

EMPOWER YOUR THOUGHTS

HOW TO BUILD A POSITIVE MINDSET THAT
CONVERTS GREAT IDEAS INTO SUCCESSFUL
MONEYMAKING VENTURES



SCOTT ALLAN

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by Scott Allan

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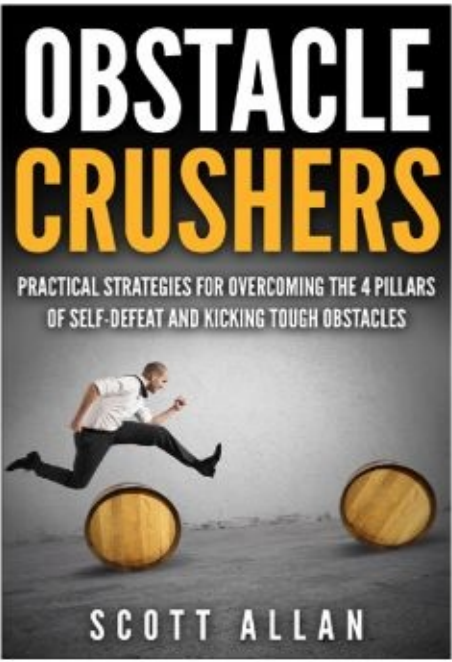
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“You are searching for the magic key that will unlock the door to the source of power; and yet you have the key in your own hands, and you may use it the moment you learn to control your thoughts.”

Napoleon Hill

Empower Your Thoughts: The “Big Intro”

Henry Ford once said, *“Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason so few people engage in it.”*

Henry Ford was an inventor and entrepreneur who had amazing ideas, and a gift for turning his thoughts into real things that would change the lives of millions for centuries to come. He was also a good friend with world-class inventor **Thomas Edison**, who had over one thousand patents when he died.

Like Henry Ford, Thomas Edison was also a great thinker and a man of action.

Ford and Edison spent most of their time and efforts thinking, building, planning, and designing. By pursuing their grandest vision and building the dreams that fueled their obsession, their contributions would bring timeless value to the world. Their legacies will live for thousands of years.

How about you? Is there a legacy you want to leave behind for others to follow?

You may not know it yet but you have the same potential as Ford or Edison. You can direct your thoughts to take immediate and massive action towards your goals by implementing your best ideas into a workable plan that builds anything you desire to accomplish.

By the time you finish this book, you will see that you are the “master gardener of your soul”, as James Allen once said. You can choose the thoughts you want to have, you can direct these thoughts to forge a positive attitude that empowers your mindset for success, and then, direct this energy into taking action every day on your most passionate ideas.

When you can master the development of your thoughts and transform your thinking into ideas that create the things you really want, you can build a business from scratch, launch a product, travel around the world or challenge yourself to overcome an impossible obstacle.

In this book you will discover how to build a platform of great ideas that you can convert into moneymaking opportunities. I will also show you the importance of developing a positive mindset and how you can empower your thinking by taking direct action towards your best ideas.

In addition, you'll learn to capture and organize your ideas so that you don't lose anything when you are just too busy to write stuff down.

In today's world of "busy people", we are all just running around trying to keep up with the latest technology, the most recent app, and manage the multiple news streams that keep coming in. In this book **Empower Your Thoughts** you'll learn powerful strategies such as:

1. The **3-Step Folder Method** for capturing and organizing ideas;
2. How to use **cross-fertilization** to build your idea platform;
3. The **Whitman strategy** for idea gathering and building projects;
4. How to use **Evernote** and other powerful apps to capture ideas fast;
5. Setting up projects for easy implementation and success!

Keeping your ideas and thoughts all in one place for easy access can be challenging when you are busy, on the move, and have no time to write anything down. This book provides you with the solution to eliminate that problem.

But that's not all...

1. I'll teach you the **3 powerful lessons** my father taught me so that I could empower my thinking for success;
2. You'll learn the 4 pillars of building a Positive Mindset so you can gain better clarity, peace of mind, and control over your emotions and actions;
3. Learn to Integrate the elements of your positive mindset and keep your mind free of clutter so that you can expand your mental space to create more great ideas;
4. Develop better relationships with yourself and the people in your life you care about;
5. Reduce the clutter and confusion in your mind by focusing on less.

Anything you desire to achieve is yours the moment you make a decision that you'll have it.

I promise that if you follow the course in this book from start to finish, you'll gain greater control over your thinking, empower your thoughts to build a

powerful mindset, and from then, you will be able to combine these elements to drive your creative ideas into building a thriving business that makes money.

In a simple formula: Know what you want. Empower and train your thoughts to focus on this desire. Forge an attitude that supports your purpose. Drive everything towards taking action on your ideas. That is what this book is about and what you are going to learn to do. By giving you lots of real world examples and solid advice, the program in this book is going to take you from where you are now to where you want to be.

Don't be manipulated by old ways of thinking anymore; don't be roped into believing that you are born with whatever mindset that you have; don't believe the lies that say, "You have nothing to offer." You have everything to offer, and it begins when you start paying attention to the thoughts you are creating, and applying this mental energy towards building an idea platform that sells!

Don't wait for your life to happen; make it happen! When other people see you doing the things they wish they were doing, they'll look to you for the answers. People will ask, "How did you do this?" And before you know it they'll be paying you for coaching and speaking gigs. They'll want to know what your "big secret" is. Like Thomas Edison, he had a system for taking notes and putting his ideas into motion. His secret was hard work. What is yours?

Take control of your thoughts right now, build a powerful positive mindset void of any negative vices, and create a system where you can capture and implement your best ideas to design the life you have always dreamed of having. Just keep reading and soon you will be able to put the actionable content to good use.

Don't wait for this to happen. Take action now and make it work!

You can start building a life that is both full of positivity and fulfilling; when you feel good about yourself, you are motivated to take action on the things that are important.

Remember: a good life is built by positive choices. Are you ready to make yours?

About Empower Your Thoughts

This book is structured into four parts. I would recommend that you start from the beginning and read all the material building up to idea development.

Here is a brief breakdown of the contents:

In the first part of this book I'll talk about how to empower your thoughts by sharing with you **the three lessons** my father taught me when I was growing up; although simple in their application, these lessons had a major impact on how I viewed the world. By focusing on your thoughts, you can cut out the distractions that create noise; this frees up your "mental space", reduces stress and puts you in greater charge of your life. You will learn to master the circumstances of your life instead of becoming a slave to them.

Part two "**Building Your Positive Mindset**" focuses on developing a positive mindset by focusing on four areas of your life. You will be able to take action by implementing the steps that follow to create a positive attitude that will boost your creativity.

In part three "**Building An idea Organization System**" I'll teach you the strategies and process for creating a system for capturing and organizing your ideas. You'll learn some simple but effective strategies that can help you finally put your best ideas into a creative funnel system ready to take action.

Part four "**Creating Income Streams From Your Ideas**" is putting your ideas into action by focusing on the various ways you can make money through passive and active income through building a business as an entrepreneur.

We have a lot of material to cover, so if you're ready, **turn the page** and let's get into it!

PART 1: EMPOWER YOUR THOUGHTS

Three “Life Lessons” My Father Taught Me

“Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world.”

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

When I was growing up, my father taught me three very powerful lessons about the importance of empowering my thoughts for a better life. You see, my dad was always doing a lot of reading, mostly self-help books that focused on personal development; he was very committed to making a better life for himself and his family.

My father would often share these ideas with me when I was struggling with something or just having a bad day. Whenever he gave me advice, he would usually quote a passage from one of the books he was reading, and apply it to my situation so that I could find a solution to life's challenging moments.

The lessons I learned had everything to do with forming my mindset in the years to come.

There were many powerful lessons my father shared with me over the years. I'm going to share three of those lessons with you here in the first part of this book. The rest of the lessons I'll save for another time and possibly a different book.

Lesson #1: Think For Yourself

My father once said to me: *“You should learn to think for yourself so that others don’t have to do the thinking for you.”*

I didn’t understand the principle at the time but over the years, the lesson made more sense.

By learning to think for myself, I was able to make higher-level choices about my life. I realized that I could choose to question such things as logic, opinion and what other people called reality. I could formulate my own ideas instead of relying solely on the opinions and facts formulated by others. You can do the same.

By thinking for yourself, you’ll have more freedom to be yourself.

When you think for yourself, you gain greater control over your mind. You should form your own opinions about things only after you’ve spent enough time analyzing, questioning and building your own logical conclusions. You can then discuss your solutions and thoughts with others to gain deeper input. You can work together to solve problems and come up with better ways to do things.

By learning and training your mind to “think for itself” you can depend more on yourself instead of leaving it all up to others to figure out. While other people are standing around waiting for someone to tell them what to do, you can take the initiative and take action first. By thinking deeply about a situation and directing your thoughts to better understand things, people will eventually come to you with the questions to their problems. This is extremely empowering because it puts you in a position to help others.

The world is in demand for people who have the ability to raise their thoughts to a higher level. People will pay you for your ability to empower their workers to become more efficient or to run their company more productively.

By putting your thoughts into action, and showing others how to do the same, you can form a powerful alliance with a group of people focused towards a specific goal. When people collaborate and combine their thoughts and ideas together, amazing results are achieved and complex problems solved.

Do you want to empower your thoughts and learn to control the way you think

and behave? Or, would you rather work for someone else that does the thinking for you? You can choose your own path in life: there is no right or wrong direction as long as you end up in a place you choose to be.

You can choose to take the higher road; through self-empowerment and doing what you want to do, train your mind to think accurately and ignore all the “clutter” that’s out there in the world.

Starting today you can discipline your thoughts to empower your life and do the things you have always wanted to do.

Lesson #2: Controlling Fearful Thoughts

My father told me that you should observe the thoughts you have about fear. Fearful thoughts are inevitable and belong to everyone. He said that everyone is afraid and that people handle it in different ways. My father said that fearful thoughts will either push you to take action so that you are no longer afraid; or, they will force you to retreat.

The choice is always up to each person. You can either react to it, live in the fear and experience it as a sense of impending doom that something bad is going to happen, or, you can take action toward the thoughts causing the fear.

Controlling my fear was the **second lesson** in empowering my thoughts.

Fearful thoughts impact us in many ways. They create “**scarcity**” thinking. You believe that you never have enough, no matter how much is gained. If your focus is always fixated on the things you don’t have, you spend precious mental energy focused on all the things “missing” in your life.

This creates an obsession to keep accumulating stuff that fills up your life. You constantly want more of the things your mind desires. Scarcity thinking is a breeding ground for fear: the fear of loss, the fear of living in poverty, and the fear of not having enough.

It’s a double-edged sword: the more you get, the more you want. Scarcity thinking becomes a bad habit that you continue to return to whenever a situation arises that threatens your security. It turns into an endless loop that is never fulfilled.

My father said you should always practice gratitude so you can remove the greed scarcity thinking creates. Love what you have and let go of the obsession to acquire more. Nothing should be taken for granted, not even the air we breathe or the water that is so easily accessible in our homes. He also said that the lack of gratitude in the world is the cause of most problems.

You can replace scarcity thinking with gratitude. It is the only cure I know of that works. If you have \$100 in your account, be grateful that it’s not \$10. If you have only \$10, be grateful you don’t owe \$10. In every situation, look for the opportunity to express your gratitude. Tell others that you feel lucky

because they are in your life. Don't lose another moment fixated on the things that don't matter. Stop thinking about getting the stuff you don't need.

Expressing your gratitude towards the people you care about is the best solution to keeping fear away. There is no fear when you focus on the people in your life whom love. We should think about them as often as we can.

But, there is another challenge. We should practice acts of gratitude towards the people who cause us suffering as well; they are teaching us something about ourselves. Resentment and harboring grudges destroys our thoughts. It robs us of any happiness and invites fear in. Do something nice for someone you don't like. See what their reaction is. Do you still feel contempt or resentment towards this person? I challenge you to try it and see for yourself.

Taking Action Against Fear

If your thinking is fear-based, your default actions will be based on your fears. For instance, if you fear having no money, you might react by hoarding and skimping. But what this does is it reinforces the fear that you have no money. By denying that fearful thoughts are real, you give them more power to control your choices.

As bestselling author **Susan Jeffers** once said, **“You can feel the fear and do it anyway.”**

No matter what fears you have, you don't have to give them permission to control your decisions. When you feel the fear, step back and observe what it is you are afraid of. What thoughts are you having that are creating your fear? When you move against the thoughts causing you to feel fearful, they vanish and lose that power over you. Taking direct action and doing what you fear is the only cure I know of that breaks fearful conditioning.

If you want to write a book [according to statistics, 83% of the people want to write a book; only 1% ever do] start by writing out a brief outline. Just get some words down on paper related to your topic. Then, go to the next step and write out a page. The next day you can write two pages. Keep expanding from your center and do a little more each day. Sometimes you need to break your fear down into mini-steps that work.

Write down the actions you could take, and then, choose one action. But do something. If you don't, your thoughts will lock into a rotating spin and you'll keep reliving the same fears day after day. I know many people have spent their entire lives talking about the things they never did and they regret it. In the end,

you'll always regret living in the fear and not doing what you have always wanted to do.

It is perfectly okay to try and not succeed the first time. You won't always succeed the first time but putting your best efforts forward will reduce the fear and make each action easier to take. Those that manage their fears and take action always persevere over those who retreat.

I always experience fear if I am thinking about trying something new that's out of my comfort zone boundaries. This can be before an interview, launching a new book, or meeting someone for the first time. This fear is often attached to feelings of rejection, the fear of failure, or the fear of not measuring up to expectations.

The more fear you have, the better off you are. Fear is an indicator of what it is you should be doing. Use your fearful thoughts as learning gauges to measure what it is you need to work on. The more things you are afraid of, the more action you can take to start diminishing your fears.

It is a false belief that having fearful thoughts is a bad thing. Actually, it is your fear that prompts you to take further action even when you are afraid. You will never be rid of it because every time you step out of your bubble, there it is waiting for you. Your fearful thoughts are signals that either you are doing something wrong or you are putting off doing something that needs to be done.

Your fearful ego will avoid taking risks by engaging in mindless activities that keep you occupied. Absently turning on the TV, playing a video game for endless hours, or seeing what other people are doing for distractions on social media sites. All of these distractions can mask your fear and, once the activity ends, you are back to feeling anxiety and fear all over again.

Practice to become self-observant of those moments when you are procrastinating or engaging in "escapist" activities. When you have the urge to run away, you are feeding into fearful thoughts that keep you stuck. What benefit are you gaining by escaping? Is there a payoff to procrastinating?

Question your motives and take notice of the ways you buy into your fear-based thoughts. When you catch yourself fleeing or avoiding responsibility, that's your signal right there. You can make the choice in any given moment to take action and do the thing you would normally avoid.

Instead of looking for a way out, take the best path through the situation, challenge or problem.

Lesson #3: Master Your Circumstances

When I was growing up, I had a lot of anxiety about my life; I worried about everything. I allowed difficult situations around me to bring me down. I was never very good in school so I was convinced that I would be a failure in life, too.

I shared this fear and worry with my father one day and then he taught me the third most important lesson about empowering my thoughts.

He said: “You can’t always choose the environment or circumstances that you are born into but, you can create the life you want by deciding what to do with those circumstances. This is so much bigger than believing that your life is a by-product of your education or upbringing.”

For a fourteen-year old kid, this was a powerful statement to grasp.

When you just sit back and allow life to become whatever it may be, circumstances will shape and mold your life according to the desires of other people. If you want to be free, set your own goals in life and have a plan for putting them into action. Your thoughts will form a natural channel of continuity to ensure you get there.

Taking action is the path to mastering any situation. Doing nothing allows the situation to control you.

If you have a clear direction as to where you are going, and can say, “Yes, this is what I want to have,” and, if you are willing to do anything to get it, you will succeed at anything. By making a firm decision to be the master of your environment, and by striving to break any obstacles that challenge your vision of who you want to be, you step up to a new level. You make the choice not to settle. Find something you love to do and do it well with everything you got!

In June 2005, Steve Jobs delivered his commencement speech to Stanton University “How to live before you die.” You can watch that [video](#) here.

Our thoughts, if nurtured properly, create the situations and the quality of the life that we want. If your thoughts are neglected and you just let things happen, you'll end up in a situation doing the things you hate. Worse yet, you'll be working hard to build someone else's dream instead of your own.

One of the reasons people fail to live the life they want is they end up believing they have no control over their lives. They are stuck in the same job year after year, in the same crappy relationships, and ultimately living a life that they come to regret. They make excuses that stick, instead of creating new habits that stick in order to change their behavior and present circumstances.

You are not a product of your environment or circumstances. You have been influenced by these things, but not molded from them. The question is, "What are you going to do about it?"

Oprah Winfrey, dubbed the "Queen of All Media" and ranked the richest African-American of the 20th century, was born into poverty in rural Mississippi to a teenage single mother. Oprah spent the first six years of her young life with her grandmother who was so poor, Oprah had to wear potato sacks for dresses.

