideas. It is more tragic to be a prisoner to your own mind and impulses, than it is to be a prisoner of someone or something else.

One must be careful in not letting their lives be led without meaning, as all it takes is for a bad actor to come in and influence you, while you yourself have been seemingly physically and mentally healthy up until that point. When there is no higher meaning to your life, why work out or have better mental health? There is no meaning or purpose anyway. We are all just cells and atoms in a small rock in the vast outer space. What we do is insignificant in the grand scheme of things. Yet, it makes a monumental significance within us when we believe in something strongly. It moves us and sways us without logic or reason (whether it be philosophy, movies, music, or food).

Why do people suffer? Why were we put on this Earth and constantly suffer misery? While answering the question of the existence of God is a separate story, the world as mentioned previously is not personal. It cannot care about you nor would it try to sabotage you. Other people do. The clutches of those exploitative people are also impersonal, as they are caught by their own impulses and insecurities. Surely they are weak at heart and mind. Regardless of whether they are rich or poor, they are a prisoner of their own mind, unable to escape the cycle of their own misery. So, should we just accept and not do anything about it? Absolutely not. We must do what we think is right and express ourselves honestly. If there is too much at stake, ask what exactly is at stake and confirm through reality whether that is really true instead of making assumptions in your own head, which is a world of its own.

Movies and stories are a medium. Not the holy grail or the thing itself. It is a carrier for ideas, imagination, agendas, personal vendettas, likes and dislikes, culture etc of the filmmakers. However, they cannot replace real life and the world. It is only a representation of the world. Getting caught up inside it without realizing this would be catastrophic and cause you to go around in circles. Perhaps it can be a window into the life and mind of someone or a group of people, and it can even be a sort of an instruction manual on how to do this or that. Whether you follow it or not subconsciously or consciously is something you have to think about when watching a film. And you cannot live a life if you are constantly reading instruction manuals or consuming experiences without doing anything.

Nobody can be perfect. However, if our examples of “great men” are just “complex people” who engaged in debauchery, cheated on their wives, but also made great profound art, it puts a strained meaning behind what it is to be great. What does this “great” influence when these men are so flawed? Why are we so surprised that those who follow them end up like them more or less? Take only the good in them and ignore the bad? If the “bad” wasn't life destroying and destructive. Humans in general or at least in this day and age are easily influenced. We follow what we see and even if we don't do it consciously, we do it unconsciously.

Signposts, symbols and logos are not the thing in and of itself. They are just that. Signposts. Even this book you are reading is a signpost. It is there to help you, but not to be the end all be all. Nothing could really be the end all be all. It is you who has to make use of this to the best of your abilities. So don't mistake the signpost for the thing itself. You have to put it into practice. Theory can only get you to a certain starting point.

Films are inherently a manipulative art form (same could be said about other art forms). But the way films capture sight, sound and feelings through moving images in a dark room is immense. If we are not aware, it can capture you and make you obsess over something that is not real and cannot be real. Films or art shouldn't simply be to convey ideas and messages. They should make you feel, think and see the world in a much clearer and profound way. It cannot give meaning to existence in and of itself, but it can show or point to the meaning to the audience through the perception of the filmmaker.

You as an artist don't matter to the idea and themes being conveyed. What matters is the story. The writer must forget himself and write honestly and truthfully for the story, shedding his ego. Same way the filmmaker must bring images to the screen without the imposition of himself and act in service of the story being told. And the story being told, you are merely a tool/medium for the story. This is how you don't get caught up with ego. How is it possible to forget yourself exactly? It is not. However, the story and idea grows within the artist wanting to come out, just like a baby or a child. It has to be delivered/expressed. It does not mean it is you who expressed it. You are one of the many people in this world who had that idea but you were able to write it down and put it into being while others might have not had the time, interest or talent.

