

the little book of

3

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Introduction

“Omne trium perfectum.” Or, translated from Latin, “everything that comes in three’s is perfect”.

Our minds like groups of three, they are easier for us to remember. This is why phone numbers are broken into three sections. For example (555) 555-5555.

Comedians use the rule of three in jokes. or example “An Englishman, Irishman, Scotsman walked in to a bar...”.

Speakers use the rule of three to make key points in a speech memorable. For example “...government of the people, by the people, for the people...”

I have used this rule in the “Book of 3” to reduce advice to help in several areas down to 3 memorable points.

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Philosophy

Many people have their own personal philosophy. A set of guidelines by which they live their lives. Here is mine.

1. **THINK CAN**

The first core belief in my philosophy, is that I can do anything. All you have to do is THINK you CAN. To quote Henry Ford: "Whether you think you can, or whether you think you cannot - you are right." Buddha also put it like this - "He is able, who thinks he is able." If you believe you can do something you will try harder and you will keep trying until you succeed. If you think you cannot do something you will stop at the first hurdle because it has validated what you thought.

I also believe that the more our minds hear something, the more it becomes true to us. Napoleon Hill called this 'auto suggestion'. A few years before Buddha said "What we think, we become". Repeat to yourself that which you want, several times a day and write it down and read that too. Do this every day. Whatever you keep thinking to yourself will eventually come true.

2. **SEE GOOD**

The second guiding principle in my philosophy, is to always SEE the GOOD. In the words John Lubbock "what we see depends mainly on what we look for." Or as Monty Python puts it - "Always look on the bright side of life". There is good in every person and every situation. If you look for it you will see it - I promise. If you think a person or a situation is bad, you will look for things to validate that thought. But, if you think a person or situation is good, you will look for things to validate thought instead. Either way, its your choice. William Shakespeare said

"it is neither good nor bad, but thinking makes it so." You decide your attitude to everything, and your attitude determines how you deal with each situation. Walk in to the situation thinking its going to be good. Make a decision to make the best of everything, and that is what you will get.

When talking about other people, whether they are in the room or not - make it a rule to either compliment or keep quiet. First try and compliment people as much as possible (sincerely). This will help you focus on their positive attributes and not resent any perceived flaws they might have. Secondly, if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all. Talk about people as if they were in the room. Remind yourself that behind every behavior is a reason and you don't know all the facts. When dealing with other people assume good intentions. Never ascribe to malice what can be ascribed to ignorance. Don't assume they are deliberately trying to upset you. Ask yourself if you could take what they said or did any other way. Or maybe they have something bad going on in their life.

See the hidden opportunity. When a situation doesn't turn out the way you initially would have wanted it to, maybe it will mean you will be able to take advantage of an even better opportunity instead. When one door closes, another one opens. Maybe its a lesson for you to learn - even if the lesson is only to not do it that way again. Learn the lesson and do better next time. Lastly, be grateful for what you do have - not what you don't have. Be grateful it's not worse. There is always someone who would love to be in your situation no matter how bad you think it is. Every day tell yourself one thing that you have to be grateful for. It will make you just a little bit happier. In our house we go around the dinner table and share what we are grateful for.

3. BE KIND

The third rule in my philosophy is to always BE KIND The Dalai Lama

says "Whenever possible be kind. It is always possible." Or to quote Google - "Don't be evil." The first two rules are really about me, this last rule is my guide on how to treat others. Always give help, when this isn't possible, at least don't hinder. Do a good deed daily, preferably without telling anyone. Just something small. It will make you feel great and it will make the other persons day. Who knows, it might even inspire the other person to do a good deed too, and look you're making the world a better place.

You get what you give. What goes around comes around. Reciprocity. You reap what you sow. Karma. There are so many aspects to this one. If you are nice to people they will be nice to you. If you are mean to people they will be mean to you. if you need help, help someone else first. If you want to be respected, respect others first. If you want more friends, be friendly to other people first. This really boils down to the "golden rule" - do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Success

A lot has been written on the topic of success - how to be successful. When you boil it down, it really is achieved by just three things - Goals, Thinking, and Doing. Success really is that simple. No matter what it is you are looking to achieve. Although its not necessarily easy - but thats a different matter. This will explain the three steps.