But Oprah had made a decision at a young age that she didn't want to live in poverty. She refused to let her current situation define what she was capable of becoming. Oprah defeated adversity and defied a life of hardship and poverty to become America's most influential talk show host, and the "most influential woman in the world."

"I don't think of myself as a poor, deprived ghetto girl who made good. I think of myself as somebody who from an early age knew she was responsible for herself—and I had to make good."

Oprah Winfrey

You can master your circumstances. Regardless of what difficulties you are facing, or the size of the obstacle you have to overcome to achieve your goal, you can only be defeated by your own thoughts.

This isn't to say that you are solely responsible for the environment you are born into. People born into poverty, violence, or a life of hardship didn't choose this way of life, but if you come to realize that you can choose your thoughts, you gain total control over the direction of your life.

This is how you truly empower your life: When you no longer blame outside forces for your present life condition, you can fully accept responsibility for your present condition and, acknowledge that you are the only one that can change it.

So, is there a situation in your life right now that is causing you pain? What would you have to change about yourself in order to remove that negative element from your life? What can you do today that you have never done before that would have a major impact on the way you live your life and would allow you to enjoy more freedom?

Focus on getting in touch with what drives you. What do you feel passionate about? How can you express this passion today? Is there anything you think about that really excites you? If there is, put yourself to work and start doing it. Write out your ideas and make an **actionable plan**.

Developing a good attitude begins with taking responsibility for your life. It is about deciding on and making the hardline choices between what you'll accept and reject, instead of just taking whatever is handed to you.

Don't just settle for what you can get or you'll be settling your whole life. Figure out what you want and drive yourself to get it.

Believe that you can do this.

What Einstein Said

“Thought seeks to solve the problems of difficult circumstances through rising above the level of thoughts responsible for creating the problem. You can overcome any obstacle if you transform your present thinking ways into more advanced cognitive forms.”

Albert Einstein, one of the greatest minds of the 20th century, once said: *“The significant problems we face in life cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”*

You can overcome any obstacle or difficulty by identifying the problem, and then seeking effective solutions to solving it.

This requires a new approach in our thinking:

- Identify what the situation is;
- Identify the solutions you can implement;
- Take immediate action and observe your results.
- Adjust and correct when you have to.

If you fail, try a new approach. Just don't give up. Every problem has a solution if you keep trying. If you give up and say, “it's pointless”, you are right. But eventually someone else will come along and solve the problem that you couldn't. They will gain what you so easily gave up.

When you fail, keep trying every possible scenario. If you have to start over again, so be it. You will become incredibly empowered when you succeed at the problems that challenge you.

Einstein also said, *“We need to adopt newer and more advanced levels of thinking to overcome the adversity in removing heavy obstacles.”*

If you try to work out a new problem that you have never faced before by applying what you already know based on old information and thought patterns, you could make the issue worse; you may fix the problem in the short

term, but fail to produce any long-term success.

Overcoming difficult situations requires that you take the time to think deeply about the situation. Apply a new technique that you have never used before. Train your mind to “think differently” by engaging in actions that you’ve never tried before.

The “What IF” strategy

Taking action isn’t always easy. We usually need a push to get started. If you have heavy resistance when you try something, you can implement the “What if…” strategy.

Ask yourself, “What would happen **if** I [action here]?”

For example, you want to start running to get into better shape and lose some weight. But, you hate running. Ask yourself, “What would happen IF I ran to the end of the street?” Try this enough times and you’ll break those mental barriers that have convinced you that you can’t. Start small and work up to the bigger goals.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “*A mind once stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimensions.*”

There are times when you have to step out of the box to take on new challenges that cannot be solved with simple short-term solutions. As the world becomes more complex, we are finding new and better ways to approach life’s difficulties.

When you are faced with a heavy obstacle that is difficult to remove, try asking for help. In my experience, people are more than willing to give you’re their ideas and help you through whatever challenges you are facing. Social media has provided a powerful outlet for this. You can reach out to people right away and get feedback. But nothing is better than asking a good friend or close family member.

You don’t have to tackle a heavy obstacle all by yourself. If you have enough leverage you can overcome anything. Asking other people for help could provide that leverage you need.

Getting Rid of “Mental Clutter”

You should be aware of the wasteful thoughts that get stacked up in your mind over time. Make it a habit to “dump” your brain of all the useless thoughts that it holds onto. This includes regrets over past events and worries about the future.

You can declutter your mind just the same way you would clean up your space at home. Have you ever walked into your living room and there was so much crap all over the place you could hardly find space to walk? Now imagine your mind is the “living space” for your thoughts.

Just think about all of the accumulated information and loads of data your mind is holding onto. Most of this information is useless, and it’s just taking up valuable space that can be put to better use by learning new skills and applying your thoughts towards building a new-and-improved attitude. I’m not suggesting there is anything wrong with your attitude now, but everyone needs constant adjustment along the way.

Decide what you need and discard the rest.

One reason people struggle is because they are trying to live in today while their minds are processing old data from the past few weeks, months or even years. You can declutter your mind by getting rid of old thoughts and worn-out ideas that serve no purpose.

Many of our thoughts are based on old programs that have become obsolete. Make yourself aware of the thoughts that are causing you suffering. This can be in the form of resentments, grudges, or concentrating on past mistakes and failures you regret. The past doesn’t have to be your future. But it could be if you bring it into the present.

In many ways the mind is like the hard drive on your computer: It keeps storing and collecting stuff until its memory capacity is full. The more stuff you save on a hard drive [your mind] the slower the PC [your brain] runs.

By decluttering your mind, even by just 10%, it strengthens your concentration skills. This gives you more room to focus on work that matters. It also expands your mental space and makes room for

formulating creative ideas while boosting the quality of your thinking to higher levels. This means you can develop better ways to improve the quality of your life.

2 Habits for Decluttering Your Mind

Habit #1: Write out your thoughts

Create a new habit from today: **Write down your thoughts for twenty minutes.** Just grab a pen and paper and start writing. You can write about anything you want to: a trip you took, a movie you watched, or a current situation that is giving you trouble. Let your thoughts go and dump all your ideas onto the paper. This works as a filter system to get your thoughts out of your head and out into the open. Make this a daily habit and do it once a day; you can write in the morning or at night.

In *Julia Cameron's* book **The Artist's Way** she calls these **morning pages**. You show up every morning and write out three pages in a notebook. You can write about anything you want to, but make it a habit to show up every morning and write something. You don't have to write a lot to begin with; you can start with just a couple paragraphs and build it up over the following weeks.

There are lots of positive benefits to writing your thoughts out for just twenty minutes a day:

- Writing organizes your thinking and “sweeps out” your mind;
- Writing builds deeper feelings of gratitude;
- Writing increases your capacity to learn new skills;
- Writing eliminates many of your negative thoughts;
- Writing sets a positive tone for the day;
- Writing defines your essential objectives;

Setting up your writing habit

Choose a time that you are going to do this. I prefer the morning [morning pages] but I have also found great benefit to doing this at night before sleep as well. If you have the time I would recommend two short writing sessions a day. You can do this in a notebook or your laptop.

1. Choose a place;
2. Schedule your time;
3. Set a timer for 15-20 minutes;
4. Write non-stop for this allotted time.

Habit #2: Meditation

Meditating just fifteen minutes in the morning and again in the evening is going to do amazing wonders for your positive mindset. In fact, without meditating at least once day, you are doing yourself a real disservice. You don't like to meditate? It feels uncomfortable? I know how you feel.

I didn't meditate for the longest time. I was too afraid to be alone with my own thoughts. But after I committed to trying it for just fifteen minutes a day over the course of three weeks, it has become one of the most important habits I do now. It is relaxing, reduces stress, and clears your mind of useless mental "gunk" that builds up during the day.

Here are the simple steps for meditating:

1. Find a quiet place you feel relaxed in;
2. You can sit on the floor or on a chair with your back straight;
3. Focus on your breathing as you breathe in and out;
4. Count your breaths;
5. Stay focused on the number count of your breathing. When you lose track, return to the first count and start again;
6. Try this in fifteen-minute sessions. Increase the time, as you feel more comfortable.

Meditation isn't complicated and it doesn't have to be performed in any special way. It only matters that you are relaxed and enjoying the exercise. Focus on your breathing. Be observant of your thoughts. Don't try to control what you are thinking and instead, just let it happen. You'll discover that developing this habit is a powerful tool for getting centered and keeping your mind clear of the "garbage" that piles up during the day.

Part 1: Key Takeaways

1. You can empower your thoughts by training your mind to think clearly about the solutions to overcoming tough obstacles.
2. Stay focused on where you are and what you are doing in each moment.
3. Declutter your mind and make space for higher order thoughts and ideas. You can do this by meditating and writing out your thoughts. Use the **morning pages** strategy.
4. Read books on personal development to expand your mind, inspire your ideas and build a positive mindset.
5. Take control of your fear by taking action towards the things you are afraid of doing.
6. Master your circumstances by not settling for where you are; you cannot always choose your environment, but you can decide what to do about it.

PART 2: BUILDING YOUR POSITIVE MINDSET

The Power of a Positive Mindset

“Your Positive Mental Attitude is the most valuable asset you own, and you have complete control over it. Treat it as if it were your most expensive piece of property.”

Your positive mental mindset is at the center of all your success in life.

A negative mindset is at the core of all your failures.

Everything that you have achieved in your life up to now has hinged on your attitude being either positive or negative. Everything that you will experience as a success or failure in the future is entirely up to you depending on your attitude towards the circumstances that govern your surroundings.

A **positive mental attitude** generates positive energy that is creative and contributes to the quality of your lifestyle; it has a profound affect on everyone around you. Having a positive mindset sets you up for all your future wins; when your mind is focused on the elements of your life that really matter, you create the positive thoughts and energy that attracts every element for building a successful life.

You will never be at a loss for friendship or building strong alliances with people when you're focused on helping others. In directing your positive attitude by choice rather than default, you are in complete control of the way you view the world. Having a positive mindset creates better success in work, family and your relationships.

The choice is yours: you can create a life with a positive mental attitude or a negative one. You can have happiness and succeed or you can be full of bitterness and self-centeredness and fail at most things without trying.

For years I had a poorly managed mindset. I did very little in the area of self-improvement. I was focused on practicing negative behaviors that brought about a lot of self-sabotage in my life and career. I had a poor attitude toward people and life in general.

I believed everything that happened was the fault of someone else, or other circumstances beyond my control. For years, I put myself through unnecessary suffering because I had a negative outlook for my life. What I didn't

realize at the time is that I was creating this through my fractured thinking, negative beliefs and self-limitations.

By failing to take responsibility for my present condition, I set myself up for a lot of future pain. If you are full of fear, resentment, and negativity, you will attract these same things into your life; you will naturally become a magnet for the people and events that possess the same negative qualities. This is the combined effect of **the law of attraction** and **the law of cause and effect**. You always reap what you sow.

Negative thoughts build and feed on each other; for years I lived this way, and for years I suffered because of it. I see people all the time who are in pain, either emotionally or mentally, and, most of the time, it is because they have poor attitudes and a mindset that is focused on scarcity and breeding fear.

It doesn't have to be this way.

We can change this today.

You are in complete control of your attitude at all times. We don't always create the situations that engage us, but we can decide what to do about it and how to respond. This makes all the difference when it comes to making serious changes in our lives. When you accept responsibility for your mental state, you are no longer a victim of circumstances. You can create the circumstances you want, regardless of the attitudes of other people.

After years of creating a negative state for myself, one of the lessons I learned is that I can change anything by switching my thoughts. Once I figured this out, I became happier and I discovered a freedom that I never had before. I learned to like myself again, and then I learned to love others.

You can change it too, and then attract better people and situations into your life. By focusing on adding value to your life by being a positive person is only going to create a win-win situation for you. You'll have more friends, opportunities, and a healthier peace of mind. You always have the power to choose. When you give up that right to decide for yourself what you want, you give up that power and the choices are forced on you.

Focusing on positive thoughts and following through with equally powerful actions creates a new attitude shift. Focusing on building a positive mindset is the first thing you have to do before anything else. It is the rock-solid foundation for creating a quality lifestyle.

When I stopped blaming everyone else for my problems, took responsibility for

my life, and implemented positive thinking into the equation, the good stuff started happening. Put the development of your mindset at the forefront of your life and you'll be in control of your future in more ways than you can imagine. And, it will clear the way for coming up with great ideas that could potentially change your life [more on this in the next section].

Building a positive mental mindset has to do with focusing on four specific areas of your life. By creating a healthy balance in each of these areas, you'll experience more peace of mind, harmony and create more space in your mind for generating creative ideas.

For the rest of this section, we will discuss the areas that you can apply your PMA for the best results.

These are the 4 pillars of building a positive mental attitude.

- 1. Your attitude toward past and future events**
- 2. Your attitude toward yourself**
- 3. Your attitude toward others**
- 4. People, places and events that challenge your positive attitude**

Now, let's get into the material in the next chapter. Take notes as you work through, and if you have any questions, you can always shoot me an email at oblictuspublishing@yahoo.com.

Your Attitude Toward Past Events

“Stop acting as if life is a rehearsal. Live this day as if it were your last. The past is over and gone. The future is not guaranteed.”

- Wayne Dyer, American Self-Help Author and Motivational Speaker

The past is a time-based perspective. One person can look at their life as a series of tragic events, missed opportunities or failed outcomes: relationships that didn't work out, financial loss, or life just hasn't turned out the way they had been hoping.

Another person sees their life as a series of lessons that had to be learned through unique experiences that is preparing them for the life to come. Regardless how you view your personal history, your attitude towards past events plays a powerful role in your success to create a good future for yourself.

First of all, you have to stop struggling. Give yourself a break and be proud that you have made it this far. There is nothing more to do with past experiences. The mind is in constant conflict when it comes to events either in the past or the future.

Staying in the moment is the only reality we have. But there is a part of our nature that is addicted to time traveling, either jumping back to revisit old memories, or leaping forward to set up predictions for a future that isn't here yet.

The things we have done or not done trigger regret, and the things we have yet to face trigger anxiety and worry. Regardless whether you flip back and forth to past and future realities, neither timeframe is real. They are illusions created by the mind.

Consider these questions:

Is there anything in your past you deeply regret that is holding you back?

Is there a particular experience you have had that is hard to let go?

Do you see your past failures as learning curves or, as permanent failures that defines your future reality?

What would you do over again if you could?

Taking one of your past failures, how could you turn it into a learning curve that can benefit you today?

What would you do today if it were your last day on earth? How would you spend your last remaining hour?

Brooding over failures is the #1 reason most people are stuck, hanging onto old beefs, and wishing things had been different, believing that tomorrow is going to end up just like yesterday. These are the thoughts you need to change if you want to get unstuck. So much of your present attitude is made up of how you still view yesterday's experiences. Your past doesn't have to be your future.

By moving into the present moment where you are at right now, you realize it is the only timeframe that matters. It's all you have. It's all you ever will have. Use this mindset of being present to empower the moment and drive your thoughts into doing what you are focusing on in the now; develop the attitude that all you have is today, and the past will no longer control you. When you learn to let go of past mistakes and failed outcomes, you release yourself of that pain. I am not saying that you'll forget about it, but you can learn to accept it and move on.

As William Shakespeare once said, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

As long as your thoughts are trapped in another time zone, your present mindset remains frozen. When you see every day as a repeat version of what happened twenty years ago, this becomes your experience for today and tomorrow. You can change this by refusing to accept past failures as your future to be.

*Eckhart Tolle, bestselling author of *The Power Of Now* said, "Time isn't precious at all, because it is an illusion. What you perceive as precious is not time but the one point that is out of time: the Now. That is precious indeed. The more you are focused on time—past and future—the more you miss the Now, the most precious thing there is."*

You are the *master gardener* of your life. It is up to you to take control of your own mind and make an effort to develop the best attitude you possibly can. This will free up your mind to have more creative thoughts and great ideas [we will look at idea creation in the next section]

What you think about today is your future for tomorrow; your actions in today will create your tomorrow and all the following days after. Could it be any

simpler? Could you imagine a better way to live?

Life isn't a perfect roadmap. Nobody gives us directions to be happy or find joy; it is something we have to create for ourselves.

I often catch myself returning to past outcomes and beating myself up by asking, "Why did I do that? I was so stupid. If only I had [fill in whatever you wish you had done differently] then things would be so different today."

This kind of thinking doesn't create a supportive environment for your positive mindset; it reinforces your disappointment in what you did or didn't do last week, last year, or ten years ago. And the impact it has on your positive mindset is that you develop a pattern of negative thoughts that just builds over the years, reinforcing your NMA.

By staying in the present moment, your mind becomes lighter and less cluttered. You can stay focused easier. You're less anxious. You will develop a deeper peace of mind by staying focused on your present moment reality that keeps you fully centered.

