The 8 Hidden Habits
to Live Your Richest Life



Robin Sharma

#1 Worldwide Bestselling Author of THE 5AM CLUB

PRAISE FOR
THE WEALTH MONEY CAN'T BUY
+ THE AUTHOR

—

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to Live Your Richest Life

Robin Sharma

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'Money is not required to buy any necessity of the soul.'

– Henry David Thoreau, philosopher

'My riches is life.'

– Bob Marley, legendary reggae musician

'The most important things in life are not things at all. Everything I want is right here in front of me. I have wind, I have rain, I have snow, I have sun. So what if I don't have a big home and a big car. I know many people with those things and they still aren't happy.'

– Dag Aabye, mountain man and hermit

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A Personal Message from Robin Sharma

I'm writing you this note from the farmhouse I live in. Through the window of the room where I do my work, I can see the olive grove, vineyards and a vast mist floating over the hills that seem to reach for the heavens. It would be good if you were here with me so I could tell you, in person, everything I wish to share about a life richly lived. Maybe we can do this in the future. Let's see.

My sincere wish – as you pass through this book that I have written to help you live the highest version of the greatest vision you have of your life – is that I earn more and more of your trust as the book unfolds. And become your companion, friend and mentor.

I humbly and honestly thank you for believing in the value of the ideas you are about to discover on leading an existence filled with true success and real wealth rather than the fake version that has been programmed into too many good people. I hope this book that I've worked so hard on will serve you to make a life of far greater beauty and happiness, courage and connection, along with an inner peace that has no bounds.

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Please note that my philosophy of what makes a great and glorious human life – on which this work is based – is very different from that of other books in the personal development field. I simply ask you to keep an open mind as we progress through it and measure whether the information is valuable by the actual results it delivers into your days.

Okay. Let us begin.

There's an old story of a young boy who spends his evenings in the countryside watching the sun set over a perfect home on a faraway hill, with windows that appear to be made of gold. He is utterly consumed by the idea of – some time in the future – making the journey to visit this place and hopefully, eventually, living in it. For to do so would give him the happiness he so deeply desires.

One day when he's slightly older, he sets out to make his dream real. He journeys for many days and even long nights, surviving solely on the kindness of strangers who encourage him to keep on walking when they hear of his ambition to visit the perfect home, with windows of pure gold. Eventually, exhausted and spent, the boy arrives at his destination.

Yet of course, it's not at all what he saw it to be. Instead of perfection, the house is a broken-down barn. And rather than the windows being made of perfect gold, they are old, dirty and cracked. He realizes that, from afar, the barn's position on the lofty hill had created an optical illusion: the lightfall on the windows made them seem fashioned of precious metal. But what he had seen from a distance was a lie.

Oh, what a world we live in! We are trained to measure whether we are winning by the amount of money we have, the size of the possessions we own and how well we have used our best days in pursuit of fame, fortune and influence. This causes too many of us, deep within our souls, to feel bad about our lives, sad about ourselves and

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mad that the dreams we once had such faith in have been destroyed, dying a quiet death as we replaced them with adult responsibilities, life's stresses and human struggles.

Sure, money is important. Having a reasonable amount allows us to lead easier lives, live life on our own terms and do good things for the people we love. Having enough opens more windows of possibility and doorways of choice. Yet money is only one form of wealth – there are actually seven other forms I'd like you to focus on, so we get you to a life that you feel is honestly rich, deeply alive, and everything you once hoped it would be. I'll teach you these, along with a very powerful method, with all the enthusiasm I have, as we move ahead together.

Sometimes we're so busy looking at what others own that we forget all the blessings we have. And I'm not only writing about material things when I say this. I'm writing more about the essential elements of a human life beautifully lived. Ones that are just too easy to neglect in this fast, overly complex and continuously messy world you and I now find ourselves in. Things that may now seem unimportant yet when you're at your final hour of your last day come into clear focus as being the most important.

One of the reasons I wrote *The Wealth Money Can't Buy* is that so many people – across this planet – are suffering. Suffering from thinking and feeling that they don't have enough. Enough money. Enough material possessions. Enough likes, followers and social status. This, in turn, causes what I call in my mentoring work The Suffering of Unworthiness. Too many among us have a profound sense that we just don't matter and that we just aren't successful and that our lives are too small, when compared to lives we are told are perfect and big.