1. GOAL

First and foremost, you need to know what it is you are trying to achieve. You need to know your goal. It should be a specific goal, with numbers in. Vague goals cannot be achieved because you don't really know what it is you are trying to do. Take for example a goal of "I want to get fit." Great, how do you know when you've reached your goal, or even as you are working towards it how do you know how much progress you have made. "I will run 2 miles in 15 minutes by September 31st" is much better. Its specific. You know what you are aiming for and you will know when you have reached it. All good goals have numbers in them.

You should be able to write on a post-it note. A goal that you can't explain in a small space is too complex, its going to be difficult to achieve. For example "I will run 2 miles uphill in an average time of 15 minutes calculated over a one week period whilst maintaining a pulse of 85" Thats too complex, there are too many things to focus on for you to possibly be able to attain them all. To "run 2 miles in 15 minutes by September" is much better. Its simple, you can keep that in your head.

Lastly, and this is very important, you should only have one goal at a time. "If you chase two rabbits, you catch neither."

2. THINK

You have a goal with numbers now you can write on a post-it. That's a great start. Next you need to start thinking about it. The notion that you should be able to write your goal on a post-it isn't just a suggestion, it's the next step. Write out your goal on a post-it note (or three). Then read your goal to yourself at the beginning and the end of every day. The very wise Earl Nightingale said "we become what we think about." If you read your goal to yourself twice a day you will think about it and soon enough you will start to get ideas on how you can make your goal happen. It is very important you read your goal to yourself twice a day, morning and night.

At the same time you are reading your goal to yourself you need to tell yourself that you can do it, that you will do it. A positive attitude is really important in everything you do because it determines how hard you try and it determines how many times you try. Positive attitudes are like self-fulfilling prophecies. In the words of Henry Ford "Whether you think you can or whether you think you cannot - you are right." He was right. Don't just tell yourself you can do it, imagine yourself doing it. Picture yourself doing it in your mind's eye. Your brain cannot distinguish between something you imagine and reality. Imagining yourself already doing it will give you confidence to pursue your goal, it will also help you come up with ways to achieve your goal.

Make a plan. "A goal without plan is just a wish." You don't have to plan every step necessary to complete your goal but you do need to know your definite next step. If you have no idea where to start - find someone who has already done what you want to do and learn from them. Google them, read their story online. Ask your friends, find someone locally who has already done it and go talk to them. Why reinvent the wheel? As you go along your journey towards your goal unexpected things may crop up, that's OK. Change your plan, but

never give up. It is inevitable that you will achieve your goal so keep trying.

3. **DO**

Knowing your goal, believing you can do it and having some sort of plan are important - but they will be for nothing if you don't follow the last step. You need to take action for your goal to actually come to fruition.

You must do one thing towards goal every single day. Schedule 10 minutes to do this at the same time every day. You only need to do 10 minutes a day. Sometimes you will be tired and that is all you will do, other days you will be inspired and do lots more. Worst case you do 70 minutes towards your goal. 70 minutes is progress. Best case you will do much more. Do it at the same time every day, make it a habit. Never miss a day. If your goal is that important to you then 10 minutes is nothing to spare.

If you come up against roadblocks, ask others for help. Use Napoleon Hills "mastermind principle." If you can, ask someone who has done it before, if not, ask someone you trust. Two minds are better than one. You will come up with a way to do it.

Never, ever, give up. be like the Little Engine That Could - think you can - and you will!

Productivity

To make sure I get stuff done I follow the productivity principles of “Zen To Done” by Leo Babauta.

- <http://zenhabits.net/zen-to-done-ztd-the-ultimate-simple-productivity-system/>
- <http://www.archive.org/details/ZenToDoneTheUltimateSimpleProductivitySystemByLeoBabauta>

There are many other more complex productivity systems out there but they really all come back to the following three concepts.