Werner Herzog said if you wanna be a filmmaker, you must read. Same goes for your concentration if you want to achieve any goal. Learn to read to take in information and process the materials. It allows you to concentrate on difficult tasks and absorb important information. Reading puts you at an active state where you must make the effort to read and understand what is being written as opposed to simply hearing something (although it may depend on different people. Some are more inclined to

reading and some are more inclined with listening. I fall into the former often times).

If you achieve a flow state, you will not be making ANY excuses. You will not have to “force” yourself. You will simply do what has to be done because you have to get it out. Your ego is not at play here. It is almost as if a force is summoning you to put words onto a page or a brush onto paint and then onto the canvas. It is a state that will not come to you immediately but can be fostered through repeated attempts over the course of days or months.

Wonder why the best films are old films from 50 years ago? It is not due to nostalgia but due to whether they stand the test of time. How much did they influence (audience and future filmmakers)? How well did they impact people in years to come? How does it emotionally connect with the audience? How does the themes and story come through? Just like that, great men are not always known immediately and great men who currently stand with us, might not be recognized or known until years later after their impact is felt and seen. At the same time, be very wary of those who call themselves great men and praise themselves constantly, and also while putting other people down. They are shallow and controlled by their own egos, which will lead to their own downfalls regardless of how talented and smart they are in other areas. Even if they are materialistically successful, they are not happy inside. Seeking validation, they praise themselves and reach outside.

The best way for the artist who has such a powerful influence over his audience through his work is to make art that shows his ideal. If you simply depict “reality”, you are not an artist (which let’s be honest, is almost impossible to capture exact reality). You are a documentarian (which is perfectly fine). But an artist must bring images and words that

impact and influence the viewers in a positive way, especially since art can influence people subconsciously. Those who constantly watch depressing films, videos and music, will for sure be depressed if he was not already. Those who watch comedies constantly may not automatically be better off, but at least they will not be hurt as badly as those who torture themselves through their depression, where they essentially achieve nothing through that suffering. Through showing an ideal man, an ideal world, an ideal scenario, an artist influences himself and the viewers to act in a way he wants. The impact, whether small or big, is still an impact nonetheless. Still, “depressing” films and art have their place. But it should not be the end-all-be-all.

Humans are social creatures who must depend on each other to survive. We cannot just be eating, clothing ourselves, sleeping and blocking everything out. We inherently require human interaction to live a sustainable life. Somehow, movies, video games, books, philosophy, religion, politics, all bring people together to interact and discuss things, which give individuals a sense of importance and value, which they then provide back one way or another.

However, at certain times, the so-called value goes towards one thing a little too much. Why is it that a movie costs millions and millions of dollars to make? Why is it that corporations take created works, market it, and sell it for their own profit, losing its meaning eventually in the end? What is the purpose achieved?

Your job may not always be to convince people. Sometimes, all you have to do is inspire, or steer the thought to a certain way through presenting ideas. The subconscious mind picks up a lot more things than you realize. And if they do not care, it is still okay.

Writer's block? Rewrite an existing story you already know in your own way. It gathers your thoughts and makes you see things in a different perspective. You do not have to publish it. But it's a good writing warm-up.

Recount something interesting from your own life that you found fascinating.

Change to a different style purposefully. Come back to the original style after you are done.

Just write whatever. Easier to edit than creating it from scratch. At least when you know what you do not want, you can find what you want through deduction.

When you do not write anything, there is nothing to correct or edit.

If you are always getting stuck, change your tools. Have a change of pace. It fires different neurons in your brain which makes you think differently and approach ideas differently.

Tips for staying off the Internet and computer for writers before bedtime? Write on a notebook from the middle of the day and write throughout whenever you get ideas, till night time. In the morning, convert said notes written on the notebook to the word processor of choice on the computer, without checking the Internet. It is difficult to stay off the Internet at night since we are relaxing ourselves. However, if we open up the computer to specifically work in the morning, it is a way to start off productively.

You lose nothing by producing a video or writing that story when you are starting out. Nobody cares whether it is good or bad. Just do what you want to do. The regret of not even trying will be *very* painful when you grow older.