Here's the truth: You are absolutely and uniquely and undeniably enough. You have such gifts, talents and goodness. And so very

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much to be grateful for, right now. Yet so many have a sort of hole within us. And here's the trap: We push ourselves mercilessly to seek more and more external things to fill that hole. Falsely telling ourselves that when we have overflowing cash and flashy cars and fashionable clothes and online followers, one day, we will magically wake up feeling okay. And lastingly happy. Yet you and I know that day will never come. Because nothing in the outer world will ever make you feel better on the inside. As the Zen proverb confirms: 'Wherever you go, there you are.'

So what's the solution? Simple: to understand that what you are chasing in this collective pursuit of climbing the popular mountain of success – which society has trained us to climb – will not lead you to real success. Because reaching the summit of money but getting there feeling empty, lonely and unhappy, isn't winning. It's losing. You don't want to be like that young boy in the story I shared who chases an ideal only to learn it was a lie.

'Success occurs in the privacy of the soul,' wrote famed music producer Rick Rubin. Worldly success without a joyful heart is fool's gold. My humble prayer is that you experience both. The book you hold in your hands is my gentle offering that will lead you to experience the genuine victories, soaring cheerfulness and magic – yes, magic – that makes a human life great. I've poured my mind, heart, body and spirit into this work. I hope it serves your rise marvelously well.

With love and respect,



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Introduction

The other night, Elle sat on the sofa next to me, in the living room of our farmhouse in the Italian countryside. We moved here a few years ago, with the most important possessions of my life stuffed into three suitcases. I needed a new adventure, so I sold my home, gave away many of my things and left the country I'd lived in for fifty-five years. After we landed in Rome, we waited at the baggage carousel, excited by the beginning of our fresh life. Then we waited some more and then a little more. Yes, our luggage was lost. The universe has a hilarious sense of humor, doesn't it?

Anyway, on this evening at the farmhouse that I was just about to describe to you, Elle's little dog, Holly, who has now become my little dog as she's pretty much with me all the time, sat on my lap – sort of purring like a cat (yet she really is a dog). I call Holly 'SuperChum,' because that's exactly what she is to me.

Looking out the ancient window frames, I saw the sun-setting sky all fiery and enchanting with hues of red and hints of burnt orange. It was magic, in its simplest form. Italy does that to you. A friend recently told me, 'You cry twice when you live here. First

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when you get here, because it's not the most efficient place in the world. And then you cry a second time, whenever you have to leave.' Yes, it's that special.

Elle had a soft smile on her face. And sometimes a few tears in her eyes. She was reading the manuscript of this book, for the first time.

The whole scene was super simple. And profoundly perfect.

It made me think these words: 'This is rich.'

I'm certainly not saying my life is or has ever been ideal. Not at all. I've experienced dramatic difficulties and endured some monumentally hard times. I've been knocked down, kicked around, betrayed and deeply dismayed.

And I sure don't want you to think that I'm some kind of guru who knows it all. Because I am not.

Yet I have discovered how to turn setbacks into strengths, wounds into wisdom, problems into prosperity. I have earned a lot of hard-won lessons on living beautifully to share with you, in our time together, on the pages ahead.

I once had a ski instructor who helped me ski better (because that's what ski instructors do). While we were riding the ski lift up the mountain one day he said, 'You know, ski instructors aren't rich, but we have a rich life.' And that man – with always-rosy cheeks from the sunshine and cold, a wife he adored, children he cherished and a lifetime spent on a mountain with views that left me breathless – was the wealthiest person I've ever known.

This is what *The Wealth Money Can't Buy* is all about: the real riches that often sit right in front of us, but we ignore because we have been programmed not to value them. Makes me think of this quote often attributed to Dale Carnegie: "We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon instead of enjoying the roses blooming outside our windows today." True, right?

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Let me ask you: 'Why does our culture worship the billionaire, yet not the teacher who finds a way to inspire a class of twenty children week after week? Or the firefighter whose heroic dedication helps to keep us safe in our communities and homes? Or the gardener who makes the street more marvelous through their tireless efforts to plant, nurture and water the neighborhood's flowers?'

