

ACT AS IF

Question Everything, Set Life Goals, Achieve.
What are you waiting for?

G. Richard Bradford

What would you do if you just started the most interesting
book you've ever read? Would you read it?

Would you?

Copyright © 2012 G. Richard Bradford

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 1482796562

ISBN-13: 978-1482796568

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to you, the reader. There are times in life when people say, “Someone should do something about that.” This is me doing something about one of those things. This thing is that I am doing something about is your future. I need your help. Let’s make it better.

To Empower Success

2011 I was afraid, as I held grandfather's hand as he lapsed into and out of consciousness hours before he died in his home from cancer that had riddled his body, I looked into his eyes and asked the best question I'd ever asked at that point in my life,

“If you could do one more thing, what would it be?”

...

...

“Help one more person.”

That was the last thing he said to me, my mission in life was born:

To Empower Success

Prologue

As Donell H. Meadows comments, “It is great art to remember that boundaries are of our own making, and that they can and should be reconsidered for each new discussion, problem, or purpose.” This book, more or less, is that same principle on steroids. The evidence is overwhelming that the future will be like the past for a little while. The idea is to find weaknesses in the way you operate and to make significant enhancements so that you are surrounded and capitalizing on more opportunities on a day-to-day basis than you are today. In order to do this, being able to sort and prioritize the types of opportunities that are of interest to you is of the utmost importance. This is a New York Times Bestseller. As such, you can expect me to help you enlighten yourself. Specifically, the emphasis is on that which you know that just ain’t so and that which you don’t know that you ought to. I know exactly what I am doing. Do you? The duration of each chapter is a function of my ability to convey the concept in as few words as possible and force you to eat your vegetables. Inside the table of contents, you’ll notice that I’ve the biggest ideas that you’d love to know more about winning but for some reason haven’t been able to be as successful as you’d like to be. The main concepts include: Winning Health, Winning Time, Winning Relationships, Winning Money and Winning in General. All of this requires the Winning Attitude. I am going to teach you how to force yourself to have it and it is just that easy. Do it. ACT AS IF.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Continuing to read is diametrically opposed to your existence as you know it. There is no better time than now. The measure of a man is the purpose he creates.

This is me.

Here I go.

You're invited.

Guidelines: The New You

Prologue.....	v
TLDR; Stop Sabotaging Yourself.....	11
ACT AS IF.....	20
The Famous Spider Story.....	20
Isn't that what "Carpe Diem" means, anyway?.....	23
The Chapter of Blank Pages.....	25
Damn, You Are Stubborn.....	39
The Framework: ACT AS IF.....	45
Approach.....	49
The Traveling Salesman.....	53
Willpower Doesn't Work.....	55
Time & Health.....	57
The Force Is Strong With This One.....	62
The No Regrets Model.....	75
Shortlist Your Priorities.....	77
Insert Witty Quote About Prioritization.....	80
On Purpose.....	85
Make Life A Game.....	92
Perception is Reality.....	93
Highly Selective Ownership.....	98
Play to Win.....	102
The First Step is the Hardest Part.....	108
Never Allow yourself to be conditioned to fail.....	110
Comfort Zone: Highway to the Danger Zone.....	118

The Path to Mediocrity: Were you on it?..... 123

Acquire 123

 First and Foremost: The Power of Words 124

 Clothing, it’s on you in public, it matters 125

 Uncommon Sense..... 126

 The Value of Being Lazy..... 127

 Get Energized 130

 Indulge In Doing Nothing..... 131

 The Cost of Clutter..... 133

 Who is John Galt? 135

 OPM: Theory and Practice are Different 136

 Beat the System..... 140

 When A Loss is a Win in Disguise 143

 Perpetually Avoid Mistakes..... 146

 Go for 4th Down Conversions..... 152

Win 153

Win Relationships..... 153

 Hot Women 154

 Key Insights To Hot Women 156

 Look at things from their Perspective 162

 Be Cheesy..... 163

 Workout To Look Good Naked 163

 How To Land The Woman of Your Dreams 163

 Sex: Do You Know When You Want it? 164

 The Value of Mentorship..... 167

 __¿rULES ?_wHAt_rULeS? THERE ARE NO RULES! 169

ACT AS IF

Win Wealth.....	171
A Chapter with No Text	174
So, you want to become a millionaire?	174
Meet The Richest People – It’s So Hard.....	175
Make it the Easy Way	176
What is Business?	185
Choose Your Decimal Point	188
How I Lost \$1,000,000	191
How I Made it Back - 3387.35955%.....	195
How To Wrote A New York Times Bestselling Book.....	199
How To Start A Hedge Fund	204
Further Considerations.....	204
Glen Bradford accidentally a whole coca cola bottle?	204
Arnold Schwarzenegger.....	207
My Response To Arnold Schwarzenegger:	210
Arguments Against Supporting Evidence	213
Aholism	219
Societal Intelligence breeds Social Stupidity	221
What is wealth?	222
My Brief Thoughts on Money.....	228
OODA? 2nd Most Underrated Learning Framework (Optional).....	229
Conclusion	231
The End.....	231
STUFF	263
How Do You Know That You Know?.....	264
Just Some Quotes	265

What's your Legacy?	267
A False Paradigm.....	269
Anticipating progress and achievement is often an exaggeration of what experiencing it is really like.	270
My Biggest Regrets (Optional).....	270
How to Price Equities Effectively.....	274
The Most facetious thing I've ever written during the short period of time when I was a millionaire.....	279
An Entire Chapter on Systemic Risk	280
Success: Getting What You Want	280
ProTips.....	280
Chapter 1 – H ₀ : Life is What You Make It	354
BREAK.....	360

TLDR; Stop Sabotaging Yourself

"Too long; didn't read" indicates that the reader did not actually read the statement due to its undue length. For those TLDRs, I present the "Cliff Notes" version, without the Cliff.

I, Glen Bradford, have systematically trained myself to quit disadvantageous behaviors. That's pretty much all there is to it. As far as you are concerned, I am a brain surgeon. I am inside your head and I am removing **your** thoughts that are holding **you** back. There's a lot of junk in here, so let's start taking out the trash. I know you're excited! Me too! I live for this stuff.

Prepare to:

1. Define self-imposed unnecessary mental constraints that you currently operate under and eliminate those that are disadvantageous
2. Establish self-reinforcing behaviors that are advantageous in terms of getting what you want.

