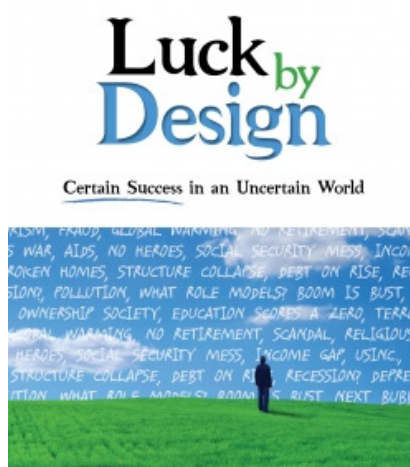


Luck by Design

Certain Success in an Uncertain World



Richard E. Goldman

Author: Richard E. Goldman
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■ The Big Idea

Luck. Some have it, some don't – or so it appears.

Richie Goldman has often been told that he's lucky. Soon after he graduated from college, he invested, against all advice, in an unknown company with one store and a hand-lettered sign, but that investment – plus twenty-nine years of hard work – enabled him to retire early and live what he calls a dream life.

Dumb luck? How about SOME luck!

Goldman knows that luck is something you create for yourself, with hard work, determination, good timing, and trust in yourself and your inner voice.

■ Why You Need This Book

This book is all about helping you how to simply create your own luck – by design. Goldman highlights some of what the Baby Boomers have done and what they haven't done. Their actions and "inactions" have created problems at home and across the globe – there are a lot of problems and a lot of work ahead.

Can the problems be solved? Is planning a life insurmountable? Not once you *read Luck by Design* – and learn how to design luck into your life.

■ The Basics

As a foundation for moving forward, think of the following as "givens," even though for now you might not believe or fully understand them.

- Life is not hard. It is complex, and it is unpredictable, but it's not hard. You want to know about hard? How about the homeless in our country, or the starving people in Somalia?
- Life is a series of illusions and disillusion. You move from the comfort of the womb and the comfort of the breast to the harsh reality that we're all flawed human beings and that somehow, despite our flaws, all of our lives are enhanced when we work together.
- You are not broken. You are a piece of unformed clay, and you are the artist whose duty is to create the magnificent being that you truly can be.
- The more gracefully you can accept how things are at the moment – not how your desires and preferences want them to be – the more energy and joy you will experience.
- Whatever you really want, you already have all the inner resources you need to make it happen. You need to learn to trust that you are in the right place at the right time to allow yourself to learn and to make something happen for yourself.
- Everything in your external world comes to you as a lesson; if you pay attention and stay awake, you will learn quickly. Every lesson – good or bad – is a great gift. Take it as such. You can figure it all out for yourself, but the thing is that you don't have to figure it all out by yourself.
- You are powerful. Surprised? Even if you haven't thought of yourself as powerful, you've been so since you were about two years old. Why do you think they call it the "terrible twos"? Because it was all about your unstructured yet powerful realization that there was power in the word 'no' and that by using 'no' (albeit over and over again), you could get attention. Your power is still there; it's just been diminished a bit by time and your own life experience.

- Learn it now, or learn it later: there are certain immutable laws. Among them are that you are going to have the following in your lifetime: pain, loss, suffering, gain, and success. How you respond to these is what defines who you are and the course of your life.
- You have a place on this earth, and you have a reason for being. Your job, obligation, and sacred contract is to figure it out. At the most global level, you are here to leave the world a better place that it was when you got here.
- Heroes are a dime a dozen. Real heroes are few and far between.
- Life is a process, not a destination. Everyone starts out at the beginning, bagging groceries, as it were. From this point forward, instead of looking at the end result – the success of a person, the success of a team, a beautiful painting – think about the time, effort, and love that went into making it happen. Learn to accept life on its own terms. Take the journey. It's called a process.
- You will hear 'no' far more often than you will hear 'yes'. Accept this and move on. Use 'no' as a test of your inner desire to get something accomplished. Understand that 'no' is an outer reflection, usually from someone else; your own heart and your own gut are the inner reflection.
- Life is not going to hand you what you want; you're going to have to create it. Life will give you the chance to "get it."

■ Know Your Foundation

What are the foundations of your life? They are the ideas of where and how you are to be in the world. They are the things that you know – or at least think you know – about the outside world. They encompass your values, customs, habits and beliefs.

Now is a good time to take a step back from the Internet, technology soup, and the television and challenge yourself. Begin to change how you look at your foundation. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. When I think about who I am, is that thought, that vision, something that I have created or is it something that has been created for me? (It doesn't matter who created it; what matters is that you know who did.)
2. What I daydream about my life, both now and in the future, what does that look like? And how close is that to my reality?

By asking these questions and developing your answers, you're working on the design of your life and moving yourself steps closer to luck by design.

■ Everything Counts

How do you tune into your own life and what goes on around you? Below is not a shopping list of things “to do” – this is your life list of ways “to be.” These are the foundations to creating your own “luck.”

BEING PRESENT. The idea of being present exists on a number of levels. It is truly attending to every moment, at work, in class, with your family, or in your community. Being present is about showing up – with all of your faculties.

TRUSTING YOURSELF AND YOUR INTUITION. Before you can trust your intuition, you have to discover your intuition. How do you go about it? Step one is to recognize that intuition isn’t a thing. It’s something that is in your heart and your soul, not in your head. It’s a voice. Step two is to learn about trust. It is the number one ingredient in every single relationship in your life.

BE QUIET, DON’T WORRY. Watch the flow of your thoughts, feelings and senses. When they feel like they are all flowing smoothly, you’re on track. If you’re pushing yourself to get through it, then you’re on the wrong track. Your gut tells the truth; your mind, which is not particularly helpful, rationalizes and justifies. Stay close to your gut.