Reframe Your Past Experiences

You can **reframe your past experiences** to view your life in a different way. Relate it to everything that happened in your life as a learning curve. Whatever it is that you are holding onto, realize that you did the best with what you had at that time. It couldn't have been any different than what it was. By doing this, you release so much of the stress and tension inside your body.

I am not suggesting that you forget about the past. That would be unrealistic. But look at your life as an incredible journey, full of all these neat experiences and events that took place [some bad, some good, some really bad, some really good] and reframe everything as "All that happened was for the best. It didn't work out how I expected it to, but it had its place in my life."

By looking at the experience in a new frame of mind and viewing it differently, you can let go of your old thoughts about failed outcomes. Two people can have the same experience regardless of the outcome and yet, one will view it as a negative event while the other person sees it as a positive one. The experience or event itself is neither positive nor negative and you should try to avoid labeling it as such.

"Two men looked out from prison bars,

One saw the mud, the other saw stars.”

- *Dale Carnegie, Bestselling Author of “How To Win Friends and Influence People”.*

Instead, put it into a constructive frame that supports your beliefs and shifts an otherwise “negative outcome” into a learned experience. Remember that an outcome is only viewed as negative if you were expecting a different result and ended up with something else you didn’t want in that moment. Who really knows if the outcome is good or bad?

The scope of this book isn’t to teach you everything about reframing, but it is a powerful technique you can implement to shift your attitude [limited beliefs, negative thoughts] about anything so that it builds you up instead of sabotaging you.

Shift your thoughts toward what you are focusing on today. Are there any new relationships you can pursue? Is there something new you can try to increase your skill or knowledge? Is there a goal that has been on the back burner you want to start working toward? What interesting ideas have you had recently that you would like to put into action?

Your chances of success are exponentially increasing the moment you shift from past events to living in today. This takes diligent practice, but you can do it. There is nothing holding you back.

When you let go of the obsession to control the past, it opens up a new funnel for creating more of what you want in your present life. Stay focused on the present moment because it is the only time in your life that really matters, and it is the only thing you really have any control over. You can manage what is happening right now by making choices in the present situation.

Key Takeaways

- Stay focused on today’s tasks and objectives; enjoy the precious moments that today brings.
- Focusing on the past means you’ll be less likely to see the present moment opportunities.
- Work on the tasks at hand and not the ones completed; reframe old

beliefs and ideas by looking at them differently. It is not what happened but how you perceive the outcome.

- Learn to forgive yourself for past mistakes and failures; nobody has had a perfect life, and your so-called failures are part of the learning curve cycle. Be proud of what you have done with your life up to now.
- Think about the course of your life for the next thirty minutes. Ask yourself, “Where do I want to be in one year? Five years? Ten years from now?”
- Read Eckhart Tolle’s book “**The Power of Now**”.

Your Attitude Toward Yourself

Your attitude toward yourself is the second area that contributes to the quality of your positive mindset.

It amazes me how people treat themselves as if they were their own worst enemy. We might drink too much, smoke, or commit other acts that sabotage our characters, health and put ourselves at risk regardless of the consequences.

Your attitude toward yourself plays a vital role in the quality of your lifestyle you create. By working on developing a positive attitude for yourself, you'll overcome all levels of low self-esteem and boost your confidence.

Here are some questions for you to think about:

1. Do you love yourself unconditionally?
2. Do you regularly exercise and take care of your body?
3. Do you create opportunity for yourself to grow and learn through reading? Are you taking any courses that could enhance your personal development?
4. Are you tolerant of your own mistakes?
5. Do you wake up and start the day off right with a PMA?
6. Do you believe in your limitations, or do you make a serious effort to overcome them?

Think about these questions as you work through the material. Come up with more questions to ask yourself and start to drive your thoughts and behavior toward making things better.

My Story

One day when I was browsing the bookstore, I came across *Anthony Robbins's **Awaken The Giant Within***. I took it home and read it cover to cover. I took extensive notes as I read through the book and made every attempt to put into action what Anthony was teaching.

Over the course of a few months I gradually began to feel the positive changes in my attitude. Within a few months, my attitude toward myself shifted. I started to feel good about myself after years of struggle and

engaging in negative behavior. This took my life in a new direction.

I created better habits that contributed to personal growth. I formed healthier beliefs about my character. I created an actionable goal system and, instead of self-sabotage invented a better lifestyle. I did this because I was able to make an attitude adjustment in how I viewed my life.

As my attitude toward myself changed, I noticed changes on the outside as well. I used words of positive power instead of negative labels to describe my surroundings. I developed a winner's mindset; I created positive thoughts about who I was; I attracted more friendships and started learning new skills such as languages, art and focused on personal development tactics that made a difference in my life.

You can do the same thing. Anyone can if they have a desire to move beyond where they are in the present moment to where they want to be.

Your mindset toward yourself is the foundation for all your success. It is simple, really. Maintain a positive mindset and you create a quality lifestyle that is rich beyond anything you ever dreamt of [no fluff, it's true].

If you are stuck in a negative state and express this attitude towards the people and situations in your life, you can only blame yourself when things go wrong. This isn't to say that only good stuff happens when you maintain a positive attitude. The bad stuff will happen too. What makes the difference is how you perceive the experience, and how you choose to deal with it. There is nothing right or wrong, but your thinking makes it so.

How to Create a Positive Mindset for Yourself

The attitude you have toward yourself defines the actions you take on a daily basis. When I was angry and negative, I had a poor self-image. This led to taking action that defeated my life.

When I worked toward shifting my attitude, surprisingly enough, the good stuff that I always dreamed about started showing up. I don't believe it was a coincidence. This is why your attitude, not just toward others but also toward yourself, is a paramount factor in determining your overall joy and satisfaction.

Love Yourself Unconditionally

Above all else, you should *love yourself* unconditionally. When your attitude toward yourself is healthy, and you communicate to yourself in a positive way, you naturally treat others well and your attitude toward them is warm and accepting. People pick up on this. If you have a poor attitude, this emanates from within and negative people will be attracted to you. The winners are not going to waste one minute in your company.

In his book called *Love Yourself*, author **Kamal Ravikant** says, “As you love yourself, life loves you back. I don’t think it has a choice either. I can’t explain how it works but I know it to be true.”

Many people only like themselves when they accomplish something, or have done something worthy of love. It comes from social conditioning. When you are good, you are rewarded; but if you’re bad or you fail a test in school, you are deemed to be punished somehow. We are not taught to love ourselves unconditionally but to respond to a reward system that focuses on conditional love.

When it comes to creating a positive image for yourself, focus on liking yourself...a lot. Then focus on loving yourself. It doesn’t matter what you accomplish, how much you own, or who is impressed with you. What matters is that you can look at yourself each day and say, “I’m glad I’m me.” Seems silly?

Try it for a week.

Try it for a month.

Try it for the rest of your life.

Observe the negative labels you place on yourself

Take notice of the times you are labeling yourself harshly. This is where **positive affirmations** can play a key role in shaping your mindset to speak to yourself in a gentler, more positive way. If you are in the habit of feeding negative messages to yourself [What an idiot I am! I’ll never succeed; I’m always failing], you have to swap out that little voice that threatens, hurts, and puts down; replace it with a voice that is supportive and fills you with encouragement.

Labels come out when you have disappointed yourself or think you failed somehow. And maybe you did. But who doesn’t fail? Who doesn’t make mistakes? Who isn’t human? Who has a perfect life? You can give yourself a break. Make a list of positive affirmations and practice saying them several times a day.

Shift this attitude and you can shift your life's path. You can start with very simple steps. Step up to the plate and put a stop to the committee in your head. Silence it once and for all. Recognize it for what it is: the ramblings of mad voices operating without your consent.

This is the ego of the mind, and its mission is to control your will by filling your head with false beliefs. You can put a stop to it by recognizing when it's happening and then saying, "Okay, enough. Get lost."

Seriously, you have the power to turn it off. The voices are yours to command, not the other way around.

Establish your mindset at the beginning of each day

What really worked for me and countless others I know is waking up with the right attitude. In other words, wake up on the "right side" of the bed. So many times, I either went to bed with the wrong frame of mind or woke up with it. I can tell you that if you start the day on a bad note, it is going to carry with you throughout the rest of the day, unless you get a handle on it first thing in the morning.

It is crucial to set up your mindset for success early in the day. I can't tell you how many times I have woken up angry, bitter, or dreading the day that I was about to have. It starts with a negative thought; that one thought trickles into more until I have an avalanche of negativity even before I get to breakfast. So how can you wake up with a good attitude that lasts throughout the day?

I do three things:

- Exercise for the first 20 minutes. I do two sets of leg squats and 2 sets of pushups, twenty reps. You can do whatever exercise you want to: yoga, tai-chi, or shadow boxing. But exercise for twenty minutes.
- Free flow writing for twenty minutes. Write down whatever comes to your mind. This is an amazing exercise for clearing your mind and to flush out your ideas.
- Read for twenty minutes; choose a good self-help book or read your list of affirmations and positive quotes. At the back of this book I listed my favorite books. By reading for twenty minutes a day you could easily get through two books a month.
- Lastly, drink a glass of water and eat a good breakfast.

I can't stress enough how this simple system at the beginning of each day saves me from having a miserable day. When I wake up full of worry, anger feeling resentment, or focusing on a negative experience I had, the day is wasted. It is very difficult to bring yourself back to a positive state of mind if you start the day off badly. Start it off right, and no matter what happens that day, you'll be able to handle it much better.

Key Takeaways

- Keep yourself in shape by exercising regularly; eat the right foods and avoid junk.
- Make consistent effort to break any bad habits that are damaging to your mental health and body.
- Make a list of your good qualities and remind yourself what they are.
- Avoid things such as personal labels, self-pity, or envy.
- Remember that you can only be defeated by yourself, and your attitude towards yourself is paramount above all else.
- Be aware of those bad days you have; let yourself have a bad day, but before you go to bed, feed your thoughts with positive affirmations and some good motivational material.
- Create a worthy goal for yourself, and spend some time each day working toward this goal.
- Learn to recognize and filter out anything that gets in your way of maintaining a positive attitude such as negative thoughts and self-criticism.
- Stay away from reading "junk news" and articles that don't contribute to your positive mindset.
- Realize that it isn't the size of the obstacle that defeats you but your attitude toward it.

Your Attitude Toward Others

Just as your attitude toward yourself plays a key role in building your positive mindset, the attitude you project toward other people—friends, strangers, family, and coworkers—is of vital importance in developing your mindset in order to have healthy, functional relationships with others.

Even if you have a strong outlook toward yourself, when you bond with others and make relationships count it adds significant value to your life and theirs. Also, your relations with others will play a key role when it comes to idea development, accountability, and having others you can share your ideas with and get constructive feedback.

You can gauge your attitude toward others by looking at the questions below:

Do you complain about people when they are not around?

Are you tolerant of the mistakes and defects you see in others?

Would you consider yourself kind, patient and caring?

Do you look for every opportunity to help someone who needs it without them asking you for help?

Generally, how would you rate your relationships with people you work with on a scale of ten?

How would you rate your attitude toward strangers [tolerance, kindness, empathy] on a scale of ten?

There are no right or wrong answers here; we all have work to do when it comes to our day-to-day dealings with people.

Your level of complaining

Okay, let's be honest with this one. How often do you complain about other people? This includes bickering, labeling, or a put-down that results in lowering the other person's persona or reputation to a level that you feel comfortable with. I know what it's like when people get under your skin, or they do something that just sets you off and you just have to tell someone about it. So, what do you do?

We **complain** about it to anyone who will listen.

Complaining is a waste of time. It doesn't help the situation, and it is one of the most damaging and negative habits that you can practice. Complaining doesn't solve anything. But look around you. Everybody is doing it, you say. And you are probably right. We grow up with it; we watched our parents do it. We hear friends or coworkers tearing down so-and-so. It looks like the right thing to do when the whole crowd takes part. You can see it everywhere in our society: in the news, tabloids, and the net.

Chronic complaining is at the lowest form of communication; it ruins any chances of real problem solving.

How I Killed the Complainer

Whenever I found myself getting into complaint mode, I imagined that the person whom I was tearing down was standing right there behind me. But, they couldn't say anything except stand there and listen to my ranting and raving. As I would start on my rant of what they did or how they crossed me, I visualize that person standing right there listening to every word I said.

But they can't speak. They just have to take it.

Think about that for a minute.

If complaining is your addiction like it was mine, try this exercise. You will stop doing it after a few times. Also, you will gain a greater empathy for people, which, in all fairness, is something this world needs more of.

Especially these days, many have turned to social media as their new outlet for complaints. Now we can do it without having to face anyone.

Regardless whether you do it verbally or through an email, it has the same negative effect.

Not only do you harm the other person but also you damage yourself. Your positive attitude toward yourself drops a notch when you set out to tear into someone else's reputation. Tearing down someone's reputation is the first step to developing a bad attitude, not just toward the person you are targeting but to everyone you meet. People won't trust you. If you are always complaining about someone, then people start to wonder, "Okay, when will it be my turn?" Eventually, the people who complain to you about others are the same people who complain to others about you. It becomes a negative loop.

In fact, this happened to a friend of mine. One day, at an office luncheon he was eating together with a colleague and was fuming about one of the new

employees who couldn't get anything right after three months on the job. After they were done eating and got up to pay the bill, they saw that she was sitting at the table right next to theirs hidden from view. The look on her face told him everything: she had heard it all. My friend was cured of his complaining addiction, but the lesson learned was a tough one.

This one habit can change everything for you. It did for me, and my attitude toward others underwent a major shift. I made more friends and became more tolerant and slightly understanding of others whom I had conflict with. We are all different, and, as far as I can tell, nobody I have ever met was born perfect.

Steer clear of tearing down another person's reputation. It isn't worth it. It damages their reputation and your own as well. Find another way.

Here is what you can do:

- Use the strategy I told you about. Visualize the other person always standing there and they can only watch and listen to you. See yourself as you launch into your attack when you "unload" your frustration onto someone else over coffee.
- Say something good about the person. If you have to make a comment about the way they treated you or something they did, fine, but take this approach. Balance your complaint by saying something nice about them. In fact, compliment that person, even when they are not there. And as the saying goes, if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.

Your level of kindness

Gandhi once said: "Be kind to others. And if you can't be kind, at least don't hurt them."

This goes hand in hand with complaining. Being kind to other people is easy when they are kind back to you. But the real challenge lies in being nice when niceness is not reciprocated. Let's be honest here: we live in a very volatile world. People have bad days, and some even have bad lives.

Should I be kind when someone is rude or acting like a jerk? That's your call, but I personally won't reciprocate one bad behavior with another.

What it comes down to is your ability and discipline to control your first reaction.

"Oh, he cut me off in traffic so I did the same to him."

“She didn’t give me anything for my birthday; why should I give her anything?”

“I said good morning and he just blanked me. That’s it, from now on I’m ignoring him.”

I have a very simple rule here when it comes to being kind: be kind to everyone. You don’t have to make friends with everyone, or even reciprocate if they are acting standoffish, but treat people with an equal level of respect regardless of who they are, social status, or what they look like.

This brings me to the next point...

Building Tolerance

When you lack tolerance, then this allows room for negative thinking about others to come creeping back in. When someone gets in your way or does something to drive you towards anger, your thoughts jump to the defense.

I am not saying that you have to let others walk all over you. Just the opposite. And why force yourself to “not get angry” when you are? No, what I’m suggesting is to observe the emotions you have when you’re losing tolerance.

What thoughts are you having? How are they controlling you? What could you do to make the situation better?

Realistically speaking, sometimes the best course of action is to distance yourself from the person. Take some time out to regain your thoughts and think things through. Nobody can be tolerant forever if you are always battling the same character defects in other people.

As I’ve said already, you are in control of your mindset at all times. When you react toward the negative attitude of other people, you lose this control. You give it up to the other person. Do you want to be in control of your own life, or would you rather someone else were in control of your emotions?

We deal with a lot of people throughout our day: family, managers and co-workers, people driving in traffic, and, these days, people on social media. Take notice of how often you get angry every day. Seriously. Keep score. Then, make a count of how often you bicker or complain to someone about so and so. How much time did you waste today doing that?

Key Takeaways

- Find someone whom you trust and make that person your partner, friend, or accountability partner. Build a relationship with this person and help develop a plan to help each other succeed.
- Make another person feel better by passing on kind words, giving a compliment, or expressing empathy for a situation they are dealing with.
- Stay away from situations that focus on labeling, condemning, or tearing down another person's character. Catch yourself when you start to complain about somebody else, and stop the habit right away.
- Avoid people who have negative attitudes; you don't have to be rude to them, but you don't have to engage with them or invite them into our circle either.
- Form relationships with people who are dedicated to self-improvement and you can support each other on your journey.
- Help someone with a problem they are struggling with; share your wisdom and offer suggestions to ease their struggle.
- Be kind. To everyone. As a rule of thumb.