Let's break that into more pieces:

1. Define what it is that you want.
2. Figure out the most advantageous approach to getting what you want.
3. Acquire all the tools and resources that you will need to get what you want.
4. Get what you want.

You see, success is a dish best served whenever you want it and I want it all the time.

How bad do you want to be successful 5 years from today? 10 years from today? 20 years from today?

Well...Get on with it then!

What the heck is wrong with wanting to be successful today instead of in 20 years!?! Something is clearly wrong with wanting it NOW. You just don't know what it is. I am going to do everything that I can to make sure that you aren't successful now so that you can be successful in 20 years. Doesn't work like that, does it? Didn't think so. Buckle up.

Except to learn from experience, one should never waste time looking back. There is nothing you can do to change your past. However, you can actively choose your perception and thus directly impact your future. In fact, you can become virtually anyone you want to be. Why be the average frustrated chump that lives a suboptimal life of mediocrity due to their inability to break past self-imposed constraints? That was the old you.

As far as you and I are concerned, that person is dying every second that passes and will begin consuming less of your time effective right now. You and I are now on a mission to awaken the new you. Fortunately, the new you has been inside of you all along. You and those around you have locked him up. You've put him in constraints. Let's get him out and go play. Envision who you want to be and be that person. No excuses, there are no second chances. Always..... Do it now.

This is effectively my guide to living a better life. I'm not talking about better regarding how other people measure your life. I'm talking about a better life for you, however you choose to measure it.

I hope you will find some of the truths I say highly alarming and shocking. That means that you are about to get better. That is the first reaction to accommodation. Accommodation is that feeling that you get when you realize that you've come across new information that changes the way that you perceive the world. Assimilation is just fitting in new information to support your world viewpoints regardless of whether they are factually accurate **or not**. Assimilation is the standard of comfortable and boring. If you want to grow, you must re-tool your brain to find comfort in accommodation. Would you be shocked to know that you can make 100x return on your money? Would you be shocked to know that you can date the most beautiful people on earth? It's actually easier to do this than it is to make minimum wage and be desperately single or married to a pig. Pick and choose. It's your life. Your choices result in your life. Fact. I will not help you if you do not help yourself.

The big lie is coming.

I've failed at writing this book **74** times previously.

Yep, that's a lie. I just made it up, but you still believed it for a second and it established rapport and kind of made you like me, just a little bit.

That's important to note. If you say it with confidence, people will assume you know from experience. Sometimes it is incredibly useful to be able to act more experienced than you are so you can gain opportunities to grow.

ACT AS IF

Other times, you need to be able to identify you are not only cheating yourself by faking it, but you are also cheating others. The difference? Perceived sustainability.

OK....

So what is perceived sustainability?

Perceived sustainability is whether or not you think that the actions that are at hand can be done continuously on a forward basis and will benefit all of the stakeholders involved. Are people being treated fairly? Do they feel like they are being treated fairly? Are you treating yourself fairly? What is fair? Who measures it? You do. Who says what is fair and reasonable? You do. Who deals with the consequences of your perception? You do.

So, where do we go from here? Let's begin by looking at the biggest problem in your life. It's the biggest problem in my life. It always is. It always will be. The problem is:

Biggest Problem: What am I going to do now?

The best way to approach the biggest problem in life is to begin by simplifying the problem and seek the answer to the simplified problem:

Simplified: What is the most advantageous thing I can do now?

See, now you have purpose where there was none. Now you have direction where previously you were directionally challenged. I spent the first quarter-century of my life directionally challenged. Guess what happens to people that are directionally challenged? There are three options for the directionally challenged. They follow in the order or **default prioritization**:

1. Do what other people tell you to do.
2. Do nothing, because you are lazy, the natural human condition.
3. Do something out of habit.

The trick is that most people spend most of their time in option 1. They do it because they "have" to in order to survive. Just ask them, they'll tell you that they "have" to as if they don't have any other available options. They'll tell you that they do it to get by. I can assure you that this is not a solution to the simplified problem above, so why is this you? Here is what is going to happen. You and I, as a team, are setting up and installing thought processes that result in habits that will enable you to do what you want as opposed to getting stuck in option 1.

For all you naysayers out there that think that directionally challenged people do something outside of the three options listed, doing something new is a habit. That habit is a good habit to have. If you have it, you're further along than most. High five!

Winning, in your case, can be defined as switching these priorities around with a small twist:

Switching 1 and 3:

1. Do something out of habit.
2. Do nothing, because you are lazy, the natural human condition.
3. Do what other people tell you to do.

Final Iteration of Priorities – Rewording with Purpose:

1. Do what you want.
2. Do nothing, because you are lazy, the natural human condition.
3. Do what you have to do, to do what you want to do (1).

So, we are getting somewhere. Let's revisit the question.

Simplified: What is the most advantageous thing I can do now?

As you've noticed, all questions or problems can be broken down into even smaller components. If you break them down far enough, everything is binary. Binary is yes or no. It is true or false. Breaking down large, complicated problems into simpler, step-wise, solvable problems is how you make progress. Further simplification of the biggest problem of life involves identifying discrete opportunities. Let's work through a few situations that you've found yourself in where you've made the wrong decision so that you can begin to visualize yourself making the right decision and running with it.

(YES OR NO)

1. Should I approach and talk to that person over there?
2. Should I take ownership of that right now at a specific price?

How did you get to these problems? Do you have enough of these problems? Do you go outside and run into people that you'd like to speak with? If you don't, your questions should be:

1. Should I go outside and try to meet new people?
2. Should I try to look for things that I might want to have?

All I am saying is that you have to start somewhere. If you don't start, then your failure rate is 100% in perpetuity. That's a great way to live life, to

fail at everything you didn't even know was possible. Find your problems. Make sure that they are the problems that you want to have. Start solving them. Own your life.

Which problems do you want to have?

In your case, you probably have not defined your specific goals. But, I'm sure you can visualize what those goals might be. In fact, take 10 seconds, put this book down and visualize yourself achieving one of those goals. Imagine yourself being cool, calm, collected. You're living in the thrill of the moment and you are unlocking your true potential. You can feel the energy that you thought had just peaked inside of you starting to run much faster and harder than you ever knew was possible. The momentum is undeniable. It's unbelievable that this is happening to you. At first, you were uncertain and now you fully embrace the magic of the moment. You take it and mold it into your own, perfect creation.

Did it feel nice? Did it feel right? Kind of empowering? Isn't that how you want to feel?