1. COLLECT

Always carry a small notebook, or have a note taking app on your phone, and write down all tasks, ideas, projects, or other information that pop into your head. You never know when you will get a great idea or when you will get a todo that you have to do. Get them out of your head and onto paper (or app), so you don't have to worry about remembering it. Use your precious mental RAM for more important work.

2. PROCESS

At least once a day go through all your “inboxes” (any place you can get a task to do from for example your notepad, note taking app, email, voicemail, CRM etc).

For each item go through and either:

- Delete it (if you don't need to do it)
- Delegate it (to someone else),
- Do it (now - if it will take less than 2 minutes (including

- filing it for future reference),
- Defer it (to your one todo list)

Then set the 1 - 3 Most Important Tasks to be done next.

Split your one todo list into 2 sections: "DO 1ST" and "TODO." As you go through and process, with any task to be deferred add it under the TODO section. Then go through and move the next Most Important Tasks to DO 1ST. By splitting them out it helps you focus on the Most Important Tasks and it prevents you from being overwhelmed by everything else under TODO. You should process on a daily basis. Make each item in the list actionable. For example "Get labels from Staples" rather than "Find a way to organize boxes." Also split larger tasks in to bite size chunks For example "Collect income statements", "Collect receipts", "Enter income in tax software," "Send return" instead of just "Do taxes."

Here is a sample todo list:

Todo.txt

DO 1ST

Send tax into to accountant

Call Chamber of Commerce for membership packet

Call XYZ corp about upcoming speech

TODO

Find new web host

Outsource site billing

Set up interview with Michael Jordan

Wipe old computer

Put old computer on eBay

Arrange lunch with Shaquille O'Neal

3. **DO**

At the start of your work day go through the items in DO 1ST on your todo list and do them in order. Focus on one task at a time, without distractions. Do your MITs (Most Important Tasks) early in the day to get them out of the way and to ensure that they get done. Focus on doing these tasks before moving on to anything else.

Attitude

A positive attitude can help you in many ways - your happiness, your health, your success. Here are a few simple ways for you to maintain a positive attitude everyday.

1. **START YOUR DAY RIGHT.**

The way you start your day will normally set the tone of the rest of the day. Make every effort to start your day right and you are more likely to have a good day and a good attitude.

- Read or listen to something positive and inspiring.
- Avoid negative news on the TV.
- Exercise and get those endorphins flowing. It will put you in a good mood for the rest of the day.
- Prepare the night before. Get your clothes out and make your lunch the night before so you aren't as rushed in the morning.
- Choose to have a good day.

2. **PICK A POSITIVE ATTITUDE.**

Our attitudes are like self fulfilling prophecies. If you start out thinking something will be difficult it will probably end up being difficult because you will focus on the problems rather than the successes. You will probably also give up sooner. However if you start out thinking that you can do something you will try harder and you will keep trying. Make sure to pick a positive attitude when starting out. It will have an impact on the outcome.

3. **SELF TALK.**

The more our mind hears something the more it believes it. Even if it is you who is saying it. This is why brainwashing works. Why not use this

concept to help yourself? The average person has 12,000 thoughts a day. Even if you only change 10% of those thoughts that's 1200 opportunities to brainwash yourself everyday! Become aware of what you are saying to yourself and then decide if that is what you want to happen. Are you telling yourself the outcome you really want? If not, change the wording of your thoughts to increase your chances of success. Phrase it positively. For example "I will jump up and reach the 7 foot mark on the wall."

Health

I call this section “health” and not “diet” on purpose. I am not a fan of “popular” fad diets for a couple of reasons. Firstly, people go “on the diet” and lose weight. Once they have lost the weight they go off the diet and put the weight on. Its not permanent weight loss. Second, most fad “diets” that focus on eating, or not eating, a small number of foods are simply not healthy. Your body needs a wide range of nutrients. One exception in my opinion is Weight Watchers this is healthy and sustainable for the long term.