People, Places and Events That Challenge Your Positive Attitude

Even the most positive and inspiring people are challenged by the trials and tribulations of everyday living. Maintaining a positive attitude and outlook can be tough when the rest of the world seems hell-bent on making your life difficult. But that is the reality: life isn't always easy, but when you face it with an optimistic mindset, people and situations are easier to deal with.

There are many situations that will challenge your positivity when you are surrounded by adversity. This could be people who want you to solve their problems for them, a relationship issue, trouble in your office, or an unexpected emergency that has nothing to do with you, but you are the one expected to take care of it.

There is a whole list of things that can happen every day that are going to take your attitude and put it to the test. It could be someone who steals your parking space, cuts ahead of you in line at the supermarket, or a difficult coworker who shouldn't even have a job in your company is causing trouble that leads to stress. The question you might ask yourself in these situations is: "What am I going to do?"

What did Gandhi do when faced with adversity?

Gandhi lived a simple life. He never had much and he never needed much. He wore simple robes and only ate as much as he needed to. He lived in a state that many deemed as poverty, but this is how he chose to live.

His mission and purpose was to free his nation and his people from British rule. How did he stay positive and strong when faced with threats and the possibility of being killed when trying to free his nation? How could he maintain such a level of spiritual and mental freedom when his life and that of his people was at stake? How could anyone?

You don't have to be Gandhi to deal with life's difficulties, but you can try putting yourself in someone's shoes by visually imaging what they would do. How would [name of the person you admire] handle this? What would he or she do?

When I have a bad day or I come up against someone who is giving me grief, and I would like to do nothing more than get into it and handle the

situation with an aggressive attitude, I stop and ask myself this one question: “What would Gandhi do?” It might sound like a crazy question to ask yourself but seriously, it calms you right down. Why? It changes your whole perspective. Instead of wondering, “What am I going to do?”

[Because I don’t always have the best solution,] I ask a question that shifts my frame of mind toward somebody I know that could handle this problem.

You can replace Gandhi with someone who is known to be a positive force: Mother Teresa, Jesus Christ, Buddha, or the Dalai Lama. It can be someone you know in your family or neighborhood that you respect

because they are a positive influence on your life. Whomever it is, use that person as your “perfect model” to deal with a difficult situation, person, or a challenging problem. When I ask that question, the answer eventually comes, and I’m less likely to lose my temper, overreact or lash out in anger.

Try this strategy in any situation that you find challenging. With practice, you will be able to manage your emotions much better and maintain that positive outlook that you have worked so hard to create.

What are the difficult situations you are facing now?

Not a day goes by when you are not going to be faced with some problem, crisis, or situation that calls you out of your happy spot.

You are driving and feeling the power of a happy moment when your car dies.

A friend of yours calls and is getting divorced, and you start to worry about your own marriage.

Delayed trains, planes, and automobiles: in a land full of chaos, staying in your happy spot is challenging.

You get a bill for \$3,000 you have to pay by the end of the month. You have fifty dollars in the bank.

Pick one of these situations and map out your solutions list. Make a list of what you can do to handle this. You can’t always prepare yourself for everything that is going to happen, but take time to visualize problems that might occur. Then, try to work out a solution to those problems.

By running through “situation simulations” you can train your mind to be better prepared for handling tough situations when they come up. You’ll have less stress, and be more confident to take on whatever life throws at you.

“Cutting it Loose” Strategy

There are just some things that we can't do anything about. Yet, we might hold onto them because we feel obligated or responsible. I say, if it has nothing to do with anything you did directly, cut it loose from your life. Why deal with other people's problems if it's not yours to begin with? I often get so caught up in things happening around me that I try to do too much. You don't have to solve the world's problems. Start with your own and then help someone else whenever you can.

When faced with a situation that I can't deal with at the moment, I use a thought technique called **cutting loose**.

With your mental scissors, imagine cutting this thing loose and having it fall away. It falls into darkness, or I imagine it falling away into nothingness. Try this as many times as it takes. Letting old outcomes go is one way to free up your mind. And, the more space you have for this the lighter you'll feel.

Remember: your mind is full of the accumulation of so much stuff over the years it needs to be dumped out every now and then. When you hold onto old ideas, thoughts, and gripes it turns to anger and causes stress. You will get headaches more frequently and start losing sleep.

I spend fifteen minutes every night before going to bed meditating. For years I didn't meditate even though I had heard so much about the benefits and how great it is for you. When I started it was hard to keep it going as a habit, but gradually it worked. It puts my mind at rest and I don't go to bed holding all that mental junk inside. Dump the junk out of your head if it's taking up valuable space.

Control your reactions, and not the reactions of other people:

Your reaction to any person, place, or thing is under your control. Nobody can make you act in any manner. When you say, "He made me angry," what you are really saying is, "He did something I didn't approve of, and I made the decision to react this way."

This is good because the only way that you are really going to develop a firm, solid attitude is through practice, and there is no better way to develop this discipline than going out into the world and saying, "Okay, give it to me. What have you got?"

The world is not going to bend for you or me. You have to be the *rock in the river* that can build up enough personal power to stand strong against the current and let it run around you. A great strategy I use is to step out of *yourself* and

become an observer of everything you see happening around you.

For example, certain times of the day, I'll break away from my desk and the monotonous habit of just staring at a computer screen, and start to listen to everything going on around me. You can see people totally immersed in their little world, running around putting out fires, being busy when they are not, or looking for something to engage their attention. I use this **observance technique** to bring myself into the reality of the world as it is happening around me.

You can do it anywhere. Next time you go outside, stand off to the side on a busy street and watch everybody as they run here and there, using smartphones, communicating, arguing, immersed in their little world as it is going on around them. We are all a part of this.

What I discovered from this technique is that the world is not about me. When you are in the thick of a busy day, doesn't it feel like everything going on around you is somehow about you? When I stopped taking things so personally, it made it easier to accept and deal with.

Most of what happens to us and how we deal with it is perception. Two people can go through the exact same experience and yet come out of it completely different. One person is stressed out, anxious, and needs medication to calm down; the other person shrugs it off and says, "Oh well, that was fun." Most of what happens in our day-to-day lives actually has nothing to do with us in many cases, but people get too involved and they invite those problems in.

Key Takeaways

- Create a script in your head that directly communicates with the person who is causing you grief. This is very powerful. This is very important and can sustain your positive attitude for long bouts of time.
- Use the “What would Gandhi do” technique. Ask yourself, “What would [name here] do in this situation. This is a powerful strategy for getting clarity when things are really difficult.
- Use the “cutting it loose” strategy for dealing with people or situations that you are not responsible for; or, you just can’t think about the problem in your life at the moment and you have to cut it loose.
- Remember that you cannot change the attitude or control the behavior of other people. They are going to do what they do. You can only control your reaction to it.
- Take some time out and apply the “observance technique”. Watch everything happening around you. Then, when you step back into it, you will have a wider perspective of the world and the people as they act and react.

Your Action Plan for PMA Development

Before we get into the next section on idea development, here are some action tasks you can implement to live a more positive lifestyle and start working on increasing that positive attitude. Don't worry about the days you have "downtime" and your negative thinking starts lurking around; when you do the things that make you feel good, you'll naturally pick yourself up.

By doing at least three of these tasks every day, you'll develop a powerful mindset and empower your thoughts to become creative devices.

Here is a list of strategies you can try in developing your positive mental attitude.

Read positive quotes and affirmations. Keep these quotes handy so that you can refer to them every day. I choose five quotes every night and read them several times throughout the day. You can find loads of positive quotes by checking brainyquote.com.

Wake up early. Your brain is most active in the morning. Try getting up earlier than usual, reading for twenty minutes, or exercising. You can write a blog or take your dog for an early walk. This time spent in the morning can be your most important time of the day because it sets the tone for your PMA throughout the rest of the day. Check out this great [article](#) by Leo Babauta on the benefits of rising early.

Meditate twice a day for fifteen minutes each time. Meditation clears your mind and enhances your concentration. By meditating you gain greater control over your mental functions and increased ability to focus. It reduces your stress, improves health and reduces negative energy while increasing your capacity to think up great ideas. Read [this article](#) on the benefits of meditation and why you should make it a part of your daily routine.

Keep on learning something new. A mind that is stagnant stays stuck in old beliefs and habits. Learning new skills and staying open to better ways of doing things frees your mind space up and makes room for more advanced learning. You could learn new skills to increase business opportunities or improve the quality of your relationships with friends and family. Increasing your skills through committing to constant and

never-ending improvement, you attract the people and situations that add greater value to life.

Write down three positive points about someone you struggle to get along with. If Gandhi could take on the British Empire and practice forgiveness when surrounded by adversity, you can make an effort to forgive one person and their defects. Write down the person's name. Then, write down three things they do well and praise them for it. If you can't approach someone in person, you can write everything down and read it out loud. Visualize the person being there in the room with you. You will experience an amazing feeling of "letting go" with this activity.

Read as many books on personal development as you can. Try to schedule in reading time every day and do it for at least twenty minutes. I spend upwards to an hour most days reading something. This has been a major contributor toward developing my positive attitude. Reading isn't just something you should do when you have time; it should be a part of your daily routine. You can pencil in the time to read instead of just doing it when you have time. This one daily habit of reading will set a positive tone for your mindset.

Here is a short list of some great books I recommend:

The Miracle Morning by **Hal Elrod**

Awaken the Giant Within by **Anthony Robbins**

Maximum Achievement by **Brian Tracy**

Think and Grow Rich by **Napoleon Hill**

The Power of Positive Thinking by **Norman Vincent Peale**

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by **Stephen R. Covey**

The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be by **Jack Canfield**

Creative Visualization by **Shakti Gawain**

Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less by **Greg McKeown**

Now add at least ten more books you would like to put on your reading list!

Write out your goals. Schedule one hour a day for the next week to write down

your goals for the next five years. What goal will have the biggest impact on your life this year? What goals do you have for this month? You can create goals for every area of your life: health, wealth, relationships and travel. Put aside at least three hours to totally map out your goals for the next twenty years.

Focus on empowering your thoughts. Try to keep them positive, constructive and clear of clutter. Watch out for negative thoughts and put a stop to them when they happen. Avoid labeling or buying into negative discussions that focus on complaining, bickering and petty issues that harm others. Observe the thoughts you have about people and situations.

Turn off the TV. We spend far too much time watching TV. I won't suggest stopping it altogether because it is good to relax and watch a movie from time to time. But any more than thirty minutes a day and you are killing time that you can never get back.

Instead of watching endless hours without any self-control, schedule your TV time after your other stuff is finished. For example, Saturday night is my DVD movie time. I watch a movie every Saturday from 9 to 11 pm. When I watch TV as a default habit just to kill time, it becomes the only thing I do. During the rest of the week, I'll actually unplug it and won't turn it on at all.

Part 2 Recap

In this section, we covered a lot of ground. I showed you how to focus on the key areas for developing your positive mindset. We looked at the various strategies you can implement for turning your mindset into a powerful tool for creating positivity in your life and work. Developing the right mindset requires a commitment to constant and never-ending improvement and so, even if your progress is slow, just keep working at it. You'll get there.

Coming up in the next section, we are going to take a look at idea implementation and how to create an idea organization system. You will also learn the 3-step folder strategy for mind mapping and organizing priceless ideas while capturing them on the move.

Let's not stop just yet. If you are ready, turn the page or scroll to the next screen. See you in the next section!

PART 3: CREATING YOUR IDEA ORGANIZATION SYSTEM

How To Eliminate Excuses for Crafting better Ideas

In the previous chapters we looked at the strategies for empowering your thoughts to develop and build a positive mindset. With this foundation in place, you will be able to forge greater ideas to be used for creating anything you want: mastering a skill, building a business, or implementing innovative products and services to help people live better lives. Your ideas can build a gateway to a better future.

In the first section of this book, we focused on empowering your thoughts to craft a mind that is more focused and energized. A mind that is clear and filled with positive energy is more likely to come up with better ideas that are positive; that is, you will generate better ideas that help people and add value to their lives.

Now, how would you like to create a thriving business that keeps you employed full time while you travel the world? How would you like to make a living doing what you love by working from home? By putting your ideas into action, there is no telling what could happen. You could come up with a product or service that people really need and would pay top dollar for. Or maybe you'd even give it away as a beneficial cause to the planet.

This book began with creating quality thoughts for keeping your mind clear of mental junk that interrupts the flow of idea generation. Then we discussed using that to build your positive mindset and developing a good attitude towards yourself and others. Now we can tie everything together in these next two sections by getting your ideas out there.

When you are passionate about the work you do or project that you're working on, ideas can flow easily. If you are stuck in a job that you hate, this stirs up negative thoughts and the creating process is more difficult. You might be less motivated to put your ideas into action. So find something you love to do and put your ideas into action to find a way to make a living from doing what you love.

Whatever your passion is, that is the platform your ideas will be strongly focused on. But, as you will see, it is good to spread your ideas across other categories and platforms as well. You don't have to restrict yourself to just one specific area of interest. My ideas tend to cover a broad spectrum; one day I'll

have an idea for a book, and the next day it could be something for a new online business.

Your Ideas Matter

Why are ideas vital to success? A strong idea carries the potential to develop into a world-class work of art, a book, a business, or the solution to a problem that helps thousands of people. Have you ever had an idea that you just had to take action on? Do you have so many ideas every day that you feel overwhelmed and don't know what to focus on first? Or maybe you struggle to come up with unique ideas and you want to make it a habit to create more?

I'll share a secret with you: your ideas matter. People are waiting for the next thing to help them and add value to their lives. You don't have to come up with the next best light bulb, or have thousands of ideas like Edison or Einstein.

But, with a clear mind that is focused on solving a particular problem, solution development or building your "dream lifestyle," you do have the potential to come up with the answer for just about anything. You have a world of ideas and thoughts that you haven't discovered yet. An idea is more than just a "good thought"; the right idea could be the key that opens the doors of your dreams.

Mark McCormack, the founder and chairman of **IMG** and a bestselling author, said, "*If new ideas are the lifeblood of any thriving organization—and, trust me, they are—managers must learn to revere, not merely tolerate, the people who come up with those ideas.*"

Ideas are infinite. They create the future. Good ideas can create your future! Build a business, enjoy your work, or plan out your goals for the next ten years and remember to generate ideas for putting an action plan into the works.

Building Your Own Reality

When you stop believing in the world's version of reality, and you set out to create your own reality that fills you up with a deeper sense of passion and purpose, a new life starts to take shape. Just look at all the entrepreneurs out there who have fashioned whole new careers and businesses because they had an idea and put it into action. You can create a similar experience if you know what exactly it is that you want.

A lot of people lack confidence in their ideas: we hear names like Einstein, Edison, Jobs, and Disney and immediately think *genius*. Yes, these innovators were geniuses in their contributions to the world. This doesn't mean that you and I should shy away from creating an idea platform full of mind-blowing

inventions that others might pay money for. Is it really too hard to believe?

Mai Lieu was a hair stylist in a salon twelve years ago when she had an idea for a self-styling gadget that would save people a ton of money. She quit her job and worked on her invention, the [CreaClip](#). Now she is a successful millionaire entrepreneur, speaker, and author.

Susan Gregg Koger turned her passion for thrifting and vintage clothing into a thriving business after selling the things she could no longer keep around her home. The company called **ModCloth** is growing at the rate of 40% a year with over 450 employees. You can read all about her success story and the company she created [here](#).

Imagine what you could do if you put your ideas to work?

You can make a difference right now, by sitting down for one hour and sketching out all the ideas you've had over the past week. Try it and see. Do it right now. Grab a pen and paper and brainstorm the ideas that have been roaming around in your mind. I'll bet you've had several since this morning.

Don't cast aside your ideas just because they seem "out there" or too unbelievable. By exercising your **idea muscle**, you will make idea generation a habit. Soon you will have so many ideas that you won't have time for idle chitchat or small talk that leads nowhere. You'll be too busy building a better future for yourself.

The Idle Mind and Banishing Excuses

An idle mind without a purpose will develop all sorts of bad habits: excessive TV watching, compulsive shopping, addictions such as gambling or worse. Without this focus in your life, you will be looking for distractions to fill up the time, or create trouble for the sake of doing something. Don't get sucked into the boredom life trap. Focus on turning good ideas into a creative funnel that adds value to people's lives and you'll be taking the first real step towards bringing your uniqueness into the world.

When people say they are bored, what they really mean is, they want to do something but don't know what to do. If they can't occupy the mind with a creative project or put an idea into action, it opens the door to a host of negativity.

Getting focused and keeping your goals in sight is going to keep your ideas flowing continuously. They will be overflowing and you won't be able to keep up. You have lots of good ideas and, in this section, you are going to explore

various ways to capture, organize, and integrate these ideas.

But first, here are the excuses people use for not believing in their ideas. Instead of creating excuses, you can create your future.

My ideas are not original, creative, or mind-blowing. [That's okay; you can build from existing platforms. You don't have to come up with something totally unique. Just find a better way to do it.]