Soooooo..... let's talk about goals and then I'll show you my best practice cognitive framework.

First Step: What do you want?

The first step to *getting* what you want is *figuring out* exactly what you want.

For some people, this is easy, but for others, it is nearly impossible. For some, the goal is crystal clear, as if looking through a window. For others, it is as if they are looking through an opaque glass.

The easiest way I can tell you to determine your life goals is to think

about what you liked to do as a kid.

Think back to when you were a kid... Or maybe you already know. What is something you just can't stop thinking about? Whatever that is, that might be your life's work trying to get out of the constraints you have it under.

My father once had an original song that popped into his head when he was 25. For years he would occasionally sit down at the piano and pick out the tune. At some point he wrote the words down. Finally, the world came together and he not only recorded the song, but he made a music video out of it.

Funny part was, he never had any intentions of selling it, or becoming famous by it. He just had to get it out of his head. Having done that, he now tells his college classes he wrote and sang in a music video. To him, that was success.

Second Step: Ask for it

If you don't ask for what you want, how do you expect to get it? Are you afraid to ask yourself what you want? Odds are that you're more afraid to ask yourself what you want than you are afraid to ask other people and yet for some reason the default assumption is that you are asking someone else, not yourself. Regardless, you lack the ability to read other people's minds. How do you expect them to read yours? You can hardly read your own!

So, I'm asking you to not read this book

Not all of it, anyway. Why waste your time on stuff that doesn't interest you? Look up the chapters you think are the most interesting and start there. If you don't find a particular section interesting, don't read it. That's what I'd do. Spend that time doing something you love. My grandmother gave me some keen advice the other day. She noted that in her book club, the first hundred pages and the last fifty of most books is all you really want to or need to read in order to experience the full value of the book. Everything inbetween for most authors tends to be highly repetitive and trivial. When you read, plan accordingly.

To Live – Or Die Trying!

This section might bore you, or it might excite you, don't be afraid to skip ahead. The fact is that I begin solving problems by doing my best to define them as objectively as possible. I do my best to start from scratch when I approach each new problem.

ACT AS IF

Who is Glen Bradford? I am Glen Bradford. I run my life like a business. The thing about choosing to run my life like a business is that it allows me to leverage well-documented and thought out constructs that will allow me to make decisions that will drive towards the goal. Businesses are predominant in capitalist economies, where most of them are privately owned and administered to earn profit to increase the wealth of their owners. I am a sole proprietorship, meaning that I am owned and run by one individual, that is myself.

Over the last 25 years, I have relentlessly studied the consequences of various decisions and actions made by people and businesses and have decided that reality is what you can get away with. As such, with this framework, I am going to begin a process of continually restating and reviewing that which I am doing at any particular point in my life in order to more effectively achieve my goal.

So it took me 25 years to figure out my goal. I say, "Let's not overcomplicate things." Some would say that life has no purpose, you have to create your own. I say that an existence with a purpose is going to beat an existence without one any day of the week. Ends up that my purpose, my goal and my mission statement as a business are all the same. Here they are, derived from necessity, in tearsheet form.

The Goal: To Live.

There is only one goal. Anything that brings me closer to achieving it is productive and all other things are not productive. The best framework that exists for making business decisions is the Theory of Constraints.

The underlying assumption is that my business can be measured and controlled on three measures: throughput, operational expense, and inventory. Defined below:

Throughput is the rate at which I feel that I am living in the moment.

Inventory is all that I have that enables me to generate throughput.

Operational expense is the time that I spend turning inventory into throughput.

Throughput: Throughput is maximized when I achieve flow. Flow is the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity.

The Theory of Constraints dictates that before the goal itself can be reached, necessary conditions must be first met. The only condition required in my case is that I need to be alive in order to pursue the goal.

The Theory of Constraints is based on the premise that the rate of goal achievement by a goal-oriented system is limited by at least one constraint. Only by increasing flow through the constraint can overall throughput be increased.

If I wish to increase their attainment of The Goal I should therefore test proposed decisions against three questions using the terms defined above in bold. Will the proposed change:

1. Increase throughput? How?
2. Reduce investment? How?

3. Reduce operating expense? How?

So, that's our goal in summary form. Let's talk about some basic conclusions that can be drawn right off the bat and then I'll show you why having a clearly defined goal is important.

1. If it doesn't help you feel alive now or in the future, you can cut it out of your life today and never look back.
2. If you can spend less time doing things that you have to do in order to experience living in the moment, do that. Waste as little time as possible doing things that you'd prefer not to do. But make sure that you do what you have to do in order to find yourself living in as many moments that you want to find yourself in as possible.
3. Life is an adventure story where you pick your own ending by picking the various ways that you get to drive throughput. Wise choices result in incredible and mind boggling consequences that others will attribute to luck. You are not so foolish in your attributions. You know that luck is a habit. Luck is merely a result of deliberate practice.

Without having a goal, you might find yourself like some of the "best and brightest" that I've met that measure themselves using a score that they made over 10 years ago. I was at a Google party in San Francisco a while ago and met some of their employees who quickly told me their SAT score as an introductory point --- as if I cared what they scored on a standardized test a decade ago. While a high test score is something to be proud of (I guess), I will certainly encourage you to measure yourself in ways that matter to you in regards to making your life tangibly better. Are you making progress towards living a better life? That's where we start. Do not lie to yourself. Most deception is bad but self-deception is worse. Are you making progress? I don't care what the answer is, the fact is that you are making progress today by reading this New York Times Bestseller. So let's make even more progress. Come on!

ACT AS IF

Before we get involved with the advantageous dynamics of the cognitive framework that drives the ACT AS IF mentality, let's start with a story that illustrates just what you can become if you ACT AS IF.

The Famous Spider Story

Life doesn't often present the opportunity to save people's lives. But when it does...

In high school, like many others, I would often daydream about how I would stop a crazed gunman if one suddenly burst into the back of the classroom. I had tactics planned, partnerships established, and devices used all in my plan. While the teacher droned on about theoretical nonsense, I was disarming a really nasty looking guy.

Then one day, it actually happened. Only I was on an airplane, and the nasty looking guy was actually a nasty looking spider. A deadly spider that had somehow found its way into the airplane.

The following is a true story of an event that transpired in about 1 minute as my Southwest flight was accelerating down the runway at takeoff. This particular flight was from Indianapolis to Midway en route to Tampa, FL.

But first, let's rewind to earlier that day. After all, this story is where this all began for me. Seriously, I can't make this stuff up.