You can never change the world. You might make some people slightly better. And that is still amazing. When enough people make the world slightly better through their actions and character, unleashing their full potential, we will be in the next phase of humanity sooner than later. Even if not, it does not matter.

Want to know the secret to making a masterpiece/work? Make tons of mistakes and attempts until you get good at it and learn. Do not spend too much money or other people's time when you start off. But as you go along, you should be able to do your own work so well that it becomes easier to get people to work with you (and even if you don't, you can still do some awesome work). Also, team projects are different from individual projects in terms of scope. Remember that, and don't put limits on yourself.

The purest art and works are done without the draw of money and fame. Instead, help people in ways you can without expectations. Be satisfied in your own process, consistency and discipline. In the future, people you help may even be curious and interested in your passion projects.

The tools you use are not the most important thing. You do not need the best and latest camera when you are starting out, and in fact even the most experienced use the camera that works best for them and not the one that is the latest. You also do not need to throw cash at the latest software that is super expensive. Start with what you got and make the best use of it. Upgrade when the work is getting stale or you yourself feel you are ready to do more. But either way, it is not simply in the tool. It is about who uses that tool. That has to be you.

The best case scenario is when your passion project aligns well with people's wants/needs. You have hit gold if you execute it. But if not, then do not be discouraged. You have to make it for you and you alone.

If you are able to express yourself and in the end feel satisfied, then it really does not matter if other people like it or validate it. What matters is it meant something for you, regardless of how esoteric/niche it was.

Do not share good moments and incidents immediately. Give yourself the time to think. See whether it is beneficial and respectful to yourself and others to share. How many times have we seen good news being shared too early and something going wrong? Especially when things have not gone through yet. Let us say you are making an independent film, it is much wiser to let people know your film after it is made than promoting it while you have not even finished writing the screenplay. So many variables take place up until a movie comes out and let's be honest, most screenplays do not even get fully written and most do not get made. Even big name directors cannot fund some of their passion projects.

So why not put your head down and finish the script first before promoting it? Why not make the film and finish the filming at least before sharing it around with everyone that you are making a film? It feels good doesn't it? To get validation. To hear, "Good job", "Congratulations", and "Good luck". Then remember the pain of the variables like actors' schedules, dispassionate individuals, lack of funding, people who are just complete jerks, your own over-ambition, and ego. Remember all this before you announce things. And then realize you must stop doing this for your ego and instead do it because there is an important story to tell. The importance of the story should drive you. Not your ego.

The Aware Man

Look from the head. Look above.

If you walk with your shoulders back, chest forward, and with a relaxed smile, what/who is there to be afraid of?

If you want to be more aware, with higher consciousness, you have to look above and free up your body. But of course, you also have to build your body with fitness and reduce all stiffness (to the best of your abilities). Live with higher consciousness, reduce digital overload. Embrace analogue (pen & paper etc.). Of course you might still have to use computers for your job and interact with friends on social media. But use it mindfully (only when needed and only for the purpose you came for. After it is done, do not use it, or only for a certain period of time like 10-15 minutes per day where you have to have all your interactions).

There is a reason why only a few people in this world are truly happy and successful. Not everyone can handle or better put, not everyone can grow to handle the friction around them as they work towards a huge goal.

Do not just dream. See the practical steps. See what needs to be done in as realistic a way as possible. And leave your emotions out of it. Just work on it and get into a flow state. That is the best way to achieve your goals. Minor/major setbacks? Look at it critically. Be honest with yourself to see what could have gone better and what you must do to improve. Fortune favors the calm and collected who take just enough action necessary and does not waste it on unneeded pettiness.

Wear clean clothes. Wash your face and hands when you enter your home. Wear a nice smelling scent that lasts long everyday. Make sure you clean every single part of your body well everyday with soap and water. Make sure you are fresh all the time even if you are just staying at home the whole day. You should not do any of this to impress others. You should do this to keep your sanity and well-being.