1. *All the good ones are already taken.* [No, they aren't. The world needs ideas now more than ever. This is the worst excuse I hear the most often]
2. *I'm not an inventor;* [Learn how to invent and patent; Mai did.]
3. *It takes me a long time to come up with a good idea for anything.* [So what? Many successful people didn't have their "big idea" until much later in life]
4. *Most of my ideas are crap.* [Yes, maybe they are; but most ideas are until you find a good one]
5. *I'm not good at writing ideas down; I get them and then I forget about them.* [Don't worry; we will cover the idea capturing system soon]
6. *I need an MBA in order to launch a successful business.* [Steve Jobs never finished college, and Einstein never finished high school. So?]
7. *Whenever I have a good idea, it turns out somebody has already taken it. What's the point?* [True, a lot of ideas out there are similar and, it's not uncommon for people to have the same idea. But that's okay. The fact that you came up with a really good idea that someone else did says something: you can do this!]
8. *People laugh when I tell them about an idea I had. I don't have much confidence in myself to really come up with anything that's worthy.* [You might be telling the wrong people. Join a mastermind group that supports your ideas. People don't laugh at you but laugh with you.]

There are lots of excuses that people use to talk themselves out of doing something. We seem to think that all the good ideas are taken, or that only inventors, scientists, and creatives have the right to come up with all the good stuff that changes the world. You don't have to come up with an idea that is

going to change the world. If you do, that's awesome, but take the pressure off yourself to come up with something that is so unique nobody else has ever thought of it.

Most ideas these days are built from existing platforms that other inventors and creatives have already established. This means you can look at something that is working for other people, and try to find an edge; look for a way that it can be done better. That is where your ideas exist!

One of the best ways that you can do this is to create a business, product or service that solves problems for people. When was the last time someone helped you with a problem? Was it a book, blog, or product that you purchased? Or maybe a friend of yours gave you some advice that you followed through on. Do a search on Google and see what problems people have. What do they want to know? What keywords are they searching? If you aren't sure where to start, try this and see what ideas you can come up with.

You can do whatever it is you desire to do and be. Your limits are only established by the beliefs you have about yourself. Do you want to spend your days engaged in tasks and time-wasting activities that don't matter? I didn't think so. You are full of more ideas than you could fill up a thousand notebooks with; I'll bet anything on it. If I believe in you, then you can believe in yourself.

Keep a positive mindset and you'll stay focused on putting your thoughts and ideas into action. From there, you can funnel your plan into a business of your choice.

In the next chapter, we will look at the various apps you can use to capture your ideas on the move. After that, we will look at organizing ideas into their right categories and then pulling them out when they're ready to be put into action.

Capturing Valuable Ideas On the Move

One of the most important daily habits you can do for your ideas is to develop a system for gathering and compiling everything into one location. Once you get into the habit of generating ideas for your business, lifestyle, hobby or life's passion, you'll find that your "idea machination" is going to explode. It is natural and exciting. I love just walking down the street and suddenly getting an idea for something that excites me. But the trick is, I have to write it down or record it right away.

If you don't take action right away and get your idea down on paper or recorded into digital software, chances are when you try to recall it later, you won't be able to. This has happened to me many times. I lost a lot of good stuff this way that I couldn't recall hours later when I wanted to. Fortunately, with today's simplicity of taking notes with hand-held devices, you can have an entire system for note collecting and idea gathering without skipping a beat.

What's the point of having good ideas if you can't remember them?

This is why it is essential to have an idea journal. By creating a system where you capture your ideas on the run, you can avoid losing those golden moments when a good idea that could be worth cash in your hand suddenly materializes in your mind.

What is an idea-capturing system?

It could be an idea journal, where you record your ideas, using digital software such as an idea app that can quickly record your ideas. You can do this with pen and paper (I am old school and still love writing down my ideas in an idea journal) or using your smartphone/tablet. By opening up the app on your computer or smartphone, you can plug in your idea for easy access later. You can also use the recording mic to speak your ideas into your phone (more on this later).

There are countless ways you can record your ideas without risk of losing them. If you think you can get away with trying to remember your idea that you just had, your memory is a lot better than mine. I have so many ideas throughout the day for books, blogs, and strategies to grow my business that I couldn't possibly manage on memory alone.

Check out this article here on Thomas Edison, who recorded his ideas and experiments in over three thousand five hundred notebooks in his lifetime and

had over five million documents recorded. In fact, he had so many ideas that an organization was founded called the [Thomas A. Edison Papers Project](#) committed to organizing and editing his life's works. These notebooks and documents are still being investigated today.

Coming up, here is the process you are going to use for capturing, organizing and putting your ideas into action:

- 1. Capture/Record Ideas**
- 2. Organize Ideas into Folders**
- 3. Initiate and take Action**

Idea Capturing Systems

Evernote

My favorite tool for capturing ideas is Evernote. But Evernote is a lot more than just an idea collector. I also use it for writing blogs and I have written entire books on the Evernote platform. You can organize your ideas into individual notebooks within Evernote and then place your related notebooks into notebook “stacks.”

In addition, you can take a screenshot of website pages that also serve as ideas for articles you might be researching. You can record your voice and email your notes to people you want to share them with. I could say that, with Evernote, you don't really need anything else, but I will show you some other apps that are pretty good for getting your ideas out there and some cool ways to organize and be creative with your ideas.

Evernote is a powerful online tool that also syncs with all your other devices. When I am on the run and suddenly get an idea for a book or a business idea, I just open up the app on my smartphone or PC and write it down as a note in Evernote. Then, I don't have to worry about losing it.

You could be in the middle of your day and suddenly have an idea for a song, a book theme, a new recipe, or a business idea to launch your next product. But if you don't write it down, it could be gone ten minutes later, as well as the potential for earning you lots of bucks later on down the road. I have lost many good ideas this way. They were great thoughts “in the moment” and when I didn't record them, I had forgotten what they were an hour later. Make capturing your ideas a habit; don't rely on memory alone.

I'll be referring to Evernote throughout the rest of this book so you can download the basic application package for free [here](#) if you don't have it already.

More Apps for Capturing and Recording Your Ideas

Pen & Paper [Yes, it still exists]

I love the **pen and paper method**. There is just something about writing it down that makes it more real and adds more juice to your thinking process and memory retention. You actually retain things more when you put pen to paper. The physical process of writing stuff down actually makes it more real.

What is free flow writing?

Take thirty minutes and start to write. If you can't think of what to write about, just start with anything. **Don't stop to think or edit what you write. Just let the writing flow uninterrupted.** You can write about a topic you are interested in, or an idea that you want to try out and develop.

I recently read a book about waking up early in the morning and getting things done. So, based on this I wrote a free flow article about all the benefits of waking up early. Then, I started to come up with ideas for what I can do if I wake up early. This led into an action plan I could initiate. My idea then expanded into the ways I could set myself up for waking up early.

Make free flow writing a daily habit. You can even do this first thing in the morning when you get up. This exercise really digs deep and gets the good stuff out of your mind. It's like "mining" for the ideas that are in there. Before you know it, things that you had never thought of are hitting the paper.

You can use the **Pomodoro Technique** and set a timer for 25 minutes; during this structured time start your free flow writing. At the end of the 25 minutes, you can either stop or, take a five-minute break and then continue for another 25 minutes. I do this three times a week where I'll schedule an "Idea Creating" time for myself that I can get everything out of my head and make working with my ideas easier.

You can download the Pomodoro app [here](#) for \$2.99.

Here is the Pomodoro technique [website](#) so you can learn more about all the benefits of this great little system.

Action Item:

Schedule 20-30 minutes a day to do free flow writing. If you have nothing to write about, quickly scan some blogs or articles. Or, dig into your ideas folder or idea journal and pull out an idea. This is a great way to start taking action on your idea. Be sure to schedule your time for this, or else it will be something that you'll do "when you have time" and then it won't get done.

So, collect during the day, organize your ideas at night. Initiate your thoughts when the time is right.

I don't want to overload you with choices so I'll give you three more options and you can choose from your favorite. Keep in mind that apps are always changing, developing, and being upgraded. Some apps that are popular this year may be gone next year. This is why it is important to choose apps that you can sync with other devices and back up regularly. Almost all apps do these days but just make sure you know the functions of each if you use it regularly or rely on it for your note taking and documents.

Microsoft OneNote: another option to Evernote is the Microsoft OneNote application. You can use both of course but I would recommend choosing your favorite to cut down on work and avoid having your ideas spread across various platforms.

You can check out [Microsoft OneNote](#) here.

Captio:

This app is great when you are on the run and need to deliver quickly. The app is simple. When you get an idea, simply open it up on your phone, type in the note and hit send. Done. It goes right to your email inbox. You can take pictures as well. This app integrates with other apps as well such as Evernote. It can work both online or offline and it will store your notes until you're ready to send.

One option you can do is take notes with the Captio app. Then, later on in the day, organize the notes taken and place into notebooks in Evernote. The one advantage with this app is that it is much faster to operate and open up on the go. This works especially well if you only have a moment to get something down, such as waiting for the light to change at the intersection [please don't try it while driving!].

You can download [Captio](#) here for \$1.99.

Corkulous

At home, I use a corkboard to create mind maps with cards that I can easily tack

up. The Corkulous system works like a corkboard. As with the other apps, your corkboards are easily shareable across devices and other apps.

You can download [Corkulous](#) here for free. There is an upgrade to [Corkulous Pro](#) you can grab for \$4.99.

Super Note

I am a visual learner. I love colors and looking at the project that I am creating. For these reasons, Super Note has become one of my favorite apps for getting creative. You can take notes, make recordings, take photos and schedule reminders. This app works like a simple text editor and notebook as well. The color-coding allows you to organize themes or categories according to colors. Again, everything can be transferred to email or Dropbox for easy sharing.

[Super Note](#) can be downloaded here for \$2.99.

I love this app and would certainly recommend it on top of using Evernote. Sometimes, note taking isn't very exciting, especially if it is something you have to do for a meeting, but, at least, with this app, you can put the fun back in the system again.

Dropbox

Most people I know use Dropbox these days. It comes with 2GB free and can be upgraded to 1 TB for an annual fee. It can be accessed across all devices like Evernote. The files can be easily shared with others if you are working on projects with people. I use Dropbox to back up ideas and books I am working on. Consider this option for storing data.

You can share files with people as well and it makes project teamwork a breeze. If someone adds an idea or document to Dropbox, everyone can pick it up. But, for the more creative approach, go with one of the apps previously mentioned.

You can sign up for [Dropbox](#) here.

Audio Recording and Speaking Your Ideas

One of the fastest growing methods for recording thoughts and ideas quickly is using the recording function on smartphones. By quickly speaking your idea, it is now recorded as an audio file; I know people who are writing entire books this way and then having the audio files transcribed later on by services or programs such as the [Dragon Recorder Application](#) software.

You can then transfer the digital files into Evernote or Dropbox from your phone. It's also worth mentioning that Evernote has a recording tool as well.

Chapter Recap

In this chapter, I have shared with you some of the most reliable and user-friendly ideas and note-capturing apps available. Choose your favorite idea-capturing application and record all of your ideas without losing them. Later on we will look at how to organize and put your ideas into action.

Here are the apps again:

- **Evernote**
- **Captio**
- **Super Note**
- **Corkulous**
- **Dropbox**
- **Audio Recording [Dragon Recorder App, Dragon Dictation]**
- **Pen and Paper:** Keep physical notes of your ideas in an Idea Journal.

Building Your “Idea Organizing” System

This chapter is about organizing your ideas so that you can find them when you need to. Without a system for locating the right ideas at the right time, you’ll waste time scrolling through files and folders, wondering where you put them. Spare yourself the frustration and create a simple system to access your ideas when you need them.

In David Allen’s book [*Getting Things Done: the art of stress-free productivity*](#), he says that when you organize your papers in the office, you should only touch a paper twice: once when you receive it and the second time when you put it into its appropriate folder. If not, you get into shifting papers around to find it. This is counterproductive. Things get lost.

When you are busy dumping your notes into a folder, if you don’t take the time to organize them at the end of the day or week, you’ll end up with a big mess, and finding what you want will be time consuming. If you don’t do something with them, notes will be everywhere and possibly spread across various apps or buried in other folders on your desktop, which adds to the confusion. To avoid this, the next stage is to have a system for organizing these ideas so they stay current and easily retrievable.

What I’ll show you is a simple system for getting your ideas into the places they should be in just three simple steps. The first step you have already covered by having a system in place to capture your ideas. Now you need a place to put the ideas so they’re in the right folders. You already know how a filing cabinet works:

1. Loose paper is found in office.
2. Paper goes into folder in filing cabinet.
3. Folder is located with a stack of other folders [This might be a project you are working on or related subjects.]
4. When information or a document is needed regarding this particular client or contract, the file is opened up and the contents taken out.

Simple, right?

Okay then, let’s take a look at how you can store your ideas in digital and physical format.

An example of how I collect ideas is by dividing them into categories. Another

idea is to use the **idea folders strategy**. It works like this. Organize a group of folders and label each one according to the specific category, niche, or project. You can loop your ideas together if they are to be used in the same project or work. This is a process also known as **cross-fertilization** that Edison employed when he was working on several projects or inventions at the same time.

For example, I have a folder for blog ideas, books, and website development. There are so many ideas here as well as resources I have to access that I have multiple folders for each category.

Whatever your ideas focus on, this is how you should structure your folders.

The key is to have a place where you can store your ideas that are related to similar projects, interests, and passions. I know this seems logical and very elementary but nothing can be worse than looking for something and not being able to find it. Even if you are not an organized person, this system can help you to get organized. It is not overly complex and can be managed easily if you follow the process.

Once your idea is recorded, whether it is written down in a notebook or in an app while on the run, you then move it one more time to the folder/category where it belongs.

Evernote Stacks: Organizing idea with the stacking method

I talked about Evernote in the last chapter and how it is a powerful system for collecting and maintaining your projects, docs, and, of course, parking your ideas. The other great feature it has is **notebook stacking**.

This is the system I use for keeping my projects together as well as ideas and material recorded. Of course, you can use whatever apps you feel comfortable with and adopt a similar method. In fact, you can do the same thing right on a PC desktop, but, at least, with an app like Evernote your information is saved should anything happen to your computer or smartphone.

In Evernote, it works like this:

1. You can select notebooks from the side menu.
2. Then, drag and drop one notebook into another. You now have a new stack containing both notebooks. Now these notebooks are likely related; they could be “workout” routines or ideas you have for a series of books you plan to write. You might have a contract with similar clients working together so the information is contained in the same stack.

3. You can add additional notebooks by dragging them into the same stack.

The scope of this book doesn't cover all the functions that Evernote can do, so if you want to know more you should check out these books by S. J. Scott and Nancy Hendrickson. They'll show you how to maximize the Evernote tool for both personal and business use. Both authors use the app extensively and get into the detail of how to really maximize it for using every day.

[*How to Use Evernote for Writing and Research*](#) by **Nancy Hendrickson**

[*Master Evernote: The Unofficial Guide to Organizing Your Life with Evernote*](#)
by **S. J. Scott**

Creating a Swipe File

Creating a swipe file is another good idea for collecting ideas, resources, and information to be used on upcoming projects.

According to [Wikipedia](#), a Swipe file is:

A collection of tested and proven [advertising](#) and sales letters. Keeping a swipe file (templates) is a common practice used by advertising [copywriters](#) and creative directors as a ready reference of ideas for projects. Copywriters are not the only ones who can benefit from having a swipe file.

As book publishing coach Diane Eble points out, authors and publishers can benefit from creating a swipe file of best-selling titles to give them ideas for their own titles. Publicists can create a swipe file of great press release headlines. Swipe files are a great jumping-off point for anybody who needs to come up with lots of ideas.

How I Use a Swipe File:

Swipe files are great for gathering information related to ideas you have or projects you are working on. As stated in the Wikipedia description, writers use swipe files to collect ideas on existing book titles; you can use a swipe file for comparing your upcoming project to the work that has already been completed by others. A swipe file is a reference file or a place to park reference material for upcoming projects.

You can create a swipe file for just about anything you are working on. They are great for keeping track of your ideas that you can implement later on down the road. A swipe file can contain material from magazines, websites, or catalogues, and can be composed of pictures, articles, or your original ideas. Getting back to the apps I introduced, Evernote has a feature where you can take snapshots of webpages and place them into a swipe file.

For example, I have several swipe files for book cover ideas I collected from various books similar to mine in genre. I have a swipe file for articles I have collected and another one for famous quotes and corresponding pictures they go with. Keep in mind that a swipe file is a collection of ideas from other sources and can be used for inspiration or information storage. In addition, it is a clear record of resources that you might use and can be referred to later on for citing or bibliographic purposes.

Each swipe file is unique and can be used to collect articles, snippets, or

pictures for reference depending on the type of work you do. Swipe files are great for inspiration and can be used to brainstorm on your ideas or provide inspiration for creativity.

There are lots of digital swipe apps out there you can use, but the one I like is the **Circus Ponies Notebook**. It has a great looking interface, you can manage all of your notes and documents, and is very simplistic to navigate through. You can download [Circus Ponies Notebook](#) here.