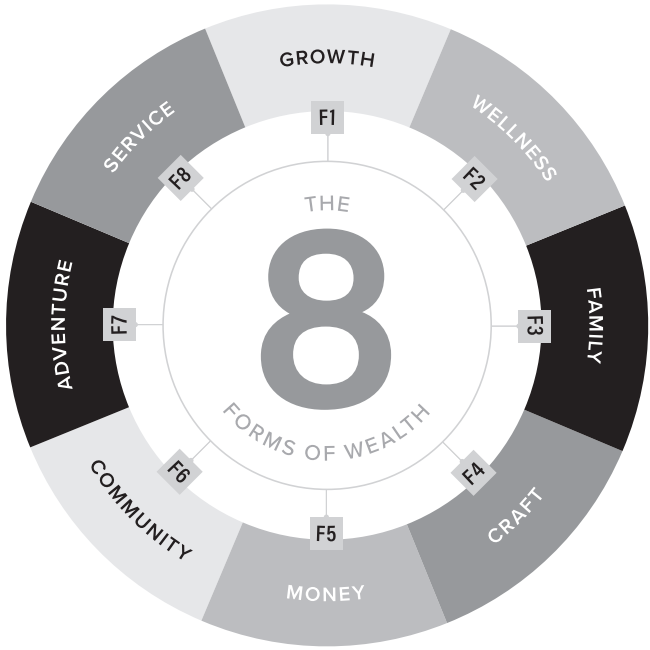
This book is about a completely new philosophy and methodology of success and wealth that we are not schooled, trained or even encouraged to consider. But one that will absolutely bring you sustained happiness, personal freedom and lasting internal peace.

Now, as I've mentioned, I do agree that money is important. We all have bills to pay, obligations to meet and pursuits to engage in that cost cash. And having strong savings and financial abundance allows you to live with less stress, more freedom and a sense of personal sovereignty (doing what you want, where you want, when you want – with the people you love). So yes, money is an essential element to your richest life. I must be extremely clear on that. It's something important yet not everything important.

As you'll see in the learning framework I'm about to offer you (one that I've taught to my private advisory clients for many years with excellent results), financial prosperity is only one of the eight forms of wealth. I've mentored many billionaires over my nearly three decades of working with many of the world's business titans, professional sports superstars, film icons and movement-makers. And I can safely tell you that, for too many of them, money is all they have. They are cash rich yet life poor.

You really need to be doing well in each of the eight forms of wealth to be able to call yourself truly successful and someone who is really living abundantly. And beautifully.

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On the pages ahead, we will carefully consider each of the eight forms of wealth shown above, in a way that is easy to apply, fun to understand and powerful in the difference it will make in your days. In short chapters designed to be personal daily mentoring sessions, I will provide you with ideas, suggestions, instructions and stories of inspiration so you can more fully live each one of them. And as you do, you will see that you will be rewarded with your richest life.

The 8 Forms of Wealth learning model is based upon eight hidden (because they are not so commonly considered) habits that I energetically urge you to embrace:

Growth: *The Daily Self-Improvement Habit.* This habit is based on the insight that humans are happiest and genuinely wealthiest when we are steadily realizing our personal gifts and primal talents. The regular pursuit of personal growth is one of your most valuable assets.

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Wellness: *The Steadily Optimize Your Health Habit.* This habit is founded on your deep understanding that peak mental, emotional, physical and spiritual vitality and living a long life filled with energy, wellness and joyfulness are mission-essential to you being honestly rich.

Family: *The Happy Family, Happy Life Habit.* This habit is built on the knowledge that having all the money and material success in the world is worthless if you are all alone. So enrich the connections with the ones you love. And fill your life with fantastic friends who upgrade your happiness.

Craft: *The Work as a Platform for Purpose Habit.* This habit is grounded in the consistent practice of seeing your work as a noble pursuit and an opportunity not only to make more of your genius real, but also to make our world a better place. Mastery is a currency worth investing in.

Money: *The Prosperity as Fuel for Freedom Habit.* This habit is driven by the principle that financial abundance is not only far from evil but also a necessity for living in a way that is generous, fascinating and original.

Community: *The You Become Your Social Network Habit.* This habit is structured around the scientific fact that a human being's thinking, feeling, behaving and producing are profoundly influenced by their associations, conversations and mentors. To lead a great life, fill your circle with great people.

Adventure: *The Joy Comes from Exploring Not Possessing Habit.* This habit is formulated around the reality that what creates vast

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joy is not material goods but magical moments doing things that flood us with feelings of gratefulness, wonder and awe. Enrich your days with these and your life will rise into a whole new universe of inspiration.