Practice tactile things (handwriting on pen and paper, drawing, building things through hand). I am saying this for hobbies. Not work related since your work might involve using a computer for sure. It makes you directly interact with the material world and create your impact on it. It feels more present than just doing things digitally or on a computer/phone.

Morning routine – dopamine detox? - How to start – No computer by your side – No phone by your side (set real alarm instead of your phone) – Look out through the window – Whatever you have to do in the toilet – Brush your teeth – Wash your face – Take shower – Breathe in and out fully – Do stretching – Start your day

Night routine – Do not stay out too late in the night – Finish dinner as early as possible – Quit watching movies/streaming services/video games etc – Read books/Journal your thoughts and feelings – Make sure your room is completely dark.

Dopamine detox does not mean you have to throw away all electronics and live like a hermit. You just do not let yourself be constantly stimulated. Instead, you let your mind wander and get bored. By being bored, you can think of new business ideas, stories, or even just see what you want to do and what you want your life to be like and why you want your life to be like that. Be careful of negative mind loops and thought patterns though. Re-read the chapters “Mindset” and “Mental Health”

for how.

Drink hot water mixed with some cold water. Get used to the sharp pain in your lips and throat (although be very careful not to take it fast. Take small sips slowly until you can take it in). It clears the throat and also your body.

Getting used to the bitter taste of black coffee and sitting down to work is better than just looking for the next big high in substances or other people.

A true great man does not need constant praise and admiration. He knows what he is doing and what he has to do and he will get joy through doing it for its sake. Validation of others comes and goes and everyone dies. But good deeds and impact you bring for generations last, just like planting a seed which will grow fruits for future generations.

What should a human's goal be? How can he be more aware and achieve a higher state of consciousness? It is not to simply get out of the material world or to become the biggest person in terms of material wealth. It cannot be to just sit in some monastery praying and meditating all day. There has to be a balance between the two. Both are important for living here.

A man without too much ego will not see everything around him as problems but just tasks to complete. You do not have to comment on every little thing and complain about this and that. It is unnecessary and does you no good. You do not have to get emotional about things that had no emotional weight in the first place. A long queue is just a long queue. You have to wait no matter what and it is what it is. A crowded place is just a crowded place. The weather getting too hot is just that. It is hotter than usual. You have to adjust to it accordingly since it is not in your control or anyone's control. Even if it is, there is not too much you

can do, so why worry? The man who is able to adjust to these things becomes disciplined and powerful slowly but surely.

What is a strong man? The one who does the task at hand without getting caught up in the past or thoughts/anxieties. The one who is concentrated like an eagle. The one who might not be perfect but does not complain and instead finds a way to do the thing that he has to do (step-by-step, one-by-one). The one who maintains discipline.

Who is the strongest? The one who realizes and understands the darkness within himself and chooses not to let it control him. The one who goes beyond base desires through a greater understanding of the world. The one who makes decisions based on reason and consideration for the greater good. The one who is able to stay in the present moment while dealing with difficult and tricky situations instead of simply reacting from a past pain. The one who goes beyond fast pleasures. The one who is flexible in his body and strong in the mind. The one who adapts to situations and events.

Being wrong now and potentially “making a fool” of yourself is much better than being a fool who cannot do anything or does not know anything much later in life. You have the power to not be that guy.

You enter different states of consciousness without even realizing it. Remember to make decisions that are important/big when you are in a higher state of consciousness.

The world is more than just the emotions of mere mortals. A man without much ego would in fact not have many problems to begin with as most “problems” that people have are more related to their ego/status/lack of emotional regulation etc. Your problem is you are not rich? You can live without much money, with just the bare essentials that are needed for survival and health. You are afraid/ashamed your friends

would look down upon you? If it genuinely is true, you can cut them off as those friends may have never really been your real friends in the first place. Plus, a friend you cannot be honest with due to fear of rejection is not the type of friendship that is solid (close friends who you can share anything with and casual friends who you just hang out for fun once in a while without getting too deep are two separate things. People you cannot share things with due to fear of rejection or humiliation are not your close friends).