This was the day that I woke up and decided something was distinctly different. I didn't know what it was. I rolled out of bed in Indianapolis and felt like I was more free than I had ever been. I got up feeling a new sense of power and confidence. I wasn't sure what was happening but I knew something had changed forever.

Fast forward. I had just finished making the usual conversation with Jason who was the passenger next to me and had begun to assume the position to fall asleep when I noticed there was something brown under Jason's collar. First instinct, coffee stain.

Sitting in the middle seat on the left side of the airplane, positioned with the individual with the alleged brown coffee stain under the collar of his white button down to my right, things got interesting. I took a second glance to confirm my suspicion and that's when.... Yes, he had a nice, freshly pressed dress shirt, but more importantly to my alarm, the "coffee

spot” was moving. Yep, it was definitely moving, in very spider like fashion, I might add.

My face flushed white like a toilet as I instantly analyzed the situation. My gut instinct which was immediately put down by my inner logic was a combination of shouting, pointing, creating distance, and potentially smashing the hairy brown leg under his collar. Now I found myself raising his level of passenger concern; he was looking at me as if he was starting to get agitated that I might lose my lunch and he'd have to spend the duration of the flight next to a passenger that easily succumbed to motion sickness. I instantly knew that if I was to alert him to the large hairy leg protruding from his collar that a variety of negative events could occur:

1. I could catch a flailing elbow to the face.
2. I could induce sheer panic among the passengers.
3. I could end up with whatever that beast was crawling on top of me.
4. The worst case of losing the beast as it runs for cover somewhere else on the airplane. I knew the worst case was to know that it is out there and not know where it is. I mean this was a huge spider.

It took me a few seconds to assess my options but clearly I had to act soon.

The plane was hustling down the runway in takeoff mode as I broke every rule in the book and calmly unbuckled my seatbelt. I directed my attention to the stewardess, the bottleneck of this operation, and prepared for direct inquiry in a growing hostile environment.

I proceeded to lean forward in the front seat of the airplane and demanded in a remarkably calm voice, “I need a napkin please.”

This was quickly followed with the expected response from the stewardess, “Sir, can you please take your seat.”

To which I naturally and most confidently replied, “Yes, gladly, but I require a napkin.”

This was followed with an even more forceful “Sir, take your seat.”

At this point, I had quite a fan base. In fact, had there been a marshall on this small flight, I am sure I would have ended up being on the national evening news. As it was, the first 5-6 rows were starting to get concerned that I was potentially an unruly passenger and the guy on my left behind me put his hand on my shoulder.

I instantly changed to a sympathetic gesture, “I understand, I need a napkin, this cannot wait.”

Success. The stewardess rewarded me with a napkin and I sat back in my

seat. Problem solved as far as everyone else was concerned.

Now, I'm not usually afraid of spiders, but this leg that was originally sticking out of Jason's collar had now been followed by the body of the spider. This thing was practically sunbathing under these airplane lights as the front wheels of the airplane broke ground. I'd compare the size of it to a silver dollar but it was larger in size. It was approximately 2 and a half inches in diameter, brown, leggy and hairy. Perhaps the spider knew that I knew where he was and his cover was blown.

Jason was very concerned at this point and I flashed him eyes that spoke loudly, 'Everything is OK.' That instant he began to relax I went into quick, swift motion. But my thoughts were racing. Heck, I didn't know how much his shirt cost and I didn't want to be liable for a dry-cleaning bill or a new shirt. I did recognize that his shirt was better than any I had ever worn. This would be an expensive operation if I misfired.

But I went for it. My aim was true. I successfully cupped the spider in my hand to the point where I could feel it squirm. At this point Jason was clenching his right fist as if to punch me. I quickly squeezed and extracted the spider from his shirt into the napkin. A split second later, I squeezed the life out of the spider.

But now what? Everyone in the first 3 rows was now on full alert, figuring I was a crazed lunatic, having just confronted the stewardess and apparently punched my seat mate.

I decide to go on the offense. "Listen," I said, "I am squeezing a fairly large spider that I have captured from your shirt. I imagine that you'd prefer not to see it."

Jason nodded "no" figuring I was still some sort of terrorist. I gave the napkin one last death grip and passed it forward to the stewardess.

But I also have a bit of an actor's flair. So, despite the fact that the little plane was in full climb and the seatbuckle sign was still on, I unbuckled, stood up, and turned around.

"Show's over. This was all an act. I am a professional. Do not do this at home." and sat down to applause.

I felt like James Bond. Jason tried to buy me a drink but the stewardess insisted that it was going to be free for my heroism. The next 10 minutes spent with me explaining the specifics to Jason why I handled the situation the way that I had. He was very impressed by my proactive method of not freaking everyone out. He realized quickly that things could have been much worse.

The plane, which a few minutes before had been filled with strangers listening to their ipods (or wishing they could) now became a compartment filled with friends.

Everyone wanted to tell me stories about the last time they had encountered a spider and the time that they had seen their biggest spider

and times where they had been most afraid.

Today, this day, was life changing. I had identified who and what I needed to be and lived it, in the moment, to its fullest.

Isn't that what "Carpe Diem" means, anyway?

Whatever you think, you're right...

...Umm yeah, Literally translated: Seize the day.

I seized the spider, and in that motion seized the moment, and in seizing the moment seized the day.

Fact is: You know where you are going and how to get there.

ACT AS IF... what? What does it mean? It means that at any point in your life if you can identify a more advantageous thing to be doing than the thing that you are or were doing, you should immediately set out on this more advantageous, recently identified course of action. This course may very well be inaction. Patience or inaction is a virtue.

Still wondering what ACT AS IF means? What does it mean? It means whatever you want it to mean! Do you want to ACT AS IF you are a millionaire in the making? Do you want to ACT AS IF you're the movie star of the next decade? Do you want to ACT AS IF you know something that other people don't know? If you can clearly define a more advantageous behavior that you are presently not living, why not change for the better? But, whatever you do, do not forget about the importance of perceived sustainability.

There are many slogans that I've come across that stem from the same vibe as the phrase: ACT AS IF. Let's take a walk down the wild side and talk about several similar expressions.

Just Do It.

Nike's **Just Do it** is a slogan that equally represents this idea. Often times people think about doing things to better themselves and actively fight internally with their better opinion, resulting in disadvantageous behaviors and thoughts winning the internal battle and thus outwardly being achieved.