Service: *The Life Is Short So Be Very Helpful Habit*. This habit is founded on the time-honored understanding that the main aim of a life richly lived is to make the lives of others better. As you lose yourself in a cause that is bigger than you, you will not only find your greatest self but will illuminate the world in the process. And discover treasures far beyond the limits of cash, possessions and public status.

All right. Thank you again for your faith in my work and for joining me here. Now, let us start. So we fill your days with the wealth money can't buy.

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THE 1ST FORM OF WEALTH



Growth

The Daily Self-Improvement Habit

The wealth within you, your essence,
is your kingdom.
– Rumi

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The 1st Form of Wealth

Growth | Quick Overview

To grow into all you can possibly be is a prize far more precious than anything money could ever buy. Personal mastery is a currency that will make you authentically wealthy. And your wisest investment is making yourself into all you can be.

To explore your unfaced fears, to release sabotaging limitations, to venture into the unknown fields of your native potential and to know how wise, strong, gifted, resilient and loving you are will bring more magic into your life than all the fame, fortune and worldly success one could ever have.

Inner growth and daily personal development are a very real form of wealth, though our society generally doesn't value them. Instead, in our current age, it's the billionaire financial titan who is placed on the front cover and the famed sports superstar placed on a pedestal instead of the person who has made the making of a pure mind, the building of a rich heart, the construction of a heavyweight character and the growing of a soaring spirit their primary priority. To me, winning within is so much more important than winning in the world. The first is enduring. The second is fleeting.

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Yet just because our culture doesn't put self-improvement and the ongoing realization of your natural powers and primal genius near the top of any list of the things that matter most to a journey well-lived doesn't mean that you shouldn't. You should, actually.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "The only devils in the world are those running around inside ourselves. This is where the battle should be fought."[1] And please trust me: once you get the value of deepening your personal growth, everything will change for you. Because a brilliant outer life begins with a beautiful interior one. And you will never be able to create, produce, prosper and savor any higher than what you are.

Okay, my new friend, let's explore the first form of wealth, together.

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1

Honor Your Greatness

A simple idea that's too often neglected. To appreciate *you*. For all you've gone through and all you've become. For all the fears you've faced and found freedom from. For the dreams you not only dreamed but had the bravery to make real. For all the people you've helped and for all the good you have done. You matter more than you know. So please do not measure your worthiness by what the majority tells you that you should be, do and have.

You being here with me is no accident, at all. Something in you – in a culture where too many fine people are sleepwalking through their most precious hours in a digital slumber – seeks something higher. I sense that although life can be hard at times, you have not lost your hope. You've protected your optimism for your brighter future and trusted that call within your soul to fully realize your ethical ambitions for all the time you get to live.

This – to my getting-sort-of-old eyes – makes you a hero. You've been through a lot. You could have given up. And become jaded, cynical, critical and closed-hearted.

Yet, instead, here you are. Ready to rise, passionate to advance and dedicated to grow through the guidance you are receiving through me, as your mentor. It's an act of high courage to be willing

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to let go of who you were yesterday to become someone even better, wiser, healthier and happier tomorrow, you know?

Oh, and I really should reinforce that personal development work is the best work you could ever do. A lot of people snicker or roll their eyes (or both) when they hear the term 'self-improvement.' Yet what is more courageous and sensible than steadily and incrementally doing the deep training to turn everyday human insecurity into rare-air confidence, personal limitation into uncommon prowess and an average mode of rolling through life into a breathtakingly exceptional journey that honors the promise you have been born into? 'The most important investment you can make is in yourself,' noted renowned financier Warren Buffett. And the finest strategy to make the world better is to make yourself better, right?

As you rework, elevate and calibrate your inner universe, your relationship with what I call in my mentoring methodology your Heroic Self (which is the opposite of your Egoic Self, the false, faulty, restricted and scared part of you that has been formed by the negative beliefs and human hurts that you've endured in your past) will definitely increase. And when your primary relationship with your greatest self increases, *every* other relationship in your life increases too.

Build stronger knowledge and intimacy with your Heroic Self (through the philosophies and tools I'll walk you through) and your relationship with your family, vitality, work, prosperity, community, adventure and service to others will fly with it.