The Whitman Strategy

This is a strategy that the American poet, essayist, and journalist Walt Whitman used to organize his ideas. Similar to our digital formats of organizing into folders, this is another great alternative to keeping your ideas in a physical location.

While it's great to keep everything backed up and organized using apps and digital devices, many people are still apt to prefer keeping notebook journals or, in the case of the Whitman strategy, categorizing ideas and keeping them separated according to whatever projects you are working on.

Whitman, whenever he had an idea, would write it down on paper and place in an envelope according to the category. Later on, when he needed an idea, he would pull out the slips of paper from the envelopes and piece them together. This might seem old school compared to today's methods of recording [Evernote, note-taking apps, or using Word] but the system is solid and adds to the fun of idea gathering and organizing.

Some people like to keep their ideas in physical form, and, if you do, the Whitman strategy works great. Another variation to this is to use a large binder with plastic sleeves. Each sleeve or pocket would be used for a different category.

You can adopt another similar strategy by using files as well and keeping them in a cabinet. The Whitman strategy of using envelopes doesn't require much space, and you can set it up quickly. If you prefer doing this the digital way, set up your folders in Evernote or one of the other apps we have already looked at earlier.

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The 3-Step Folder Strategy

The 3-step folder strategy is a simple system for gathering your ideas, organizing them into the right folders, and then moving your folders into an active funnel.

We can set this up in a matter of minutes.

Create one folder. This is called the “3-Step Folder-Main” [or you can call it whatever you want]. This folder serves to function as the main folder that contains the three folders you use for collecting your ideas.

Make three folders inside the main folder. You can do this as a stack in Evernote or, create three folders on your desktop.

Now, here is a breakdown of the folders [or notebooks] and how to use them.

If you use Evernote, you’ll create a main folder [called a notebook in Evernote] and call it “3-Step Folders.” Then, create three more Notebooks and place them inside the “3-Step Folders Notebook.” You’ll now have a stack.

Folder #1 [Central Ideas Folder]: This is your main folder for gathering ideas. I call it the “Central Ideas Folder.” You can capture all your ideas here without any organization. Just throw your ideas into here randomly. Inside the folder/notebook you’ll create a “new note” and then start to write your ideas here. You can have as many notes as you want. What I do is have a note for each idea funnel. For example, I’ll have a note for exercise, hobbies, and book writing. Again, these are just for general ideas.

Folder #2 [Project Organizer]: This is the “possible projects” folder. You can organize your ideas here by moving them all into a central folder. For example, you might want to create a website for helping people manage their money better. You would then go back to folder one and take all the ideas you had about money or website building and dump it into your “money management folder”. At this point you are preparing your notebook/folder for a possible project that you’ll take action on.

When I have enough content or ideas for this project [a book, a business, reforming my kitchen] then I’ll do a mind map and get everything out on paper. Or, use a mind map software application.

Folder #3 [Active Projects]: When you move your idea into the third folder it means that you have decided to move on with this idea by making it a project.

What I would do now is take this project and, with your mind map, create a list of actions that gets you moving on your work. With Notebook#3, I might have only 2-3 active folders here. That means I am currently working on the projects that are in this folder. Any projects or ideas that are still in the “growth phase” stay in folder#2.

So it should look like this: the first folder is for idea gathering. The second folder is for compiling similar ideas into one notebook folder related to a piece of work or project you are putting together; and folder#3 is for active projects that you are currently working on.

The Importance of the Idea Capturing Folder/Notebook

If you keep an **idea journal**, then you already know how an idea folder works. Evernote is, as I mentioned, a great tool for capturing your ideas and making folders to organize your stuff. You can use other apps for creating folders as well, but the point is that you have “something” for getting all those ideas into one central location. As we just discussed, you can then move them around into appropriate folders when ready.

An idea folder works well because it is a place to park all your ideas until you are ready to take action on them. When you get an idea: a blog, a book, or a business venture, you can throw it in here and then come back to it later, as we will cover next.

Since I put anywhere from ten to twenty ideas in my idea folder every day, I will purge this folder either at the end of each day or the end of the week. I then go through all the ideas and shift them into their folders so I know where everything is. For instance, the blog ideas I have will go into the **blog articles folder**. This is where Evernote is handy because you can create stacks for your ideas folders, as we have discussed.

For example, a friend of mine was renovating her kitchen or was planning to. For months, she was coming up with ideas on what she wanted to do, the colors of it, the design of the kitchen. She allowed her imagination to run for weeks, and every time she came up with an idea, she followed this system to totally redo her place. She had subfolders for all the different parts of the kitchen such as the flooring, walls, cabinets, and kitchen tools.

In the central ideas folder, for example, she had all the ideas she could come up with for her kitchen. Then, in the 2nd folder, she had a folder labeled Kitchen

renovations. All the ideas she had in the first folder related to kitchen reforming were moved into this folder. Then, within this folder, she had subfolders for each part of the kitchen.

This complete folder was then moved into the third folder for actions. Also, all related ideas such as swipe files, articles on kitchen reforming and everything related to that project were kept in the folder/notebook. This keeps everything together and it's easy to access.

Since I started using my idea folders and keeping everything organized in its own individual folders, I have never been out of ideas. More importantly, I have not forgotten the ideas that I had. Nothing is more frustrating than losing something that is valuable, and you never really know what you will come up with. Your mind is a funnel of imagination and creativity; it is always at work and can feed you some amazing ideas when you are least expecting it.

3-Step Folders Recap

1. Capture your ideas in one central notebook.
2. Go back at the end of the (day) week and purge this folder, shifting ideas into their proper folder categories by moving them into the 2nd folder.
Create a mind map and start to put your project into focus.
3. When you decide to take action, you move a projects folder from your 2nd folder into the folder #3. Create. From here you can sketch out your action plan. Include all the other material you collected: articles, swipe files, and links.
4. **Always Be Creating!**

Cross Fertilization

“Your idea needs to be original only in its adaptation to the problem you’re working on.”

Thomas Edison

When Thomas Edison worked on a project or invention and he ran into obstacles that needed a solution, his general practice was to refer to one of his thousands of notebooks (over 3,500 were discovered after his death in 1931) for ideas he previously recorded from other unrelated projects. He could then take the parts of one idea he had from other observations that, at the time, seemed completely irrelevant to anything else and merge it into his current project or challenge.

Through this system, which he termed ***cross-fertilizing or cross-pollination***, Edison was able to succeed with many other inventions by implementing his thoughts and ideas for one and molding them into another.

The basic concept is simple. When Thomas Edison was working on his projects, he would come up against problems in one area that could be solved by referring to his ideas and observations in another area. This is why he would always take notes and, even though they were in a haphazard order, he had something to refer to later when he needed to “recall” an idea he had several years before.

This can work for you in many ways. Ideas that you came up with years ago, even though they didn’t work back then, are still packed with potential in their application today. Likewise ideas you come up with today, no matter how “far out there” they may seem, could be used in other projects or inventions somewhere down the line. The thing is, not every idea you come up with today has its place. It needs the right “motivator” so when the time is right, that could be the solution to your problem years down the line..

Cross-fertilization of existing ideas can work for us in just the same way that it worked for Edison. By keeping all the facts in our idea organization system, including the results of ideas that you tried and didn’t succeed at, you can still have the chance to redeem yourself in other areas of your work.

Here is a practice that someone suggested to me years ago and I have been doing

ever since. I keep a swipe file of the **mistakes and failures** other people make so that, if I am working on something that is similar to what they are doing, I can avoid the same mistakes they made.

This could be a failed attempt at a book launch or a poor investment that someone lost time and money over. By keeping a swipe file of the successes as well as the failures, you can save yourself a lot of wasted effort and unnecessary risk. If you belong to any kind of mastermind group, that is excellent because the people in that group are more than willing to share their triumphs and failures with everyone, so you don't have to feel like you are spying on anyone by checking out how much they failed.

An idea that has failed carries the equivalent power of the one that succeeds. Both have powerful lessons that we can learn from.

It is going to become a productive habit for you to start recording and keeping track of the ideas, not only yours but, also those of others so that you have something to refer to. Nowadays a clever invention, even just the latest app or cool new website, got its start from somewhere. Chances are that it cross-fertilized with something or, built itself from an existing platform.

While the idea may be original in its application, most of the stuff created these days (and I mean 95%) is generated from something that is already in existence. You'll find that you can save yourself a lot of time and effort later on down the road when you are looking for answers to that particular solution if you can refer to a file for cross referencing and find the answers already there. You don't have to reinvent the wheel, but you could come up with an idea for a better wheel.

There is no such thing as a "bad idea," just an idea whose time hasn't come yet. What may seem like a worthless thought or idea now could turn out to be the "golden nugget" you need later. Keep everything and don't toss it just because it doesn't work in the moment.

Action Steps:

1. Keep good records of all your ideas and organize them according to the field/project they are related to.
2. Browse through other websites, research papers, articles, news clippings, or successful works of others who have solved similar problems to yours. Later, when you are working on your own project, you may encounter a similar situation that requires you to expand on someone's idea or

application that has already worked. Keep this information in a swipe file.

3. Make it a habit to record the process other people have used to achieve a successful solution. You want to start up a new website? You are not sure how to create an app for smartphone? All of these things have been successfully implemented. As Edison said, "Your idea only has to be original in its application." You can take your original idea and apply the knowledge others have tested to build into your work and projects.

Setting Up Projects & Idea Implementation

Working on a project that you are passionate about is when the ideas really begin to take shape.

When I am writing a new book, I always go into my ideas folder for books and pull out the ideas that I had for that book as they were put together over the past weeks or months. By now, you should have your idea folders for various niches and/or categories. Don't worry if you only have a few folders set up. This is a creative process that never ends. The important thing is that you get started on setting up your ideas so they can be put into action when needed.

It is great when you can start a project of any kind (Web course, building a new house, or landscaping your garden outside) and already have a solid idea where to begin because of the ideas you have been keeping in your ideas folder or swipe files.

When you do start a project that you have been collecting research data, ideas, and interviews for, just go into your **central folder** [you have one, right?] and pull everything out that is related to that project [remember the Whitman strategy]. I make a central folder for the project I am working on and place it in the center of my desktop. Then, every time I sit down at the computer to do some work, everything I need is right there.

Just a note on desktops: Clear everything off except the project you are working on or core ideas related to your current work. Desktop clutter halts your efficiency and distracts you into doing other things.

Now, when it comes to your ideas for a particular project, you will have lots of ideas for other stuff too [cross fertilizing]. This is great because you can start building other projects and contributing to their development at anytime even if you won't be starting that project for months or even years later.

The only disadvantage to this is that you will be tempted to start something new every time you have a new idea. I fall into this trap where, if I am struggling with a certain project and I can't find the solution to a problem or I get stuck, I'll start something new. Why? New ideas are exciting! This is especially true if the project you are working on becomes challenging (and it will) or you just want a break from it. There is nothing wrong with taking a break from your current work but don't let the break turn into a few months.

Over the years, I had lots of half-finished projects and start-ups sitting around because I would start something, get halfway and take a break, then go do something else. Some projects I went back and finished and some are still waiting to be completed.

Unless you are a project manager and you have to run several projects at once, I'd recommend you take all your ideas from one project and put them into action for that one project only. This cuts down on the chatter and noise of having to deal with so many action steps happening at the same time. As you come up with ideas for other related-projects, throw them into your ideas folders or, make a swipe file for them and then leave it. You can go back to them later on when you are ready to put them into action.

Get into the "singular focus" mode and stay there. Work on your idea until you have a complete mind map of ideas and related topics surrounding your project. And I mean any project, big or small. Your project might only take you a few days to complete, or it might take several months.

Stretching yourself too thin by working on several projects at the same time and then failing to finish any of them is going to result in frustration and a lack of motivation. By sticking with one project or task at a time, and working through to completion, you are going to feel motivated to start the next one right away. This boosts your confidence and, by using up your ideas for that one project, you can shift focus to the new project once the present one is finished.

I use the "singular focus" method and try to stay tuned to one area of work until it is finished. This is a very powerful habit to develop. You might have a project that has several "parts" or "sub-projects" depending on its scope and size, and that is okay, but stick within the framework of your current project. If you start something new before finishing what you are working on, you'll lose momentum for the project you started.

If you do get stuck on something, take some time to do more research or further your knowledge. You might want to expand on your mind map and get some new ideas happening that can build your momentum again. Once completed, or nearing completion, you will experience a boost of energy that propels you to get to that finish line and wrap things up.

Just think about the massive surge in confidence and energy you'll have if you:

- Complete your book.
- Create an Udemy course.

- Open up your own business.
- Launch a website.
- Make an addition to your new home.
- Finish your master's degree.
- Design a new product

Now, some projects do require years to complete. While the scope of this book doesn't cover projects in real depth, you can manage several projects at once if one of them is long term like working on a master's degree (2-4 years) and the other is short term such as creating an eBook or training manual (3-6 months).

Action Plan:

Use singleness of purpose and planning to focus on one project at a time. Pull out your ideas for this project and start to form the foundation for your work by piecing together the ideas. Add to your information and then more ideas will continue to flow in. Stay focused on the one project and finish it, using up all your ideas and depleting your ideas folder for this work. You will be more confident, have more energy, and feel great about your work as you continue to push ahead.

Creating a Mind Map: Your Idea Expansion Tool

A mind map is a great way to turn your ideas into a viable course of action. With a mind map you are basically doing a brain dump of all the ideas you have for that idea. I would highly recommend putting all of your core ideas to the mind map test. How it works is simple and fun.

You place your main idea in the center of the page. I would recommend that you do this on a large piece of paper or board that is either spread out on the floor or tacked to the wall. This way you can work at it standing up and you can move around more freely.

The purpose of this is to get all your ideas down on paper in one big brain dump. Once done, you can step back and see what you have. You'll be amazed the stuff that can come out of your head when you focus on one core concept for a fixed amount of time.

Previously I mentioned using the Pomodoro technique. I like this system because it sets a fixed time where you focus on just the one task. Again, set up your timer for twenty-five minutes and get cracking. See how many ideas you can dump out onto your mind map schematic in this short amount of time.

Here is what you do to set up your mind map:

Materials

Tack up some poster paper on the wall. Prepare post-it notes and a marker. Use a timer to blast your ideas out for a set amount of time.

Write Down Your Main Idea in the Center

At the center of the board I write down the main Idea that I want to generate ideas for. If it is a book, you would write down the tentative title; if it is an idea for a course you want to create, write down the idea you have for the course, such as "How to build a website". If it is a family vacation you can write down the name of the place you are visiting. Decide on your main idea and get ready.

Ready...Set...

Set a timer for twenty-five minutes. For that time only, branch out from the central idea and connect all the other ideas associated with the main idea. Within several minutes that blank paper looks like a wild maze or a spider web. I

usually put each idea in its own bubble, too. Each bubble represents an idea and that might also have sub-ideas that could branch off from it.

Work for 20-25 minutes to get everything down on paper. I find that I start to slow down at the twenty -minute mark. Once you get some practice in you can go at it for thirty minutes. This can be an exhausting activity but definitely worth it. This is how I prepare for all my books or blogs; I also use it for planning weekend trips or doing work around the house.

Point of Advice: Don't stop to worry about the order or whether or not what you have written down is any good. You don't have to edit a mind map. Just create and keep pulling thoughts and ideas out of your head. You can then use the ideas in your map to identify the actions you can start taking right away. If this is a project that you're working on, what actions can you see based on the mind map that you could take today? Stand back and look at the work you have done.

Here is an example of a mind map to give you an idea. It doesn't look pretty, but from this I can discern the course of action to take for this project.

Once you have your mind map ready, you might want to transfer it to your digital platform. It's not necessary but, if you'd like to make it look a bit cleaner, creating the same mind map in an app would be a good option.

Here are some mind map apps you can try out:

XMind – hands down my favorite app for getting really creative with mind mapping, XMind is free to download and does have pricing for upgraded features. This works across most platforms including Evernote. You can download [XMind](#) here.

Mindnode is another option but it does come with a price tag of 29.99 [Note: I am not an affiliate; only recommending this software because I have used it and enjoy its simplicity for mind mapping. You can check out [Mindnode](#) here.

Action Steps:

1. Focus on one project at a time; finish it up and move onto the next one.
2. Keep moving all your ideas into their folders that are related to all future projects and work.
3. Use the mind map strategy to brain dump all your ideas about a goal or project onto your board. Keep working until you have filled up the page or board with all your ideas.

4. Step back and analyze what you have created. Then try to visualize the action steps you can begin taking and put them in logical order.

Building On Existing Platforms

“Many of the inventions and innovations you see and use every day originated from someone’s idea. But chances are they weren’t just one person’s ingenuity but were built over years of idea building, innovation and cross-fertilization. This is what happens when an idea evolves over time.”

It is a long-accepted belief that only creative people have great ideas, and that in order to be successful, you have to come up with something totally original that nobody else has ever thought of.

