

# On the Shoulders of Giants

## *33 New Ways to Guide Yourself to Greatness*



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### ■ The Big Idea

*On The Shoulders of Giants* is more than just another book about how to develop a positive attitude or find the "Secret". It is not simply a regurgitation of what a handful of famous authors, philosophers or business people have said about a particular topic.

This book is unlike any other because it has been written by someone who has experienced the world at its darkest and found a way through. It is based on the author's journey out of the darkness and at the same time it is a universal story of how we can all use the wisdom and guidance of others (whether they be intellectual giants or everyday heroes) to help us through life's hardest times. It is a book that will support and empower you to make a shift in consciousness that's so powerful, deep and profound that your past and perceived limitations become irrelevant. The author demonstrates clearly how to make profound shifts in your life, work, finances, health, relationships, and more.

## ■ **Why You Need This Book**

This book will help you STOP being so good at getting everything you DON'T want!

It will help you discover how "Imagineering" a better life is the shortest path to actually living it and you will learn how to make simple choices that will accelerate your success now.

## ■ **1 - The finest steel goes through the hottest fire. ~ RICHARD NIXON**

People worry everyday about what's around the corner. It's so easy to get caught up in worrying about financial difficulties, illness, global events, or even our own mortality, that we often forget to dedicate any of our time and energy towards actually living. We should be thankful every single day for what we do have and for the knowledge that no matter what happens, no matter what life brings our way, it will never break us!

Learning to come to terms with all the parts of your life - even the hard bits - can be a liberating experience. If you had a 5-carat diamond ring given to you by your great-grandmother and your house burnt down, would you simply walk away from the ash and rubble, or would you get down on your hands and knees and look for it?

Diamonds are forged through extreme circumstances and so are we. And no matter what disaster or difficulty you experience, by standing on the shoulders of giants, we can all find the diamonds - the magnificence of our true selves - in the ashes.

## ■ **2 - The Map is not the territory. ~ ALFRED KORZYBSKI**

There is no such thing as objective reality. What we believe is "real" is nothing more than our interpretation of an event and the words we use to describe that interpretation.

This principal is particularly relevant in the context of examining where things might go wrong in relationships - either personal or business. Anytime you have more than one person observing an event, the door is open for the possibility of misinterpretation and miscommunication based on differing maps of reality.

Learning to recognize that we all have different maps of the world allows us to see the world through another person's eyes and therefore understand, relate and communicate with greater respect and results.

■ **3 - To the man who only has a hammer, everything he encounters begins to look like a nail. ~ ABRAHAM H. MASLOW**

Einstein referred to limiting beliefs as the "*boundary conditions of our thinking*". These ideas, concepts and opinions act as a box that we unconsciously put ourselves in from a very young age. What we consider possible is influenced by these rigid ideas - it is these ideas that make up the 'map' we referred to in the previous chapter. That is why it has often been said that the thinking that got us to where we are now will never get us to where we want to be.

If you think of your mind as an iceberg, then the tip of the iceberg is your conscious mind. The larger, more substantial part of the iceberg represents your subconscious mind. As adults, we are simply not aware of the thinking that is limiting our experiences and results because it is below the surface in the subconscious mind. These beliefs are critical because they influence what we consider to be 'normal' and 'possible'.

■ **4 - What I focus on life is what I get. ~ W. MITCHELL**

This concept is also taught in advanced driving. If your car goes into a skid, you must focus on where you want to go - not the wall or obstacle in front of you. The quickest way to crash is to take your eye off where you want to go and instead focus on your problems!

What we focus on plays a huge part in the reality we experience. In other words what we experience is much more dependent on what happens on the inside than on the outside. What happens in our mind is much more relevant than what actually happens in life! When you focus on where it is you want to go, not where you don't want to go – you'll be astonished at just how far you can go!