Be As You Wish To Seem.

I've heard a variety of this one. Be the change that you wish to see. It reminds me of boy Scouts and the attitude of trying to always leave things better than how you found them, which was effectively the Scoutmaster's plea for the boy Scouts to pick up camp and clean up the trash.

If you want it... Go get it. Period.

This is from the movie: “The Pursuit of Happiness.” If you haven’t seen this you should put down this book and immediately get to a computer and search this quote and watch the YouTube video.

The Greatest Risk Is Not Taking One.

Did you watch the YouTube video? Didn’t think so. In regards to the quote, I believe that this is where it all started for me. I found this one on a fortune cookie while I was still in high school and I made it my motto. I have recently revised it. I think that the greatest risk in matters financial is taking a dumb one. There are four kinds of risk that I break risk out into using my personal risk framework. There are good risks. There are bad risks. There are definable risks. Examples of good risks include complimenting lovely ladies, buying undervalued companies, and eating healthy. Bad risks would be drunk dialing ex-girlfriends, buying things you don’t understand, and eating unhealthy while you light up. Definable risks exist in a casino where all the outcomes are known and you can calculate your risk using probability models. Riskless situations occur when the outcome is more or less known. My example here usually involves jumping out of a plane without a parachute, shooting yourself in the brain, etc. Death is certain.

Unhappiness can be the biggest motivator for change.

This one came from my most serious ex-girlfriend to date. It’s the reason she explained breaking up with me. At the time, she was doing me a favor but I didn’t see it that way.

To see success and not take it is unwise.

Did I just make one up? I just made this one up. It sounds good enough to support with an argument like this.

Am I trolling you? Maybe. What I am trying to do is make you wonder what the point of this paragraph is. How am I doing? Have I invaded your internal dialog?

Good. Remember the last time you saw something that you wanted or an opportunity to capture a moment of something fun and you actively persuaded yourself not to? Why did you do this? Are you going to make future disadvantageous behaviors like that excusable? Does it bother you to let the worst in you win over the better parts of you?

ACT AS IF

Why are you still reading this? Is this the most advantageous thing you could be reading or doing right now? Can you identify something else that you should be doing with your time right now if you were the person that you wish you would be?

If so, I want you to stop reading and go and do that. At least when you come back to reading you'll feel the positive reinforcement of actually taking time to implement the technique that this book is about in real life. Seriously. If it comes to this... I command you to question the incentives of anyone who authors a decree that begins with the three words: "I command you." No, but seriously, I command you to set this book down immediately and go and do something else that you have been putting off. Why? Because I told you so. I'm like your father. You don't disobey your father. I'm going to start the ineffective behavior of counting down until you listen to me progressively acting more serious as I count down as if it matters that you heed my pleadings.

Five...

Four...

Three...

Don't make me count to one...

Two...

G. RICHARD BRADFORD

I'm going to come in there and make you do it the hard way if I have to...

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I
WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE
WHO DISOBEY.

ACT AS IF

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I
WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE
WHO DISOBEY.

That that is is. That that is not is not. Note that that that that that that is not is not that that that is. Is that it? That it is.

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY.

ACT AS IF

Seriously. Do something that you've been putting off that you know you should be doing.

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. FINE, HAVE SOME ACTUAL BLANK PAGES IF I HAVE BEEN UNCLEAR.

ACT AS IF

As you may have noticed... I'm serious. If you fail at this point, the rest of the book will not save you from yourself.

ACT AS IF

ACT AS IF

ACT AS IF

Damn, You Are Stubborn

It is a pity for you to leave undone those things which ought to be done. Regardless, you made it this far without changing your life for the better. A congratulations are to be deserved. You probably want to know the purpose of those blank pages. “Gosh, I just disobeyed this author and made it to his next chapter, sucka!” At this rate, you might as well go the entire book, fantasize about having a better life, and proactively stay the same. My friend Omar told me after reading this, “I don’t like how you just assumed that no one would take any actionable steps to achieve their goals.” Omar actually went out and proactively got something very important done that he was putting off as he is a chronic procrastinator, he set up a date with a

gorgeous woman. So, are you going to live vicariously through Omar? You sure? It sounds fun. What did you do?

Yes, I am talking to you. No, not you. The you that is inside you that knows that I am speaking the truth. You could be better but you simply insist on occasionally sabotaging the potential of measurable progress. People like you make people like me very successful because you are predictable. I can reliably ask you to do stuff at less than your time is worth to yourself and I'll let you happily justify this lower worth however you choose to. This is the old you. The only good part about the old you is that you are stubborn. Let's take that stubbornness and do something positive with it. Before we get carried away with how I am going to make you a better person, because obviously you've been trying to do so and failing your entire life, I want to tell you about the significance of my ability to sell you blank pages.

I'd be willing to bet that those blank pages you bought made you question your better judgment. I'd be willing to bet that in reading these blank pages, this is the first time you've questioned your better judgment since the beginning of this book at a minimum. In some cases, days, months or even years may have lapsed without this positive feedback loop of questioning your judgment. You may have found yourself asking, "Am I really taking this guy seriously that is making me read blank pages?" "Why is this important?" "Is this worth reading?" "Should I continue to invest my time reading this book?"

I figured the absolute best way to elicit the desirable type of behavior that I want you to have is going to be me force you to do it subconsciously. Only then can I positively reinforce this behavior and if I am lucky, in the long run we'll bring this to the forefront of your mind as frequently as possible. This attitude, of questioning, is incredibly advantageous. What would you do if I told you that at present I am sitting on a plane bound for New Orleans because one of my friends called me up around 10 hours ago and asked me to go to New Orleans for New Years? Can't Does your present lifestyle offer that kind of flexibility? Why not? Should it? What if I told you that I'm doing it for free? Southwest companion pass baby. Would you like to be able to spontaneously do what you want to do? I am not saying that your goal is to travel. Mine certainly isn't. I just decided that I would regret not doing what I am doing presently more than I would regret doing it. If you want to guarantee failure, you can start by not giving it a go. Can you envision a lifestyle that will enable you to do what you want? Damn, you are stubborn. Why are you holding yourself back? What is this inside of you that prevents you from being the real you, the you that you know you can be?