By the way, you should know right now that I come from humble beginnings. No silver spoon in my mouth. Born in Africa. Came from immigrant parents. Two years ago, I took my life partner Elle to see the house I grew up in. The current owner was watering the lawn when we walked up to the place. I told him that

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I used to live in his home, over fifty years ago. So he invited us in. Nice man. Smiled a lot.

After we left, Elle said, 'That's the smallest house I've ever seen.' I felt the same way.

And I grew up with a ton of flaws – as all humans do. Filled with thoughts of scarcity, emotions of timidity, sensations of insecurity and methods of operating that chained my talents, restrained my optimism and smothered my freedom.

Yet one thing saved – and transformed – me: a limitless (and sometimes obsessive) love of growth. If I didn't know how to improve something, I could learn how to do it. All I longed to become and everything I dreamed of experiencing could happen by enriching my understanding. Of course, *you can do this too*. Which is why I'm so excited for you.

As I write these words, I am reminded of what the philosopher and writer Ayn Rand wrote:

> Do not let your fire go out, spark by irreplaceable spark in the hopeless swamps of the not-quite, the not-yet, the not-at-all. Do not let the hero in your soul perish in lonely frustration for the life you deserved, but have never been able to reach. The world you desire can be won, it exists, it is real, it's yours.

Such are the wishes that I hold dear for you.

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2

Live The Outer Change Follows Inner Change Law

As I write you this mentoring message I do hope you're in great spirits, full of enthusiasm (what a great word that is!) and in hot pursuit of a gorgeous life that you'll be proud of when you're an old-timer. And if you're already an old-timer, then my prayer is that you're already proud of your life.

I was up at three this morning (went to sleep just after 9PM) so I could meditate, visualize and pray. Then I hopped onto my elliptical machine. It's my favorite piece of exercise equipment, unless we include my trusted mountain bike. That one's tops for me. When I first met Elle – on our second date, to be accurate – the first thing I showed her when she visited my home was my mountain bike. She later confided that she thought that was a little strange. But all these years later she's still with me. So I guess it was an okay move.

Anyway, I need to share a story. One evening a father sat in his favorite chair, reading a newspaper. His young son sat near him. 'Dad, let's play,' the boy said cheerfully. But the man was too busy being an adult and kept on studying his paper.

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'Daddy, let's play! Let's have fun,' the little boy said. Yet the father paid him no attention. He continued his reading.

The child persisted and the man ignored him. Finally, the father had an idea. There was a picture of the globe in the newspaper, so he tore it out, ripped it into dozens of pieces and handed it to his son, saying, 'Here, go put this back together,' thinking it would take the child a long time to do it.

Yet children come to us more highly evolved than adults to teach us the lessons we need to learn. And after only a few minutes the boy came back with the globe *perfectly* back together.

'How'd you do that, Son?' the father asked, astonished.

'Easy, Dad. On the other side of the globe was a person. And once I got the person together, the world was okay.'

Powerful idea, right? Once you get yourself together, *your* world will be okay – more than okay. Fantastic, actually, *if* you practice the philosophies, methods, routines and tactics that I'm super excited to share with you (nothing works for someone unwilling to do any work, yes?).

One of the brain tattoos I love sharing with my audiences when I do a keynote presentation in some city across this small planet is this: 'Victims make excuses; leaders deliver results.' To be a leader doesn't mean you must have a title, a position, authority or a ton of money. Nope, not at all.

Leadership's just the opposite of victimhood. And human beings giving away their power to create wonderful results by complaining, blaming and expecting others to make things better for them are people caught in the trap of playing the victim.

The other day I was in a ride-sharing car with a cool young driver. As we chatted, he shared that he arrived as an immigrant with $260 in his pocket. That was all the money he had in his life. Yet, by his focus, hard work and relentless desire to grow, he saved

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up enough to buy a house and was now supporting eleven (yes, eleven!) of his family members. He could have complained of his hard past, blamed his mean childhood and waited for something outside of himself to improve his days. But he didn't. He started small, made steady daily gains and transformed his situation over time. This ride-share driver delivered results instead of making excuses. And he told me his real secret was his deep dedication to constant self-improvement, which is really all about growth – the first form of wealth.

For some reason this man's story makes me think of the words of the warrior poet Charles Bukowski: "Can you remember who you were, before the world told you who you should be?"[2]

We should end this chapter on that. Because I need a break from writing and my trusty mountain bike is waiting for me.