■ **5 - The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes. ~ MARCEL PROUST**

Essentially, values are the things that are important to us and they exert a powerful influence on our lives. Values determine how we relate to others, how we perform at our jobs, what products we purchase, how much money we earn, our religious convictions, leisure pastimes we pursue, who we vote for, etc. Your life is a reflection, albeit an unconscious reflection, of what you value.

On the surface we all have reasons for doing what we do and to us it all makes perfect sense. However, lurking beneath the surface is an entirely different set of reasons that are much more powerful and more difficult to articulate. These reasons – our values – constitute the sum total of our experiences to date and are largely set by the time we are 9 years of age. These values rarely change (if at all) unless there is a Significant Emotional Event (SEE) or if there is a deliberate or artificial creation of an SEE in which a

specific value is identified, targeted and shifted. The SEE allows you to re-assess your values because you suddenly see the world in a completely different light.

**■ 6 - If you want a quality, act as if you already had it. Try the 'as if' technique. ~ WILLIAM JAMES**

One of the wonderful things about personal characteristics or emotional states is that if you pretend to have them, then you have them immediately. If you act as if you are happy you may be amazed to realize that you are. Because our mind has such a profound influence on our external experience, adopting and making beneficial emotional states a regular habit is the first step to truly mastering your life.

All that we are and have experienced to date is a result of what we have imagined to be true in our minds. If we are unhappy with the results, our experience can be changed as quickly as we can change our minds and imagine a new meaning.

**■ 7 - Get out of your head, it's a bad neighborhood! ~ JEFF POULE**

The truth is sometimes we get so caught up in the mental cycles of negativity that we simply can't break out of it. We can't see any other perspective or any way out of the distress. It is like being trapped in a dark room without any windows or doors! No direction or options seem available and there is a sense of hopelessness.

Everyone has bad days and no amount of positive thinking or self-help information is going to change that. It's part of being human. Living full time in a bad emotional place, however, is not really living at all. It's existing. When you recognize that and can work out where you are at any given time, you can make sure you don't stop in the bad sections of town!

**■ 8 - You play the hand you're dealt. I think the game's worthwhile. ~ CHRISTOPHER REEVE**

Satchel Paige once encouraged us to "Work like you don't need the money, love like you've never been hurt, and dance like no one is watching." And of course, there is the flip side to all of this. There are those that have been afforded every privilege that life has to offer and have still managed to make a spectacular mess of their lives.

Events mean nothing in and of themselves. Part of the process of coming to terms with whatever occurs in your life is to find a way to make sense of it. If science indicates that objective reality doesn't actually exist, it is very much up to us to create a reality that helps us move on and find some meaning. It is not what happens to you that matters, it's what you do about it and who you become that counts.

**■ 9 - I like coincidences. They make me wonder about destiny, and whether free will is an illusion or just a matter of perspective. They let me speculate on the idea of some master plan that, from time to time, we're allowed to see out of the corner of our eye. ~ CHUCK SIGARS**

Sometimes we are so busy forcing our way through life that we don't notice the little signs and nudges in different directions. When we do notice them, we try in earnest to over-analyze and impose meaning, and in doing so often miss the point of why the serendipitous even happened in the first place.

Coincidences are the universe's way of guiding us toward things, events, people, and situations that can help us to fulfill our destiny and live with purpose.

**■ 10 - You control your future, your destiny. What you think about comes about. By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you most want to be. Put your future in good hands - your own. ~ MARK VICTOR HANSEN**

You have to know what it is you are seeking to achieve in life. Otherwise, it's so easy to drift aimlessly. Years pass like days and the next thing you know 20 years have passed and you've still not finished that novel that you started to write, not gone back to school to get that degree, not sorted your financial affairs, never bothered to get around to learning a second language, etc.

The reason goal setting works is biological. There is a part of your brain called the Reticular Activating System (RAS) which deletes the vast majority of sensory information from your conscious awareness. Being clear in your own mind about what it is you're trying to achieve consciously puts those things onto your internal radar via your RAS. And once they are on your radar, your mind will filter for and locate information, resources and opportunities that will allow you to meet your goals more quickly and easily.