OK, so now I want you to feel good about questioning your better judgment. It's foolish to continue to read a book if you have identified that

ACT AS IF

it is not worth your time completing. There is no honor in completing meaningless tasks. If you're watching a TV show or movie and you find yourself waiting for it to be over, just turn it off and do something else. One of the things that George Washington Carver did extremely well is that if he ever tired or grew frustrated of what he was presently doing, he'd put it on the backburner and move forward with something else. This system is not unlike Prim's Algorithm. For the most part I use this with added emphasis on being opportunistic. Not only am I stepping through tasks in progress as I feel I should be completing them but I am also keeping an eye out for better things that I should be capitalizing on instead. I guess you could call me an opportunity junkie. I'm addicted to finding and realizing what I perceive to be the best opportunity. The catch here is that life has many facets: romance, money, family, spirituality, etc. Don't get stuck in one or the other and be open to jumping out of one into another if the opportunity is there.

This feeling that you are starting to get is a good one. What you are feeling is simply put: opportunistic. You feel like you want to run outside and start negotiating immediately for exactly what you want. Don't get too carried away, there are real world constraints. We'll get to those, but for now, I want you to take this positive energy that you are feeling and indulge a little bit. Go out and do something for yourself. If it involves others, that's great but it sure doesn't have to. The goal of this exercise is to start feeding the positive feedback loop of actively identifying positive actions to better your life. After all, you've only got one of those by my calculations. Since, for the most part, you don't get second chances to relive any part of your life that is in the past, you might as well accept that you have a choice. You can choose one of a few things at present:

1. You can go with the default: Lie to yourself
2. You can admit that in life, you can choose the actions you take.

This has subcomponents.

- a. You proactively can choose to make the best of things.
- b. You can choose to be indifferent and let life and others dictate what you do, what you believe in, and who you are as a person.
- c. You can proactively sabotage yourself and make things harder than they need to be.

To me, the choice is clear. 2.a. sounds the most advantageous. I choose to ACT AS IF for a reason, and that reason simply put is that it does not make sense not to, all things considered. That said, I feel like an excellent way to help you come to the same conclusion would be to argue the other

points and let you draw your own conclusion (because you are going to anyway).

1. Contrary to the opinion that you'd expect me to have at present, lying to yourself will actually get you far in life. If you continue to tell yourself that you are living a more fulfilling life than you know you are, this is the best path towards happiness. Not only that but this attitude will help you make the best decisions. Remember that ex-relationship that you had? Wouldn't it be neat if you were able to lie to yourself and say that it would be great to still be a part of a dying relationship? Isn't it worth all of your time and effort to make amends and put in a lot of effort towards a dead end? Shouldn't you want to look at things from their point of view and invest more of your personal time and resources into something that you not only don't have to do but also makes you unhappy? I certainly think that it is a best practice to lie to myself. I frequently do it and encourage others to do so. You'll be a lot better off if you join me. You'd be cooler if you did. Oh wait, you mean that what I'm asking you to do is to stop lying to yourself? Well, STOP IT.
2. B. Remember when you were asked to do something meaningless and you decided not to do it. Shame on you. Don't you know that it is always best to do what others tell you to do? If you get paid for it, it must be right. After all, what kind of person would you be if you didn't make any money? What if you had nothing? Wouldn't that be terrible? How else are you supposed to get along unless you do as other people tell you at least part of the time? Wait, part of the time is an option? When I give, I am all in. I want to give all of my time to things that don't mean anything to me. This is noble and makes me feel better about myself.
C. Proactively sabotaging yourself doesn't deserve its own argument as I believe that the argument is self-evident if you find yourself reading this book.

Allow me to offer you some actual wisdom as opposed to the commonplace bullshit that your friends and family mislead you to believe is true, kind of feels true, but actually isn't true.

For starters, to expect sense is the hallmark of nonsense. How else can I put that? Truth does not demand belief. Contrary to popular wisdom, there

ACT AS IF

are actually tons of easy opportunities that have significantly above average returns. As Max Planck notes on the stubbornness of people, “A scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.” This is by far one of the most important points. If you are sailing, you can’t pick the winds direction, but you can choose how to set your sails. In the many facets of life, and opportunities you uncover, seek to constantly set things in your favor and choose to have the wind at your back, helping you. There’s little to no reason that you’d ever seek out a game where things are difficult and the payoff is marginal. That’s why everyone is doing it. To succeed unconventionally is what you are after. False. That is totally false. To succeed is all you are after. I don’t care how you do it or how you perceive success but that is the goal: success. Ironically, success is unconventional. Therefore, to succeed will in some circles make you very unpopular while you are in the process. Expect that, leverage it, and make the most of it.

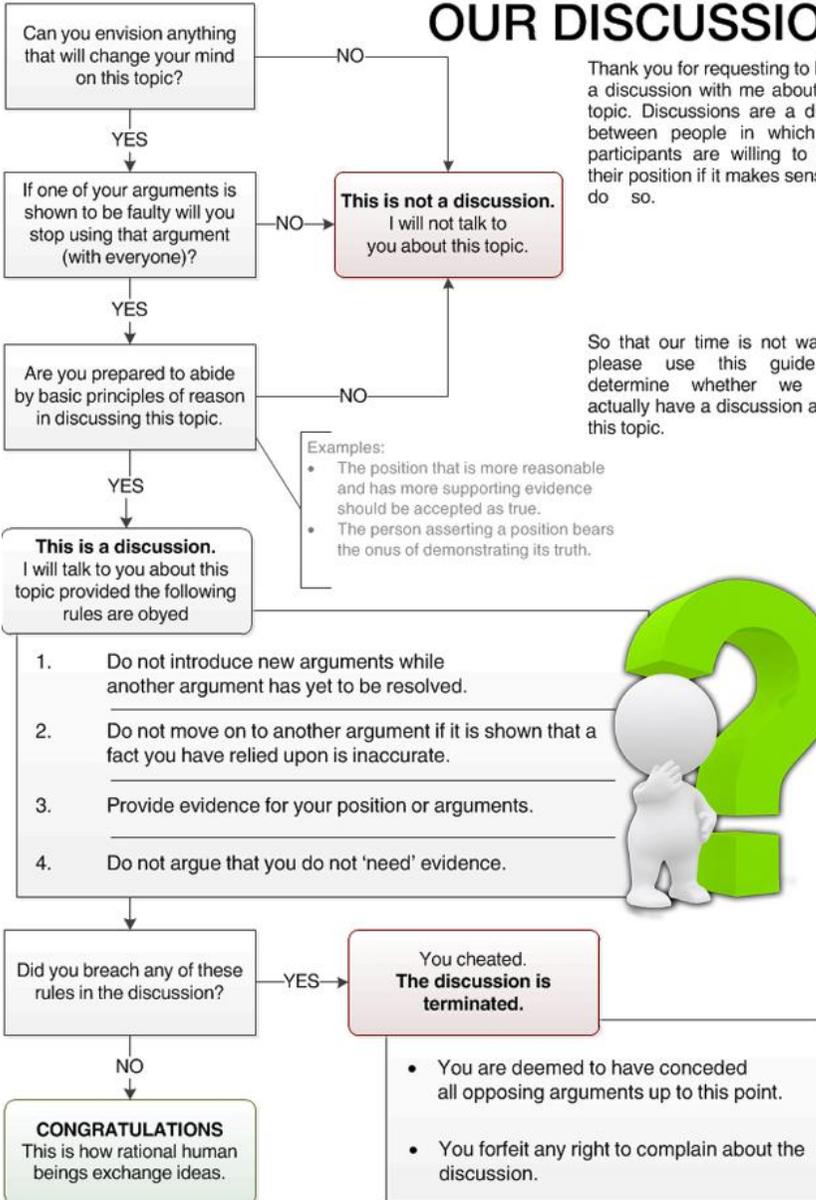
Now, let’s begin. But before we do, I need to cover the only rules that I have about internal dialog. This discussion I am referring to is the one that takes place between your ears. You feel me? There is no need to bring up and entertain topics that are inactionable. Leave that mental busywork to the verbal complainers and the do-nothing-ers of the world.