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3

Don't Be a Resentment Collector

Someone looks at us the wrong way. Someone close to us disappoints us. Someone we trusted lies to us. Such things are part of the essence of life. You can't avoid them, much as you try.

When we are not treated as we wish to be treated, it's so easy to get angry. Or to withdraw. Or to harbor a secret resentment.

And as we advance through life and interact with other human beings, it's easy to keep adding to what I call The Resentment Stack.

You just keep getting discouraged, and rather than processing through the emotions of hurt, frustration and irritation these experiences create so you are free of them, you just swallow them all. And wallow in them. And let the resentments fester, like a great gaping wound (that stains every moment you experience and tarnishes your creativity, productivity, prosperity and serenity).

You're wise and bright, and you pick really great mentors, so you already know: this is not the best way to live. Wounds unhealed become potential unrealized, along with a serious drain on your energy – energy that could be used to create soaring results and to enjoy this supreme gift and expedition that is your life.

And also remember this: the bigger your Resentment Stack grows, the more it colors the way you see *everything*.

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You start seeing slights that weren't even there. You begin to perceive people doing mean things that they didn't really do. You begin to believe that this sometimes difficult yet also utterly amazing universe we live in is a very scary place. We see things not as they are but as *we* are, right?

So my sincere suggestion for you, as I sip my fresh mint tea infused with a sliver of ginger and listen to Kolby Cooper's enchanting country music song 'Fall,' while a very noisy rooster continues to wake up the world, is to become *a master of letting things go*. Sure – of course – protect yourself and stand up for good treatment. That's obvious and we do teach people how to treat us. You must never allow anyone to walk over you. Yet I also carefully suggest that you increase your compassion for others. We don't know what battle they are fighting. And everyone around us really is doing their best. (Even if their best is a mess.)

And while this does not mean they shouldn't be held accountable for the things they do, it does mean they deserve our understanding. Just imagine how bright a human life you'll create if you operate in the rare air of seeking to see the blessings in the people who try to curse you. Such is the behavior of history's greatest souls. And a truly wealthy person.

'In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. "Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had,'" said Nick Carraway, the narrator in F. Scott Fitzgerald's majestic novel *The Great Gatsby*.

Get this one piece right and your daily joy and overall peacefulness will escalate exponentially. And by the life you lead, you'll subtly prompt peace to break out, all across the planet.

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4

It's Okay to Be Sloppy

'Be perfect' and 'be super tidy' and 'have cut abs,' our society schools us. What nonsense!

Is it not a mark of high wisdom to live a richly *balanced* life?

There are times to exercise world-class willpower (while creating an inspiring work project, pursuing an important physical fitness goal or realizing a meaningful spiritual venture, for example) and model heroic self-discipline. Then there are periods meant for leaning back, resting more, doing little and simply being a human *being*.

And when I say in the title of this mentoring message that it's okay to be sloppy, in certain seasons of your life's journey, I don't just mean not making your bed when you don't feel like it or keeping your schedule empty so you give yourself the freedom to be bored. I also mean it's okay to be less than perfect when it comes to your inner life. Self-mastery and personal growth must never be a grind. Otherwise, you'll drain the magic out of the entire enterprise.

Last night, I watched an online video of a man saying that we should treat ourselves like a slab of rock, striking ourselves to our most extreme edges to sculpt something beautiful. His energy was intense, aggressive and seemingly angry.

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I get his point. I sure do. We can't constantly give in to weak impulses every hour yet hope to have a life of excellence, satisfaction and awe. Got it. Send me the t-shirt with the logo on it. Some of the messaging from the Hustle and Grind Culture has some truth to it. Happy things happen to people who do hard things.

Yet, to me, a glorious human experience must have some mess to it. Some times of 'strategic laziness' in it. Some breathtaking days of serious sloppiness. Where we just allow ourselves to leave the bed unmade, the call unanswered and the dishes unwashed. We're not machines, we're humans.

I guess what I'd like you to consider is to trust the flow more. Stop resisting your natural rhythms. Embrace the seasons when it doesn't seem like much is happening as the farmer accepts the fallow season as well as the times of harvest, understanding that without the first one the spectacular growth of the latter one would really not be possible. Honor the days where you have all the drive in the world. And rest more on the days that you don't.

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