**■ 11 – It's in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped. ~ ANTHONY ROBBINS**

You have the power right now to make a decision and move toward what you want in life. Life is not a dress rehearsal.

Now some of you might be thinking "Of course, I know that." However, the truth is this - until you DO, you don't really KNOW. And the only pertinent question that you should

ask yourself is, "Am I really living, making decisions and moving forward, or am I still just thinking about it?"

At the end of the day, if you have decided something in some aspect of your life but have not yet taken action... you haven't really decided anything. You are still just thinking about it.

**■ 12 - Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now. ~ JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE**

You have to dream it and then get moving. So often we curtail our dreams and hopes for the future because from the vantage point of NOW, it seems improbable or even impossible. But the two vital ingredients to change are dreaming and commitment.

Planning is important and has its place but you cannot wait to have it all worked out before you begin. If you do, you will never start anything.

**■ 13 - A man who becomes conscious of the responsibility he bears toward a human being who affectionately waits for him, or to an unfinished work, will never be able to throw away his life. He knows the 'why' for his existence, and will be able to bear almost any 'how'. ~ VICTOR FRANKL**

No matter whether you have experienced awful things in life or not, there is an innate drive in every human to seek meaning and purpose. If we understand our 'why' then we can deal with any 'how' that life brings our way. Even in the darkest of nights, we can all find a way to let the light of who we really are shine through, if we believe in our hearts that there is a grander purpose.

In other words of Frankl himself, "what is to give light must endure burning."

**■ 14 - The very difficulty of a problem evokes abilities or talents which would otherwise, in happy times, never emerge to shine. ~ HORACE**

Perhaps adversity is the universe's way of helping us uncover our unique talents and abilities?

We are all unique and we bring very different ideas and skills to the table. Expanding your experiences and trying new things is a great way to help you find those few skills

that set you apart from everyone else. As Benjamin Disraeli said, "There is no education like adversity."

**■ 15 - Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand. ~ ALBERT EINSTEIN**

Imagination is limitless and is possessed in equal measure by everyone. You don't need a college education to use your imagination; the lack of money doesn't hinder your use of imagination nor does your social circumstance or environmental conditions.

Like a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, imagination allows you to stretch your wings and really see what's possible. Combine that with an insatiable thirst for knowledge and new information and you will be truly astonished at what you are capable of.

**■ 16 - We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are. ~ THE TALMUD**

The insights other people offer you are a chance for you to make changes in yourself so that you stop attracting the same people and events over and over. Once we see our true part in the drama, that distinction alone will break the pattern and new tomorrows will be possible.

As William M. Thackeray said, "The world is a looking glass and gives back to every man the reflection of his own face."

**■ 17 - Don't practice until you get it right, practice until you can't get it wrong. ~ ANON**

Life, like diving, is unpredictable. Rarely do we ever hit the 'sweet spot' on the board of life and enter the water in the perfect position to execute the move we have planned. More often than not, we stumble, slide and falter only to discover that we now have no choice but to make something out of it.

It is often in these times of desperation or perspiration that we accomplish our greatest feats. We find ourselves in a crisis situation and in that moment we stretch beyond the finite boundaries of probability and skill and into the realm of possibility and inspiration.



**■ 18 - If you follow your bliss, doors will open for you that wouldn't have opened for anyone else. ~ JOSEPH CAMPBELL**

Only you can find your true path. The answers are already inside you. More than likely those answers have been trying to get your attention for years.

Do not make the mistake of looking to others for they can only share their truth based on what they have tried and failed to do in their own life. Plus, once you really connect to and follow your bliss, doors will open and opportunities will present themselves that simply would not have appeared for anyone else.