While innovative and creative ideas that completely change the world may be the rarity, most inventions or successful ventures are built on the ideas and concepts of others. In other words, you can build your business or brand from scratch, or you can create something from one of the thousands of existing platforms already out there.

Apple co-founder Steve Jobs created the iPod out of a need that he saw in the marketplace. But he wasn’t the first to come up with the concept of “digital music.” Who did? The first official audio player was made by a company called Audio Highway and released in 1997. Other companies introduced several other Audio devices but they never got it right. Steve Jobs took what had failed and what others had failed to take advantage of and turned it into a great product that has since become the biggest selling music device in the world with over 300 million sold.

Henry Ford was an American industrialist and founder of the Ford Motor Company. But Ford didn’t create the automobile or the assembly line that would later become standard technology utilized round the world; he did, however, take advantage of the technology that already existed and created an automobile (the Model T) that sold for \$825.00 and could be purchased by the average wage earner.

Ford took what had already existed and revolutionized the automobile industry by giving everyone what they wanted: a car that the average middle-class family could afford. His assembly line became synonymous with the mass production of inexpensive goods that changed the way companies operated globally.

Ray Kroc, who gave Big Macs to the world, purchased the rights to McDonald’s from the McDonald brothers who had already built it into a

successful restaurant in San Bernardino, California.

Ray Kroc, after selling eight mixers to the McDonald brothers at their store location, had a look at the potential of the operation and he knew that there was definite massive potential if the business were handled properly. The McDonald brothers were reluctant to go big with the franchise so Kroc bought the brothers out and put his idea into full forward motion.

Kroc implemented his plan and worked hard to bring his vision to reality: a chain of restaurants lined up and down the streets serving food to America. The McDonalds had the right idea; they just didn't want to expand on it. Ray Kroc did. It has since grown to over 35,000 restaurants worldwide in 118 countries. Remember, Ray Kroc started out with an idea that turned into a vision; the vision spawned a dream, and when he started to take action, his dream was fully realized.

Harland Sanders had a great fried chicken recipe and had the idea of selling it to restaurants. He drove across America for two years, pitching his recipe to restaurant owners. After getting over a thousand rejections, one restaurant owner finally said yes.

Now, KFC is the world's second largest restaurant chain after McDonald's, with 18,875 outlets in 118 countries and territories, all using Colonel Sanders's secret recipe he thought up. Whatever you think up, resolve that you will persist until your ideas manifest into action. Work each day toward your goals, and never give up.

Just imagine what you can do if you pursue your ideas? What would happen if you put your vision into action? What would happen if you took action every single day towards your dreams? What would your idea be worth if you put it out there and did something with it?

I want you to really think about this. Visualize the idea you have for something, whether it is a small business or applying a skill you have to sell to customers through such sites as Upwork, Freelancer, or Fiverr.

With some hard work and personal innovation, you can create a totally new way of life for yourself. Perhaps leave your crummy nine to five and start working for yourself? Think about it while you work through your ideas. Imagine as if each idea you have is a "brick" in the creative funnel of your life. It is a piece of real estate with true value that, if applied the right way, could lead to the one thing in your life that you have always wanted..

Chapter Recap

You don't have to come up with the next Facebook or invent the world's best car or social media site. You can create new ideas from all existing platforms. There are thousands of blogs and websites set up every day, thousands of books published on Amazon's platform, millions of videos being uploaded to YouTube. People are putting their stuff out there and having a great time doing it.

Take a look around at some of the systems you see and look for the potential to make it better. This can be a system in your company or school; it can be a product or invention; or you can look for a need that hasn't been met yet and deliver that to people by implementing your own ideas and making it the best possible. Always look for ways to improve on something; then, look to see how you can make it your own.

Coming Up

In the next section, you are going to see how you can turn an idea into a profitable business. Do you need a break? If so, take a short one and hurry right back. Next we are going to look at putting these ideas into action so you can earn multiple streams of income!

PART 4: CREATING INCOME STREAMS FROM YOUR IDEAS

Converting Ideas Into Income Streams

“The most successful people in life are the ones who ask questions. They’re always learning. They’re always growing. They’re always pushing.”

- **Robert Kiyosaki** is a motivational speaker and bestselling self-help author of the **Rich Dad, Poor Dad** series books.

By now you should have lots of ideas in your idea folders. But don’t worry if you don’t because idea creation is a never-ending process. You’ll be coming up with new ideas every day that you’ll be able to fill up your idea journal with. Remember to keep capturing your ideas and make it a consistent habit.

Funnel your ideas into project folders and niches and then pull them out when the time is right. You can cross-fertilize and build on existing platforms to create anything you want.

Now, in this section, I’m going to show you how to take your ideas and put them into action so that you can turn your imagination into a moneymaking funnel while providing a service or a product that adds value to people’s lives. This is my favorite part of the process; an idea is just a thought until you put it into action. In this part of the book we will look at the various ways you can take your ideas, create a set of actions around that idea, and put it into action.

There are thousands of ways to generate income from your ideas. In this chapter, we will look at the power of passive income, building an outsourcing company where you are the only employee, and creating your own work as a side hustler or online entrepreneur.

So, how do you turn your ideas into cash? You need to direct your thoughts towards the proper platforms. Just thinking up ideas endlessly will not produce anything. Let’s take your ideas and direct them into specific actions.

Building Passive Income Streams

How would you like to set up a business and have it run itself with little overseeing? How about investing your ideas into something that you are passionate about that continues to earn money years later while you are busy working on other projects? This is possible with building a passive income flow.

Create a folder called passive income ideas. In this folder you are going to dump all your ideas for creating a passive income stream. What is passive income? That's cash you can earn from a product or business without too much hands on work after it has started to generate momentum. There is a lot of work in the beginning to get it up and going, but once you have a solid platform built, it will start to generate money for years to come. Your passive income streams have the potential to grow exponentially if you work hard in the beginning by creating a foundation for your ideas to build on.

There are tons of ways you can drive your ideas into creating a passive income platform. But you can't do everything and expect to succeed, so I would recommend start with what your strongest ideas are leaning towards.

In this section I'll share some of the more popular routes thousands of people are using to build up a side-business or, to create completely new careers for themselves. Remember: it comes down to what you feel passionate about doing.

What ideas do you have that won't let you sleep at night?

Are your ideas creative, such as art, design or writing?

Are you driven by technical, innovative, or financial ideas?

Are your ideas geared towards helping people solve problems?

You can have as many passive income streams as you want, or as many as you can handle depending on the time you have available.

Here are some powerful platforms you can take a look at. [I'm sure you've heard of these already!]

Writing eBooks

Writing books takes a lot of effort to start with in the beginning but, once the initial hard work has been finished, you could have passive income for the next twenty or thirty years from your books selling online. Writing books is hard work, but once you get a system down and you can pump out books quickly, the rest is passive income while you manage your eBook business.

While you are working on your second book, your first book is making some money; if you are writing your seventh book, your six books before that are bringing in passive income to fuel your projects. This is possible because I'm doing this right now.

Imagine building a Kindle/eBook business and having 10-15 books for sale that you get passive income from every month? If each book sold just one copy a

day, that could be \$50.00 a day in your pocket. What if each book was selling a few copies a day? Or how about one hundred copies a day after you built a strong tribe of fans?

You could write just one book and then build a complete business around it. This way the book acts as your calling card and can open up unlimited possibilities.

If you have a message that you want to share with the world, writing it in a book is a great way to do it. You never know the impact that you'll have unless you try it.

Generating ideas for books is one of the easiest and the quickest ways to fill up your ideas bucket. You don't even have to be a writer or a good writer.

You might be thinking, *what do you mean I don't have to be a good writer? What are you, insane?* Well, I might be, but check out this book [How To Not SUCK At Writing Your First Book](#) by [Self-Publishing School](#) [SPS] co-founder Chandler Bolt, and then get started on building passive income from your books. This book will walk you through a simple-to-follow process for writing, yes, even if you hate it.

Repeat and refresh your system and you'll keep producing quality work that people want to buy. Seriously, I have new ideas every day for content that I want to create. I am always capturing new ideas and plugging them into my "capturing system" right away. These are ideas for books, blogging, or creating a workshop.

I have a stack of folders in my Evernote account filled with dozens of ideas for books. Whenever I am ready to start a new one, I never have to wonder what I am going to write next. The ideas just keep coming every day. They come in, I store them in a folder right away or copy them down, and then they're there to act on at a later date when the time is right. Sometimes I'll have ideas for books that I won't be writing for years down the road possibly, but that is why you need a place to capture them.

Udemi Courses

Do you have an idea for a course that you would like to create where you are teaching people how to develop certain skills? Is there something you are really good at that you could teach others to be good at too? If so, creating Udemy courses is another route you can take for building a brand and identifying yourself as an authority in a field that you know a lot about.

You don't have to be overly tech savvy, and it doesn't require a lot of startup

money, and you can start to put together a course for Udemy today if you have ideas for a topic you want to teach. As for passive income streams, Udemy can keep monthly revenue coming in while you are working on other projects.

Right now, make a list of ideas that you could possibly incorporate to create an Udemy course. Are you good at building websites? Do you have a certain way of doing something that is unique and could save people lots of money while teaching them a new skill? Do you know a lot about personal development, such as building confidence and self-esteem? Could you teach people how to turn their hobbies into a living? Do you have a special system for typing fast?

Whatever it is, you have something unique that you can bring to the table. Teaching online customers how to cook? How to write their books and get them published? How to market a new or existing product?

Nowadays, you don't have to wait to be hired by a company in order to utilize your skills. You can put them into action by creating a series of short videos for Udemy packaged as a course and have it up and running within as little as a few weeks.

There is hard work in the beginning, and a learning curve if you have never created a video course before. But, after you do it once, learn from your mistakes (and successes) and do it again, you'll get better at it. People will take notice of the quality courses you put out and your passive income sales will increase. Udemy is great because you can become a "teacher and guide" for people looking to learn a new skill from what you have to offer.

The scope of this book isn't to teach you about Udemy courses, so I will just point you in the direction you need to go to learn about this. Everything you need on creating these courses you can find at RobCubbon.com. Rob Cubbon makes \$5,000 a month passive income through his books and courses, and he shows others how to do the same.

To get started, you can go to the [Udemy website](https://www.udemy.com) right now and set up your profile. You don't have to commit to anything or have any courses ready. Just take that first step and set up your profile as an instructor. Then, start to piece together your ideas for a course by mind mapping and connecting the dots as you go. This is one of those platforms where all the heavy lifting has already been done. Spend some time on the site checking out what other people are already doing and try to follow the same formula.

Before you move on, take twenty minutes to map out the ideas you have for creating an online experience people can learn from. You already have a

lifetime of experience behind you so you won't necessarily have to learn anything new, but just get really good at the things you already know. Focus on becoming an authority in one area of your life. Build your skills around it. Always try to come up with new ideas to improve.

YouTube vids

YouTube is now the second largest search engine in the world. It is a potentially explosive market for you to create videos and post them to a YouTube channel that you own. And how do people do this? They have ideas for something, such as making music videos, cooking up recipes, or showing people how to play video games. You name it, YouTube is a massive playing field for putting your ideas into action.

In fact, what you should do right now is go to your central ideas folder and create a folder right now specifically for YouTube vids that you are going to create. What ideas come off the top of your head right now? Start by putting your ideas into your folders and then do a brain dump of your ideas for YouTube.

But what if I fail at it and nobody watches my videos?

Congratulations, now you learned how to fail. Most ideas do. Get out there and fail away. Put aside that fear if that is what is stopping you. Try as many things as you can and keep working at it. Not every idea is a winner; most will fail. What matters is that you keep working at it and trying new things.

Do you remember the Udemy videos I just mentioned? Many successful Udemy entrepreneurs got their start on YouTube by posting short vids of their content. They tested their product on YouTube before launching it as an Udemy course.

But how do you make money from YouTube vids?

You can earn a lot from advertising. Companies target high-ranking videos and pay you to put their ads on your channel. But that's not the only way. You can turn your vids into courses, you could start a blog from a video and drive people to your website [after you made one] where they can check out any other services or products you have. It's all connected; one opportunity can fold over into another. Your success in one area can spill over into many other platforms.

But, it will never happen if you don't take a chance on your ideas.

Check out Passive Income Websites For Ideas

There really are so many ways you can generate ideas for making passive

income. While you can always be coming up with new ideas to generate more income, I want to direct you towards a few websites that give amazing content on how to get some passive income streams happening.

I check into these sites at least once a week and I'm on the mailing list so I can catch any new ideas that others are sharing. You'll get lots of ideas for putting together your passive income portfolio if you see what other people are doing, how they are doing it, and then implement your own plan of action.

Here are the links:

Pat Flynn's [Smart Passive Income Blog](#)

Nick Loper's [Side Hustle Nation](#)

Tom Ewer's [Leaving Work Behind](#)

Outsourcing Companies & the Online Entrepreneur

Do you dream of being an entrepreneur, running your own business from home, and connecting with thousands (or millions) of online customers who want to hire you for your services? Well, you can do this by utilizing your skills to become an online entrepreneur. With the right ideas and tweaking the skills you have, you could be earning money today through services offered by Fiverr, Upwork, or Freelancer.

While Udemy is more geared towards passive income because you set up the course and let it run [and occasionally dropping in to answer questions], if you create a business for yourself as an online entrepreneur, you have to be present every day as with a “real” job. The big bonus is, you can run your own show, create and sell your services or products for people, and build your own clientele. With some hard work and perseverance, you will be able to break away from your 9-5 and do something for yourself that matters.

I have lots of ideas for building an entrepreneur business based on my “limited” knowledge. This is why I have created a file in my Evernote called “Outsourcing Business Ideas.” When I have an idea (yup, you guessed it) I throw it into here and keep it.

Ideas germinate even when we are not focusing on them. This is what I love about the whole idea process. You can never have enough ideas, and there is no such thing as a stupid idea, no matter what anybody says. Your ideas won’t always be good ideas, but it’s better to have twenty “average” ideas that failed than to have none at all.

Fiverr

What you can do right now is spend some time to just browse through Fiverr because you can have a profile set up in no time and start selling your services right away. What services can you offer? What skills do you have that you could start selling right away?

Do you have experience editing books or content? Are you a book cover designer or web developer? Can you create short videos for people to help them launch their products? Do you have website design experience? It is amazing what you can do. There are no limits.

It might take some time to get momentum rolling, but once you get into the swing of doing a few projects and delivering your work, you will start to get 4-5 star reviews and a higher ranking. This isn't always passive income but you can create a nice little side hustle for yourself. Or you can build up enough clientele to do it full time and quit your day job. You can check out [Fiverr](#) here.

Take a look at what people are doing and then map out some ideas that you could put into action. What interests you? What do you have experience with and really enjoy doing?

Think of your ideas as gold buried in the center of a mountain. You'll have to do some digging to find the good ones, but the more mind mapping you practice and, concentrating your thoughts on a particular subject, you will start to discover some amazing ideas that you never knew existed.

Upwork & Freelancer

Every day millions of designers, web developers, and entrepreneurs are buying or selling their services on sites like Upwork and Freelancer. These sites are for people looking for a specific skill they need done by a professional that can turn around quality work quickly.

Even with minimal tech knowledge you can create a business for yourself by setting up your profile and hustling to get customers who are in need of a skill you have to sell.

We have already discussed this in some detail so, once again identify the skills you could offer.

You could set up a landing page advertising your business or even create a website that directs traffic back to you. These are just a few ideas.

Just click on these links to set up [Upwork](#) and [Freelancer](#).

What talent, skill, or service do I have that I could offer to people?

Take time to really brainstorm this. We have a tendency to overlook what we are capable of doing. You can ask your friends and family too if there is anything you can do that they would consider buying as a potential customer.

Can you type quickly?

Can you translate any languages?

Can you take awesome photos?

Can you sing?

Are you good at design?

What skill do you not have but you want to learn so you can start selling a service or product to people?

There may be something you have a keen interest in that you currently lack the know-how or skill to teach others. It doesn't have to be writing and publishing books. Whatever it is, if it's something you have always wanted try and you feel that you have that natural edge to make it work, just get to work and find out what you need to know to get started. You don't have to "master" anything before you are good enough to offer it to people.

What skills do you want to learn?

Where can you get these skills?

What is your timeline for learning a new skill?

Just be aware of the paralysis analysis effect where you spend all your time learning about something but never actually put it into practice because of the fear that you'll suck at it.

Just learn what you need.

Take action.

Keep learning.

Work on your ideas every day.

eBay

Here is another company that needs no introduction, and if you shop online, chances are you bought something from an eBay seller. I started selling on eBay years ago after I had an idea to introduce a product that I thought would have some popularity because I live in Japan and this product is only sold here. I was right because my idea proved that there was a market for it. I enjoy selling on eBay as a way to get some extra income, and I often come up with ideas for new things to sell here.