Your problem is you don't have your own house? There are many who are struggling with exploitation and abuse. House is only a place to live which may eventually be destroyed through natural disasters or unforeseen incidents or you yourself may only get to live in that house for a few years.

All these are only material things that do not last. Why put so much emphasis on it and then get so angry and riled up when things do not go your way? Do you not realize what is more important in this world are inner peace and humility? Do you not realize no matter how much things you collect and own, it will not fill up and end your desire for more? Materials and wealth are things which are sort of important but they will always be less important than inner peace and understanding within oneself and the full awareness of surroundings. You cannot get or be satisfied with a lot of things from outside when inside you are lost and constantly frustrated.

What is inside will be reflected outside. A calm and fulfilled man will attract calm and collected people. A frustrated and annoyed man will attract that as well. A man who is desperate will attract others who are desperate and needy and the cycle continues until one of them breaks out of it. You could argue that people in poor countries did not attract their

suffering, but that has little to do with what we are talking about. After all, I have mentioned that money and material are not the most important things. They do not last. If a poor person is truly desperate and hungry, then the people around them who are able to should help them. But again, the one who is calm and fulfilled is the one who is able to do that because he will be able to do the tasks at hand, learn important skills without unneeded worry, and eventually make enough disposable income for charity.

When two highly conscious individuals talk and work together, they can make huge moves without fear and pettiness. They can sidestep all the unnecessary stuff because they already know each others' moves. They know what to do and who they themselves are. They have a higher understanding of the world than most. They can affect the world in ways that create ripple effects through time and space.

Reject short-term pleasures. Accept long-term needs and healthy outlets. Your success is predicated on how much you are willing to reject short-term pleasure. You can feel good by working towards your long-term goal. To succeed, you have to be almost sadomasochistic, working out, experiencing the stress of figuring things out as you go along, being uncomfortable and making mistakes in order to improve your life. You have to love the pain of striving for a larger goal. Eventually, that pain will not even be painful. It would be satisfying. Why? Because you are getting stronger. Nothing feels better than becoming stronger.

The world outside; wars, natural disasters, financial crashes, betrayals etc. You cannot control. The world within (your mind, your heart, spirit) you can master and understand, which will put such an ease that nothing can phase you anymore. You do not have to be controlled by pleasures and failures.

You have to realize, both the past, and things outside your control, coming as thoughts and memories, are just noise. They can be valuable insight within, but you must be ready to let go of them and not identify with them.

The person who practices difficult training and goes through difficult situations constantly can be more disciplined and take on other difficult situations as they are posed in the present.

It gives great satisfaction when you get better and better at a skill. When you start off not having any experience and skills, and you slowly gain more experience and gain more confidence, it can keep you going, getting better and better.

Those who are able to stay calm in difficult situations are not people with no emotions or people who did not have to train hard to get to that position. Granted, some are born without empathy or are unable to be in touch with their emotions but the one who understands their own emotions, understands that it is temporary, will make the best decisions in life, causing them to be at peace with themselves and those around them.

Your life is composed of many events. Build up and train yourself for many different big days, whether it is a competition, overnight success, fully realized skill level, being able to lift and train on very heavy weights, your first child etc. You have to put in the work and face many failures before that one day. As you face failures, you know what happens? You get used to it. It does not hurt as badly anymore. And then, you come back stronger than ever after the failure. You learn from your mistakes, you build up your skill level and your overall experience. You also align yourself close to reality, which is important if you want to succeed. Then, it is only a matter of time. Obviously, you may give up on things that are

not working as your shift priorities. That is okay. Sometimes, you need a brake to gather yourself. Sometimes, you really found a better opportunity. Regardless, give your all.