**■ 19 - Your limitations and success will be based, most often, on your own expectations for yourself. Expect the best, plan for the worst and prepare to be surprised. ~ DENIS WAITLEY**

Often our expectations for ourselves are tempered by earlier defeats. It is difficult to fail and to get back up and try again. It becomes easier not to give everything your best shot - then at least you can shrug it off and remind yourself that you didn't really want it anyway! Right?

But the only person you're selling out is you.

There is little to be gained by comparing yourself to those around you. The only measure of your success is how you fare against your own personal best. Learning to expect the best from yourself and demanding that continuous improvement can have dramatic effects on your long-term destination.

**■ 20 - When one's expectations are reduced to zero, one really appreciates everything one does have. ~ STEPHEN HAWKING**

It is impossible to bring more of what you want into your life if you are feeling ungrateful about what you already have.

It has been said that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. In many ways gratitude is a bit like that – it's not what you say, the mere words that count, but the sum of the words and the heartfelt emotion behind them.

Gratitude is not something you do once in a while, it needs to be part of the fabric of your everyday life - something you do consistently with heartfelt meaning. Make gratitude a "richual" - something that you do consistently that enriches your life.



■ **21 - Take away the cause, and the effect ceases. ~ MIGUEL DE CERVANTES**

On some level, we choose or create everything that is in our world. Like all beliefs, this theory can neither be proven nor disproven. It isn't really important whether you agree or not - the point is that what you believe only matters in so far as it directly influences your results.

So if you are not getting the outcome you want, why not change what you believe and see if that alters your results! Your beliefs produce either good or bad results, they both support and add confidence to you or they detract from your ability to interact with the world. If what you currently believe does not empower you to consistently produce what you want most in life, then isn't it about time you changed?

■ **22 - "Come to the edge", we say. "We are afraid", they say. "Come to the edge," we say. And they come. And they look. And we push. And they fly. We to stay and die in our beds. They to go and die howsoever, yet inspiring those who come after them to find their own edge. And fly. ~ GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE**

Sometimes in life we are either coaxed to the edge and pushed off, or we willingly wander there oblivious to what lies ahead. Either is good - at the moment your feet leave the safety of the cliff top - you will always find your wings.

There comes a point in one's life when it is time to stop grieving or worrying and commence living again. Regardless of what has happened in the past or where you are now, 'it's never too late to learn how to fly again'.

■ **23 - Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear. ~ AMBROSE REDMOON**

In many ways, courage is a choice. It is like a door that is always available to be opened. It is not a commodity that we store up or build over time for future use - although exercising it does make it easier in times of crisis. Having had courage in the past does not guarantee it in the future; the converse is also true.

Looking to our fears for answers about how to gain courage is a bit like getting in our car and attempting to drive down the freeway by only looking into the rear view mirror. Fear is always in the opposite direction of where you want to go. The answer to the question - how do we find courage - lies in finding a calling that is much greater than fear. Doing what needs to be done despite the fear and finding a meaning or calling that makes it worthwhile.

■ **24 - All that we are is the result of what we have thought. The mind is everything. What we think, we become. ~ BUDDHA**

Whether we realize it or not, we are visualizing things all the time - visualizing either what we want or don't want. Like a spider continually spinning a web, we are persistently thinking or imagining what might happen.

If we are relentlessly focused on the negative outcome and are riddled by fear, that WILL impact our reality. Many people don't realize that they have simply become incredibly successful at getting everything they don't want. There is no such thing as an unsuccessful person or a failure.

■ **25 - It is not whether your actions are tough or gentle; it is the spirit behind your actions and words that announces your inner state. ~ CHIN-NING CHU**

We need to appreciate the difference between our words and actions and the intention behind them. The intention will always win out.

If you say you want something and you have done the things that you need to do in order to manifest your goal and it still hasn't materialized, my guess is that your intention may not be congruent with your words and actions. The next step is to uncover your true intention by asking yourself 'why is this important to you?' When you have an answer, ask 'why is that answer important to you' and keep going until you uncover the truth and your underlying intention.