Talk – Action = Zero.

OUR DISCUSSION

Thank you for requesting to have a discussion with me about this topic. Discussions are a dialog between people in which the participants are willing to alter their position if it makes sense to do so.

So that our time is not wasted please use this guide to determine whether we can actually have a discussion about this topic.

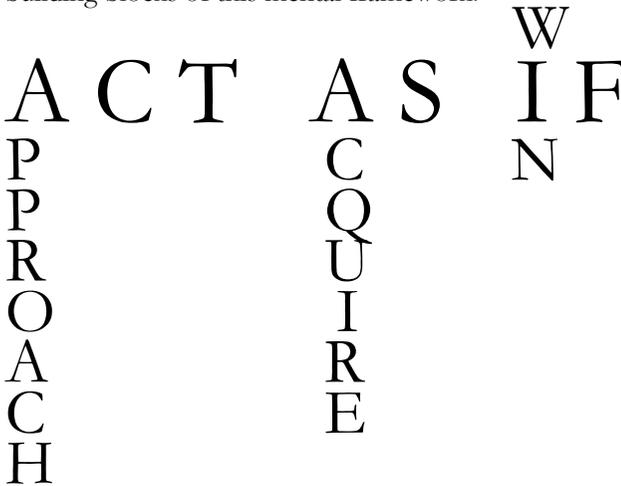


The Framework: ACT AS IF

Life isn't fair. Here's to unfair advantages.

Before you can be successful, you must define a sustainable "new you," from which the "present you" can make definable steps towards becoming. This isn't an exercise that is done once and forgotten. To be done correctly, you will find yourself perpetually re-doing and re-thinking "ACT AS IF" every second of every day until it becomes natural and you become everything you want to be **AND MORE**.

What best describes this new you that you want to be? It's a mentality. An attitude. This attitude is called "ACT AS IF." Let's talk about it and the components that make up my personal schema where I ACT AS IF. So, let's take a look at the diagram that I came up with to oversimplify the building blocks of this mental framework.



The Three steps to ACT AS IF are to Approach, Acquire, and Win.

When dealing with the approach you need to know, what do you want to approach? What is the best way that you presently can think of to approach? What are the systemic risks of approach? Is this approach sustainable?

When dealing with the acquisition of resources needed to win, you need to know the advantages and disadvantages of your mix of resources. What skills do you have that you don't think that you actually have? Can you do more with less? At what point do you feel like you have enough awareness, knowledge, and ability to make impactful decisions that you are ready for battle? At that point, the act of not being in battle should at least be on purpose because you are fully prepared. Part of battling might be acting like

you are preparing, but don't lose sight... you are prepared for quick decisive action.

With all of the power that you are able to harness, the goal is to win. Get exactly what you want. Life is lived one person at a time and your life is your own and nobody else's. Other people will be along for the ride but you are the full beneficiary of all of the consequences of your decisions. Life truly is what you make it. If yours sucks up till now, it's because you didn't get this memo. You just got served. Wake up, buddy. I'm waking you up from your deep slumber within the Matrix. You now are becoming aware of the real enemy. It's not out there somewhere. It's the weakness inside you. You must eliminate it and I am here to help you.

This framework can be applied to anything. I am sure you've skimmed the table of contents. Money, Women, Relationships, Vacations, anything that be set as a goal or objective. Business deals, happiness, food, sports, the list goes on and on. What do you want? If you can define it and it is in the scope of something that can be done, you now can make it yours. But do not forget to apply this framework to only situations that drive your personal throughput as defined by the goal! The goal is to live!

Make wealth. Make relationships. Make it up. Make it big. Make it awesome. Make it unforgettable. Make it so. You got me? This is about making it.

Define Success

The hardest part of getting what you want for most people is defining exactly what that is. Granted, there are people who accidentally happen to be able to achieve what they want without every clearly defining it but this is not the norm. That I can assure you. For most people it is an iterative process where they look at what they have and they ask themselves what they want next and they make adjustments on the fly to try to see it through. In defining success, you must pay attention to what your limitations are as a person and you must be honest with yourself. Clearly, there are things that you are not physically capable of and to imagine and plan that you are will lead to the opposite of success, failure. You must also prioritize the things that you want. If you don't prioritize, life will do it for you and the outcome will not be what you had intended. Much like Sun Tzu, I'm going to teach you to learn by doing. Good news is that you've already to the goal: *To live*.

Approach

The first step to ACT AS IF is to make an approach. If you don't

approach, you should expect a failure rate of 100%. Much like a game of basketball, you miss 100% of the shots you don't take. If you don't even go to the game you forfeit. If you don't even play then you can't expect to win. Approach the things you want. If you don't want it or it is not worth your time, it's not worth approaching. Part of the initial approach is identifying opportunities you are interested in and surrounding yourself with them. You want to place yourself in the most advantageous places to get what you want as possible.