Your main challenge is not when things are going easy. Your main challenge is when things are going hard. When things are difficult. When you must weather the storm and there are no good results coming your way. Your ability to handle this is what will determine your success. When things are easy and perfectly laid out for you, it might be much more comfortable and you may even expect it to always be like that. Reality simply does not work that way. People do not want to work with you on your project? Figure out another way to get people to work on your project, even if it might be more complicated and takes more time. Make it work with just you alone, or compromise something. People do not watch your videos? People do not like or are uninterested in your content? Stop for a moment to look at what is in the trend, objectively. See what is similar to what you want to do and do it. Try out different styles and methods instead of being stubborn in one.

Your competition? Yourself. It has always been yourself. It will always be yourself. Do not let your lower self win. Bring out your higher self. Keep him up as long as possible. He might not be there all the time and might be too afraid to come out at critical moments. But remember. He is within you. He is you.

The world is not purely run through pure objectivity or pure subjectivity. One must find the balance in both. You cannot convince an emotional person purely through objectivity alone as that person will not care about the hard facts presented, and that person might think what you are saying is just propaganda if you are mostly appealing to base emotions. The world is very complex. People are also very complex. No one person can

be the same.

Some triggers of addictions are best to be avoided indefinitely, for your own safety as well as others. No matter how far you have come or grown, there is always a slight chance you would fall back into the trap of addictions.

Stop with your desire for success in every single thing. Stop with the desire for everything to work out in your specific way. The world does not care about how things seem in your head. It only is what it is. Either you get on with it or get into serious issues. Even the most successful people can fall into delusions and lose money or loved ones. Nobody is safe from the cusp of reality, except those who accept it fully.

The end goal, whatever it is, does not exactly matter as much as you think. Even if you do not “succeed”, it does not matter in the long run, although of course it is still important to have a long term vision. We are all still just insignificant in the vastness of the universe. Your wants, needs, desires, all vanish when you die. When you face obstacles and setbacks, realize this. It does not mean nothing matters and you should give up. We are not talking about nihilism here like some people like to immediately jump on and criticize without taking a close look at what we are actually talking about. It means you do not have such an investment that you are not strong enough when things do not go your way.

TIP: Look at plants and animals often (in real life). It might seem pointless or even meaningless, but it is okay. Look at them often and do not think too much about it.

Outro

Let me get one thing out of the way. Although I was always fascinated with stories and writing, I couldn't exactly see myself as a full-on writer. Even now, I don't exactly consider myself a writer. These are changing identities that fit according to the times and situations one finds themselves in. I realized this was an option and this was a way to help those who were like me (men in their teen years to 20s). It was also an opportunity to put what I believed and valued into use.

When I first started working on this book, I wasn't certain about my own life or ideas. However, through gathering my thoughts in writing, and removing barriers and distractions that were so prevalent (movies, cameras, music etc), I was able to better engage in discipline, even when I was not working a full time job. I was also able to strengthen previously discovered and known ideas about letting go of past resentments and anger, through writing.

Just because these teachings are written does not mean people would follow it completely. Even if there is a guide book for life and the world, there are so many variables and unforeseen circumstances. This is why communities are important to one's life and the world at large. When one person is lost and does not know what to do, another person or the group can help him or her. Things are always changing and people can act unpredictably. A strong community (even if it is small like a small circle of friends or your family) can help a person to not fall off.

Not everyone can follow everything in this book. That's okay. If you're in a situation out of your control, you have more important things to worry about than self-development, just like it was mentioned in the previous chapters and the intro. You might also not agree with everything in this book. However, what is written could absolutely still be helpful even if you only follow some things (mostly related to the mindset). I have written it in a way that it will help as many people as possible. Most important is not just following this or that rule etc. It's more about the overall mindset, and widening your awareness/understanding. Once that happens, other behaviors and things to follow can happen organically. By that point, you will not need this book. However, whenever needed, you could use this book to remind yourself what you must do to stay on track of your journey.

Rizwan Rahman