■ **26 - As long as a man stands in his own way, everything seems to be in his way. ~ RALPH WALDO EMERSON**

If we can give a new meaning or definition to the obstacles that we face, we unlock the ability to face these opportunities head on and move through them quickly and easily. Obstacles are just part of life; welcome them as reminders that you are alive and vibrant and able to surmount anything in your path.

Obstacles prove we are on the right track. Learn to 'get out of your own way' and you will see that you can conquer even your biggest fears.

■ **27 - Live out of your imagination, not your history. ~ STEPHEN R. COVEY**

Look at any successful person from history and you will find a person who continued to try and who refused to believe that their past would foreshadow their destiny.

Your biography does not pre-determine your destiny - your past has absolutely no bearing on your future. But if you continue to do what you have always done, you will get what you've always got!

**■ 28 - If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we would find in each person's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility. ~ HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW**

We all know our own pain - we are intimately familiar with the injustices that we have suffered, the crosses we have had to bear and the countless nights that we have cried ourselves to sleep. What we don't fully grasp is the depth of another's pain - the unspoken abuse, neglect, prejudices, anguish, loss, torment or afflictions.

As human beings we all have the same capacity to inflict harm through our words, actions and inactions, whether knowingly or unknowingly. But we all know that we cannot hold our breath forever; the release of by products and things that no longer serve us is an instinctive function. By the same token, sooner or later we all must discover our innate capacity to forgive.

None of us are perfect and as such we are all destined to experience both - the need to forgive and the desire to be forgiven. Perhaps that is why Longfellow's quote is so moving? For it is precisely at the time that we are being called upon to release and let go that we are reminded to have compassion for the sorrow and suffering of our enemies.

**■ 29 - You'll see it when you believe it. ~ WAYNE DYER**

True certainty has less to do with outside events and more to do with who we are in the inside. No one can take certainty away from you: You can only take it away from yourself by the questions you ask yourself and the habits you rely on to cope.

If you keep asking the wrong questions or repeating negative habits, you actually create more uncertainty or doubt and you will never have the life of your dreams.

**■ 30 - Character is what you are in the dark. ~ DWIGHT L. MOODY**

Things will get better, but you have to make them better. You have to dig deep into your own soul and find out who you really are in the dark... you may be astounded at how much strength you find inside and just how resourceful you can be.

As Helen Keller said, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

■ **31 - Money is neither my god nor my devil. It is a form of energy that tends to make us more of who we already are, whether it's greedy or loving. ~ DAN MILLMAN**

It always comes down to how you think about money. And just as money is neither good nor bad, it is also never a valid reason for failure. Lack of money never held anyone back.

Money is simply a means to an end. Your thoughts about it - how hard it is to make, whether it's dirty, what you have to do to get it, what you intend to do with it - all have the power to influence your ultimate results.

■ **32 - The maxim 'Nothing avails but perfection' may be spelled 'Paralysis'. ~ WINSTON CHURCHILL**

Perfection is impossible. We can only ever do the best we can do in any given moment with the resources and knowledge we have at that time. There comes a time in every life and in every project when you need to come to the decision that your absolute best is good enough.

Otherwise you stay on the sidelines making excuses for why you can't just make things happen because, 'it wasn't quite good enough'. Putting everything you have into something and actually doing it, even if it's imperfect is always superior to endless talk, no action and perfection paralysis.

And what is perfect anyway? Who defines it? You can't control the reaction of others. You have to let it go and accept.

■ **33 - Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference. ~ ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

The only thing we have absolute control over is our own mind - our ability to choose our own way.

Even in the face of unbelievable atrocities, hope and love are possible if we plant the right seeds in our minds and if we are open to standing on the shoulders of giants (whether they be famous or every day heroes) in our own lives.

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