Acquire

Secondly, I want you to acquire all of the resources necessary in order to achieve your goal. Have you ever begun something with the attitude to fail? The first thing you need to acquire is the attitude that you are going to succeed. If you don't first start by believing in your ability to succeed, you are far more likely to fail and we are trying to win here. Winning is more about the acquisition of attitude than anything else. If your attitude is right, even when you fail, you will not have failed because you will more clearly see what it takes to win. Winning is a process that requires failure and learning, but there is such a thing that I want to completely and utterly destroy from your mind as an acceptable attitude. **Playing with the attitude that loss is OK is not OK.** Going into something with the attitude of defeat and despair is not the attitude of a winner. A winner enters the arena, level headed, ready to make calculated decisions to leverage their strengths, and is ready to capitalize on any opportunity that presents itself if it helps them in their pursuit of winning. It is the attitude of losers that walk into the arena and shrug off losses and externalize their weaknesses. I traveled around the world to pick up a book from a friend that I had read before that had a quote in it that best summarizes this concept and is my favorite quote:

“The superior man is distressed by the limitations of his ability; he is not distressed by the fact that men do not recognize the ability that he has.” – Confucious

This quote can mean different things to different people. To me, it means that the superior man understands that he can change his outward appearance if he chooses to impress on the other men that he actually has the ability that they presently do not perceive him to have. This concept to me is **EPIC SHIT**. This is the most insightful and succinct way to put this concept that, one who is superior to all others, can actively manage the perceptions of other people to his advantage if he sees fit. This is what I am going to teach you. That is what this book is about.

My friends, on the other hand, believe that this quote means that in their lives they should disregard the opinions of others and focus on themselves. Although this may be a reasonable interpretation of the quote, it is in my opinion lacking the lightning burst insight of the prior definition. To support this as the meaning, one must purposely delude themselves into believing that opinions of other people don't matter. They do. The opinions of other people will make or break your success. If other people believe in you and your abilities, success will come easily and more naturally. As Matthew says, To him who has, more will be given. To him who has not, even that which he has will be taken away.

If you have not, there are systems out there, mostly driven by money, power, and greed that will constantly erode at your ability to have. If you are not aware of these systems, I can assure you they are not working for you, but against you. You might find yourself proactively ignoring the existence of these systems as you painstakingly have to deal with the consequences of them. Imagine for instance that you are laying down and three other people are laying on top of you. One more hops on. Can you feel the pressure? Is this kind of how you would feel if you could imagine shunned, unopened unpaid and unserviceable bills piling up in your name at your address? Creditors hunting you?

On the other hand, if you choose to, and I encourage you to do so, I encourage you to see things as they are. I encourage you to accept that you can act in such a way that draws people in and is not only advantageous for you, but for them as well. I want you to accept that the way things are is for no reason in particular except that they are. If you can make up something better for everyone involved, it is up to you to make it happen. So, what are we waiting for? Let's get on with the things you need to know to empower not only your own success, but the success of others. By leveraging the talents of others, you will leverage yourself far more than you even believed you could when you started.

I want you to become a student of consequences. Study the consequences of the actions of yourself and others and the reactions of all things related. Study those who are successful in ways that you are not successful but would like to become successful. I want you to base your present and future decisions on your cumulative understanding of your perception of how the world works. Do the actions or inaction that you take on a daily basis drive you towards being who you perceive yourself to be? Is that who you want to be? Can you do things better? If you weren't you, what kind of advice would you give yourself if you were someone else? If you can come up with good, actionable advice for yourself where you believe that taking it will result in a better life, what is keeping you from taking it? Can we eliminate that idea or concept or thing that is preventing you from being who you should be?

ACT AS IF

I want you to ground all of your believable consequences in reality. How do you think people will react if you take a specific action? If you do end up taking that action, was their reaction in line with your expectations? Could you have acted more advantageously in retrospect? What did you do really well? What do you think you should try to do differently? Would you say that you could have put in more effort? Would be putting in more effort be the best use of your time or do you have more important things to do? In life, define what you want most first. Everything else is secondary.

Win

The last step is to Win. If you need an explanation of winning, I can't help you. Let's take a look at the Approach in more detail.

Approach

Pay close attention to the things that you do decide to do because the only person that is going to derive meaning from them is you. Approach them as if you are playing a videogame if you have to. That's what I do. The master of their domain is one whom can, much like an iguana, morph their personality to exceed the expectations of their audience. They had no idea that you were that unbelievably awesome! They want more! You have a highly contagious positive attitude and a drive so great to be successful that

you can't let anything in your way go unnoticed. If it is in the way, it must be moved out of the way.

Your Mystique

There is no "going to be successful" or "planning to be successful" in the way you act. You are successful. This is now how you act. You have committed to this new you and everything else is secondary. That is the bottom line.

Since people will notice that there is something inside of you that they cannot explain that excites them, they will begin to ask you questions to try and explain the change. Explanation is futile! People always look for purpose. Make your responses such that it leaves them hanging. Leave them an incomplete picture, wanting more and having even more questions that they want to ask you. Your story is simple. You woke up and decided to take advantage of the moment that you live in and they are invited, just don't stand in your way or try to slow you down. You feel great and today is the best day of your life.

You want to, if you can, be as sure of the world around you as possible. Now, you can only achieve that to a certain degree, but you want the greatest degree of perspective and control that you can obtain. That means that you will be giving up comforting fantasies in order to live in an actually real world. These fantasies are mind viruses. They are preventing you from taking the necessary action to get what you want. Get rid of all the ones that hold you back or aren't actionable and seek to replace them with ideas and concepts that actually help you. Don't entertain the impossible, but seek to really understand what is possible.

On the inside of this new you, yes, making decisions regarding what you do and how you do it does require a lot of deliberate thought sometimes, but outwardly, as far as anyone can tell, you are the definition of who you envision yourself becoming and effortless thoughts are constantly driving highly effective action.

People are drawn to the irrational more than to the rational. Play into it. Obviously, you are somewhat putting on a show and you know this, but never admit to it because that would spoil their fun of trying to figure you out! Besides, your life is now a show. It's your show and you're living it! It's exciting! Keep them guessing! Your personality is a catalyst for fun. You can't give answers when answers are dull, it's just not in you anymore. You are contagiously exciting and you know it. Yank their chain a little. Create a little mystery. Take them places but don't tell them where you are going. Even though the place might suck, the fact that they don't know where they are going will make it exciting.

Alright, so now that you are awesome, let's figure out how to surround yourself with more awesomeness. That is to say, let's get what we want.