LEARNING TO LISTEN – WITHOUT YOUR EGO. A terrific quality to develop and a most underused skill in everyday life or at work is a fundamental understanding of human nature. That understanding begins by listening.

ESTABLISHING INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE. Integrity is the powerful force behind what you say and what you do. It’s the most vital piece of who you are and who you will ever become. Integrity is the intersection of your systems of beliefs and your value systems.

■ Time in the Balance

Given that time is what you’ve got, it makes sense to learn how to use it, how to use it well, and how to balance different aspects of your life in relation to it. The following strategies are designed to help you to get time to work more for you. They’re not hard and fast – maybe more like soft and slow. They’re easy to do and designed to help you be more efficient with your time – and to not waste it.

DON’T FOLLOW THE CROWD. Just because “everyone is doing it” doesn’t mean that “it” is the right thing for you. Learn how to find your own path, to find the way that works best for you. It’s not the easiest thing to do, and there are risks, but in the end, being the author of your own playbook and rulebook will be the way to go.

DO ONE THING AT A TIME (AT LEAST SOMETIMES). Forget multitasking and learn to do things one at a time. (See the next point.)

SLOW DOWN. Slowing down gives you the chance to notice and appreciate the subtleties in life, to give your senses a chance to do what they're supposed to do – help you become more aware. Slowing down can also help you to find what's meaningful in your life and to help you to find more meaning in those things.

MEDITATE. There isn't any way to slow down the passage of time, but there is a way that you can make the minutes and the days count more and perhaps be more meaningful. That way is through meditation.

RESPECT TIME. There are three aspects to timing:

- Internal Timing (Yours). Your internal body works with its own sense of rhythm and timing.
- External Timing (Yours). Here's another way of looking at ego: its goal is to remain on your personal payroll – job assurance, if you will. Procrastinating helps keep your ego working – by encouraging you to resist at all levels.
- External Timing (with Others). This is simply a fancy way of saying that you should be on time. Be considerate of others' time.

RETHINK HOW YOU SPEND YOUR TIME. Whether you're a student, employed in the workforce, work out of your home, unemployed, or on vacation, how you spend your time is key and something over which you have more control than you might think.

■ Are You Going to Be the CEO?

By definition, there is only one captain, one quarterback, or one CEO and a limited number of teams and companies. Given that, what do you do? Realize that there are leaders and there are followers.

Here are some tips on not only living with but also being a great follower:

- Recognize that being a follower is not a failure – it's a function. It's a necessary function, just as any and every other part of a team.
- One day, you are going to be a leader, just not the leader.
- Within any organization, opportunities exist for any one person, regardless of rank, results, or title, to shine.
- Oftentimes being a follower means acting like you're the leader when faced with any and everything that you do. If it's your project, then you're the leader.

- You can be a follower without abdicating. In fact, being a follower can help you in defining yourself – it's a terrific lesson in learning how to put your ego in neutral.

Instead of worrying where everyone else is, try to reconcile yourself with the possibility that you are in the right place, making the absolute best of the resources you have available to you on that day.

■ **How Do You Become a Great Leader?**

Being a great leader means that you have to be a child, a student, a warrior, a teacher, and a parent – all at once. It's about being present enough to know what hat you're going to have to put on, depending on the circumstance.

- Be a child. You have to have a child's innate curiosity, the willingness to experiment, to not let the "past" be your guide. And you have to be willing to take risks.
- Be a student. Be open, be interested, and always be willing to listen. If you are, you'll see that there are lessons all around – especially from your co-workers.
- Be a warrior. Sometimes you have to go it alone – fighting for your idea, for your company, or for yourself.
- Be a teacher. You have to teach every day. This teaching can be literal: by explaining what you're doing. This teaching can be by example: letting others see how you manage and how you lead.
- Be a parent. The people who report to you often end up looking to you for more than leadership. At times, you represent the authority that they might have missed in their lives. Keep their needs for love, attention, and recognition in mind and help to fulfill those needs in ways appropriate to the business setting.

In all of these, you need to mentally adapt to each situation as a new experience and remain flexible when reasoning and problem solving.

■ **An Inner Journey**

There are six basic aspects of yoga that make it a very attractive practice and spill over nicely to how you might consider handling your life; these are:

1. There's no competition, either with others or with yourself.

2. Yoga forces you to stay within yourself, and it teaches you boundaries about yourself.
3. There is no judgment in yoga; you learn how to just “be.”
4. The practice of yoga helps you to develop self-reliance, to harness all parts of your being, and to give the capacity to take care of yourself, especially in times of crisis.
5. Yoga is about achieving subtle results, both physically and mentally.
6. Yoga is called a practice. It’s a great lesson that’s fantastic to implement with the rest of your life.

Yoga can help you rediscover the freedom and the light that you had as a child.

■ **Designing Your Luck: Finding Your Place**

At some point in life, we all can feel stuck, adrift, or have the nagging feeling that “there must be more to life than this.” If you truly want to design your own luck, creating your Life Design is a great start. Before you begin, here are three recommendations:

1. Be specific. When thinking about where you’d like to be at some point in time (otherwise known as “there”), define “there.” Too often people create goals that they really can’t get their arms around. Creating a Life Design is more than creating goals; it’s creating reachable and sustainable goals. You start by really knowing yourself, not only your strengths, but your weaknesses as well.
2. Remember that this Life Design is for your eyes only. Be honest and open. This is your own exercise, for your benefit. Don’t write as if someone else were going to see it or comment on it.
3. Understand that your Life Design is not permanent. It is subject to change at any moment – by you.

Keep your Life Design where you can refer to it often. Reflect upon what you’ve written, and refine it when necessary. It is a living and pliable document, the blueprint for your life, and will require modifications as your life unfolds.

Focusing on your Life Design will keep you moving toward designing your luck.

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