Most “good” diets comprise of 3 basic concepts - eat less, eat healthier and exercise. I should mention at this point that you should consult with your Doctor before making any health changes. With that in mind, here are my suggestions for health that can be followed long term resulting in slow but sure weight loss. These suggestions have been refered to as the "Half Diet" in the past.

1. PORTIONS

The first concept in any weight loss plan is portion control. It can is difficult to always know how much of eat food you should eat. So why not keep it simple? Eat less by using a small plate. We tend to fill our plates up when serving our own food. Using a 10” plate instead of 12” plate will mean you serve yourself 20% less food. Just by using a small plate you can reduce your overall portions.

Did you know that most restaurants servings are between 2x and 4x the recommended portion size. When eating out ask for a doggy bag at the beginning of the meal and put 1/2 your serving in it.

Simply - use half size plates.

2. PLANTS

The new, simpler, nutritional recommendations on choosemyplate.gov show that approximately half your plate should be fruit and vegetables. Whenever you eat simply make sure half of it is plant based. Eat that half first too so if you get full you have eaten the best part first. This really is the easiest way to make sure you are eating a reasonably healthy diet.

In other words - eat half plants.

3. PHYSICAL

The last part of the health puzzle is physical activity. Did you know a 10 minute walk has been shown to offer the same benefits as a 20 minute jog? Research also suggests that the best time to walk is after your evening meal. Start by going for a 10 minute walk after dinner. Slowly but surely it will make a difference.

In summary - walk half an hour.

That's it - half plates, half plants, half hour walk.

People

Have you ever met someone and felt an instant connection to them? Have you ever met someone and instantly liked them? I've been told that people who meet Will Smith, Oprah Winfrey and Bill Clinton were immediately drawn to them. Immediately liked them.

Why is it so important to be likeable? One word - Likeonmics. If you are likable you will get "paid". You'll get paid financially in getting hired ahead of less likable people. You'll get paid in promotions at work. You will be paid in favors. Favors like job recommendations. Favors like business opportunities. You will also be paid in friendship.

But people are born likable? No! Being likeable is a skill that can be learned. There have been many books written on this subject, probably the most famous, and the best in my opinion is "How to win friends and influence people" by Dale Carnegie. Who can memorize the entire contents of a 290 book? Certainly not me. My secret to being likable involves using PIN's on people. Let me explain.

1. PRESENT

"P" is for present.

Be 100% present when you are talking to people. Give people your full and undivided attention.

- * Stop facebooking.

- * Stop checking your email.

- * Take your eyes away from the screen.

- * Make eye contact.

- * Smile at them.

- * Listen. You were given 2 ears and 1 mouth. It is said there is a reason for that ratio. Here is a trick to "active listening" - repeat back in your head what the person is saying to you.

2. INTERESTS

“I” is for interests.

Be interested. Be genuinely interested. People like people like themselves.

First and foremost to be likeable let the other person talk about what they are interested in. That's right, for you to be “likable” you can let the other person do the talking. Show you are interested by maintaining eye contact, by nodding and by acknowledging what they are saying.

Find common ground. Find mutual interests - no matter how small. Remember, people like people like themselves. Look for cues. What do they have pictures of on their desk. Do they have a sports teams logo on their clothes? Pick up on these cues? Keep up with current affairs - all of them. Me, I not only have a good idea of what is going on in politics and the stockmarket but I also make a point to know who is leading in major sports events like the superbowl as well as who won the last big reality show. I'm not not interested enough in these things to actually watch them but I am interested enough to take a minute to read the news about them. Having these nuggets tucked up my sleeve means I can usually find some “common ground.”

3. NAMES

“N” is for Names

Use their name. People love the sound of their own name. It makes them feel special. It makes them feel you care.

Call people names. Nice names. Compliment them. It will make them feel so special. Make it a genuine compliment. No matter how small it is, it will make their day.

If you are trying to get them to give you some help - name what is in it

for them. Give them a WIIFM. (Whats In It For Me.)