I have an eBay folder set up, so when I see something that looks interesting, I might put it into my swipe file or, if it is an idea, add it to my ideas folder to pick up for future reference. You can set up an eBay account [here](#) if you haven't already done so. If you want to be a seller, go ahead and start by following the tutorials found [here](#).

You might come up with an idea to introduce a product that you handcrafted yourself; whatever it is, you can start by putting your ideas down, mind mapping ideas for things you want to sell, and get started by listing things around your home.

Chapter Recap:

What skills or knowledge do you have that you could outsource on Fiverr or Upwork? How could you present these skills to other people? Take time to scroll through Fiverr and check out all the things that people are offering. You don't need to have any special talent (although it helps) but there are literally hundreds of ways you could earn more income.

Some of them are:

- Book editing
- Copywriting
- Ghostwriting
- Photography
- Coaching and Mentorship
- Offering tech services
- Health and Exercise
- Building websites
- Marketing online products

For more information on setting yourself up with Upwork (formerly Odesk), you can check out this book by **Lise Cartwright**, [*The New Freelance Writer's Guide to Odesk: How to find great clients, high paying jobs, and be a successful freelance writer using outsourcing giant Odesk!*](#) For just a few dollars, you can learn most of what you need for setting yourself up as an effective outsourcer.

I would also recommend these books on building your brand and business:

[The 4 Hour Workweek](#) by *Tim Ferris*

[Job Escape Plan](#) by *Jyotsna Ramachandran*

[Platform: Get Noticed in a Noisy World](#) by *Michael Hyatt*

[One Simple Idea: Turn Your Dreams into a Licensing Goldmine While Letting Others Do the Work](#) by *Stephen Key*

Strategies for Generating Ideas

Now let's take a look at the different ways you can get your "idea train" moving.

By collecting your ideas and coming up with new ideas every day, soon your head is going to be spinning and you will feel that push to do something.

Let's get some ideas going. It doesn't have to be a subject that you already know something about. Trying to come up with ideas for topics that you know almost nothing about is a great way to get the idea muscles working. I have provided some links to some websites as well so you can check them out and start brainstorming your ideas.

I really want you to just unleash yourself here. Don't stop to think about how realistic it is or if your idea sounds foolish. Self-criticism is the one obstacle that prevents most people from accomplishing or following through with anything. They start to doubt themselves before they have given it a chance.

Here are some subjects you can start with to brainstorm your ideas. Try to come up with at least ten ideas for each one. See if any of these resonate with you. Check out the links to the websites as well.

Strategy#1: Earning More Money Ideas

Write down ten ideas you have for making more money. This can be anything from having a yard sale to becoming an affiliate advertiser. Now, take one of these ideas and brainstorm how you are going to earn more money. Will you set up a shop on eBay? Do you have any ideas for investing your money? There are thousands of ways you can increase your income. You don't have to settle for your "fixed" salary.

Strategy#2: Building Self-Confidence Ideas

Write down ten ideas you have for improving your self-confidence. Try one of these ideas right now. Write this idea down on paper and keep it with you all day tomorrow. In what areas of your life do you lose confidence? Is it in your relationships? Is it a situation at work? Is it something about yourself that lacks confidence? Identify the area of your life that needs a confidence boost, and then wrote down your ideas for targeting this one specific point.

Strategy #3: Losing Weight Ideas

Write down five ideas you have for losing weight. Imagine if somebody asked you for advice on how they could lose weight. How could you lose five pounds

in a month? What exercises would you recommend? Try to come up with at least twenty ideas and rank them in order that you think would be the most effective weight loss. This is one of the big problems that millions of people struggle with. What if you could come up with a process or program to make losing weight fun and easy?

Strategy #4: Writing a Book

Write down ten ideas you have for books you want to write. These can be books in your field of expertise or fiction titles that you've always longed to see written and published. Then, come up with **ten ideas** for marketing your book. Nowadays with today's self-publishing revolution, creating your dream of writing a book is a real possibility. Thousands of people are launching their books daily. Will you be one of them?

You can follow this simple process for getting your book written fast:

- 1. Mind map your ideas*
- 2. Create an outline*
- 3. Write for one hour a day for thirty days.*

Remember to check out **Chandler Bolt's** book I mentioned "*How To Not SUCK At Writing Your First Book: A Book On Writing For People Who Hate Writing.*" It shows you exactly how to apply this process that makes writing fun...and yes, even if you hate writing.

Strategy #5: Ideas for Solving Current Problems

What problems do you often come across? Imagine if you could get paid for solving other people's problems? This is where websites, eBooks, and courses excel. Once you have figured out the strategies for delivering solutions to people's problems, you can start to make money. They will pay you for a solution! Write down several problems that people have and then brainstorm several ideas that could solve this problem.

Strategy #6: Time Management & Productivity Ideas

Do you waste time every day on menial tasks and distractions? Is this costing you time and money? Write a list of 5-7 ideas to implement that focuses on timesaving and how you can manage your time better. If you believe that time really is money, then saving time is worth every penny.

I'll give you an example. I took a typing course so that I could type faster. By

typing faster, I was able to double my typing speed, which means I can get more material out faster and make more money at my writing. What ways can you save time? Less TV? Make a list of time savers you can do or time wasters you can stop doing.

Strategy #7: Health & Exercise Ideas

What ideas can you come up with to start getting in great shape? What ideas do you have to improve muscle tone, cardio, or your flexibility? Write down your ideas on how to get into shape and drop them into your “Exercise” folder. Do you want to lose weight, or start on a paleo diet?

When it comes to your health and exercise there are no limits to the ideas you can come up with. There is also a massive market for books, videos and training manuals. This is something to consider if there is something you can offer people and try to start up a business by becoming an authority in a specific area.

Strategy #8: Education & Learning Ideas

What ideas do you have about changing the way education is taught in our schools? The way people are learning is taking a major shift. Now, write down 7-10 ideas you would implement if you were given the mission to change the way education is being taught.

What would you do? How would you want children to start learning real world skills? What ideas can you come up with that would speed up their learning so that they spend less time studying information they don't need? What courses would you introduce?

#9: Passive Income Ideas

Create ten ideas you have for coming up with passive income ideas. What could you do for YouTube vids, writing an eBook, or creating an Udemy course? Go to your main folder and dump in your ideas for passive income generation. I have already discussed building passive income so refer back to the previous chapter if necessary.

#10: Personal Development & Character Building Ideas

What would you like to improve about yourself? Come up with at least thirty ideas for how you could deepen your character and personality? What would you have to do to make your personality a dynamic fit for any situation? What obstacles are challenging you these days? One of the areas that I am always trying to target is my confidence. When my confidence increases I feel more

motivated and excited to try just about anything.

#11: Business Ideas

In this book we discussed some methods for setting up your ideas for building your own business. Now, what ideas do you have for creating a business? Write out all your ideas and then come up with action steps for your ideas using the strategies we discussed in this book. Do you want to create a business online? Do you want to expand on the current business you have?

#12: Relationship Ideas

Our relationships are precious gemstones. It's worth the time and effort to come up with at least fifty ideas on how you can build a better quality relationship with your children, spouse, parents and relatives, and friends. What ideas can you map out right now that would add great value to these relationships?

For some good ideas on how to improve relationships you can check out [201 Relationship Questions: The Couple's Guide to Building Trust and Emotional Intimacy](#) by Barrie Davenport.

#13: Home Improvement Ideas

Can you come up with at least 20 ideas on how you could improve the look and feel of your home? What would you do to fix it up? What rooms would you repaint? Which areas need to be decluttered? Make a list of home improvement ideas. Then, set out to put just one idea into action. If you have to, map out any action steps necessary. Then, start to do the first task on your list.

#14: Job Escape Ideas

Millions of people are unfulfilled in their work. They are looking for better ways to serve a higher purpose through doing work that matters. What if you could give that to them? Come up with 10 ideas to create a plan for leaving a job you hate. Imagine that you are giving this as a presentation to people who have paid to hear you speak on this topic. What would you say?

Spend at least twenty minutes a day brainstorming ideas for anything that interests you. Your ideas are priceless; think of each idea as a brick in the success story of your life. You should add at least ten new "bricks" every day.

For a great book on how to unleash your ideas, check out: [Become An Idea Machine: Because Ideas Are The Currency Of The 21st Century](#) by Claudia Azul Altucher.

Remember this **simple process** when you are working on your ideas:

4. Mind map your ideas
5. Identify the actions you can take, and then;
6. Take immediate action.

Good luck with your ideas, and keep cranking them out!

Putting Your Ideas to the Test

Wouldn't it be great if we could get feedback on our ideas before we invested any time and money that could later turn out to be wasted? Would you like to know beforehand if your ideas are actually worth the effort?

Here I will share with you the system I use to test an idea before going ahead with it. There really isn't any exact science behind it; the best you can do is spend time testing it using various applications and software, and the power of your social media group. You can also ask people, "What do you think of this?"

Here are three strategies I use to test my ideas first.

Do others think your ideas are interesting? Test it. Tell them what you are planning and thinking about.

Ask Yourself: "Would I buy this service or product?"

You can test your idea by asking yourself if this is something you'd throw money down on. I test this idea with just about anything I create. If I write a book, before I do, I ask myself "Would I read this?" If it's a course or learning platform I am creating, I want to know "Would I sign up for this?" and if the answer is yes, come up with at least five solid reasons why.

This is a great way to really test it and, to be honest I think it's one of the best ways. When it comes to testing your idea and whether or not it would work, you are your most important customer. I wouldn't throw my money away on junk because I'm actually a very fussy shopper, and before I buy into a course, or even sign up for someone's website or blog, I ask "Is this what I want?" If I look at my own "stuff" and there is strong hesitation or I can't find a good reason to like it, chances are I'll have a tough sell expecting others to like it, not to mention spending money on it.

Let's take an example. You have an idea to create an online course. Test your idea by asking yourself:

"Would I buy this? If yes, why? If no, why not?"

Would I recommend this course to my friends?

If I had to describe this course, how would I explain it?

Do I get fired up when I talk about it?

Maybe not all of your ideas have to be this in depth but, if it's something that you are thinking of investing money in, you want to run it through a test drive first. It's like buying a new car: always take it for that initial test run.

Ask on Social Media

Nowadays it's easier than ever to put your ideas to the ultimate test. Ask the people you engage with on Facebook, Twitter, Google or your own emailing list if you have one. They will tell you the truth. I will use this as a second step if my idea passes my personal self-assessment.

Invite them to give you feedback or add their own thoughts to your ideas. Chances are, if your idea is a salable one, they will become just as excited as you are about it and add more depth to it by providing you with ideas of their own.

This is a great way to gain feedback and to investigate the 'worthiness' of what you are putting together. Be prepared for some critical feedback as well. Not everyone is going to be as excited about the idea as you are. But that's okay, get used to receiving constructive criticism and you'll learn from it.

By telling others about your ideas and dreams, you could stimulate a conversation or a partnership leading to the development of a new revolutionary product or something that has never yet been tried. There is no telling what could happen once a group of people become interested in something you propose. Before you know it, your idea has expanded into an image, the image becomes a plan, the plan becomes a detailed map, and that map becomes a plan of action.

Even if they think your idea is outrageous, that could be a compliment in disguise. Ideas are like dreams—they are not meant to exist in a one-dimensional world; they are multi-dimensional with unlimited possibilities.

Take a Survey

After you have interviewed yourself and asked your friends around you and on social media, you might still want to do some digging. Try doing a survey using a site like survey monkey. You can sign up free for the basic package that includes 10 questions and one hundred responses. There are paid upgrades too but if I'm just doing a simple survey the basic is enough.

You can also use [surveygizmo](#) or [launchrock](#) for testing the viability of new products by gauging the interest of your audience based on the number of clicks and people who sign up.

Just Do It and Don't Worry About It

The last option is I just go for it. Do what drives your passion and the hell with everything else. I'll be honest here: my own interests drive most of my ideas, and if it gets me fired up I want to share that with everyone I know.

Just because you test an idea doesn't mean it's foolproof; some of the best creations are built on passion alone. In the end, it all comes down to what you feel strongly about doing. If you're passionate about doing something, you'll be able to give it your best and be able to build anything you want from this idea driven by your energy.

Killing Your Doubt

Even if I like my own ideas and I think it could be the next best thing to the Internet, doubt can cloud my judgment

I have a list of questions that I'll ask myself to challenge any doubts I have:

Do you know of anyone else who has had a similar idea? Can you build from their existing platform? Write down the first action step you are going to take right now to put this idea into motion.

Are there any reasons you think your idea is impossible? Make a list of these reasons. Now, challenge these reasons. Is it impossible because of lack of finances?

If so, how could you raise more money? Is it impossible because you lack the skills or know-how to put it into action? If so, who do you know that could help you? Is there any part of this that you could outsource to somebody else? Make a list of resources. You could hire someone through Fiverr or Upwork. You might know of a friend who is willing to help you put it into action.

If your idea seems impossible, that is good. People have built their dreams and visions on impossible ideas that the rest of the world deemed crazy, and were later accepted. So...

Put yourself out there.

Show the world what you've got.

If you feel good about what you are doing, just do more of it.

Key Takeaways

- Test your ideas by asking yourself “would I buy this?”
- Ask your friends and family close by what they really think of your plan.
- Reach out to people on social media sites that you regularly converse with and see what their feedback is. This can be a strong indicator that your idea is real.
- Take a survey using survey monkey or another online free resource.

Protecting Your Ideas & The Virtual/Inventor's Notebook

Your ideas are like valuable assets. They need to be protected like anything else. Books, publications and music are all copyrighted, not only after they are published or released but before that.

This is why it is worth it to keep everything in an idea journal, just in the rare case that your ideas are questioned, you can always go back and prove that the product or idea you created was not a total rip-off but your original design or invention. It is not unusual for two ideas to be very close to appearing the same.

How can I protect my ideas?

The Inventor's Notebook & Charting Your Journey

The inventor's notebook is a great way to record and catalogue your ideas and creations. I keep notebooks for blog articles and books, and another notebook for website ideas and courses. I also document my progress in these notebooks. Inventors and creatives, such as Einstein and Da Vinci, did this. By keeping an actual notebook and “charting your journey” as Edison put it, you can make records of your progress by logging in actions that you take daily and weekly.

There have been many cases documented where songs, books, or inventions were questioned as to their uniqueness and origin of their creativity. But I am not a lawyer and I do not specialize in copyright or legal protection for products, so I cannot give you any legal advice here.

I would suggest that when you come up with your own ideas or, you are building something from existing platforms, you focus on the uniqueness of your own creativity. Instead of just “doing what others are doing”, put your own spin to it. Be unique in everything you create.

The Virtual Notebook

Having a physical copy of your ideas is ideal but, today many people prefer the “paperless route” so the virtual notebook such as Evernote and Microsoft OneNote have become the industry standard for keeping notes safe, easily accessible and up to date. Although I favor keeping my ideas in the virtual software, I make it a habit to record it in my idea journal as well.

Keep All Documents

When working on projects or anything that requires using information from multiple streams and sources, keep a record of everything you have used: articles, resources, or referrals to other websites and inventions. If you borrowed an idea from a blog or book, be sure to note this and keep a record of the source. Not only should you be protecting your own property, but be aware of when you are tapping into someone else's too.

In most cases, people's ideas or inventions are not "stolen" on purpose but rather the fault of cryptomnesia where somebody read something ages ago and then mistakenly uses the idea as their own. Forgetting that they came across this idea years ago that had already been released or published, the "copycat" unknowingly believes that the ideas belonging to others are one's own.

Key Takeaways

- Keep everything you create documented and all sources should be regularly updated and stored on file.
- Use the virtual method and purchase an actual idea notebook to record everything in physical form.

Empower Your Thoughts: A Brief Summary

Well, now what?

We have come to the end of the book. Wasn't that fun?

I hope you gained some valuable insight on empowering your thinking, building a positive mindset, and creating some great ideas that could potentially double and triple your income. What you choose to do with this is entirely up to you.

So now the question is, what are you going to do with the lessons you picked up in this book?

Now that you have all this information, and a set of actionable steps and strategies to follow through with, what are you going to do? Will you close this book and forget what you have just learned, or will you take action and start by drafting out a plan for the future? Will you say "I'll take action someday" or will it be today?

Remember that you have a choice. You can do anything you want. Regardless of the past, your education or current situation that is either working for you or not, the ball is in your court.

Your ideas, as we discussed in this book, can be your gateway to a new way of life. When you take direct action towards the goals that frighten you the most, that's where the real gold is. You can be anyone and be doing what you love in just about any place in the world.

The journey begins with you.

Before you go, I'd like to leave you with three action strategies you can put to use right away.

#1: Keep Searching For Opportunities

Everything has the potential to be better, to grow, and to add greater value than it did before. By looking for opportunities to expand on present ideas, and looking to see where you can fill in the gaps that were missed before, you could develop a new product that helps people in their daily lives.

Innovators, creators, and entrepreneur go-getters are empowered by their passion and vision of what they believe in and have the courage to see it through to the end. This is you. By reading this book, you are saying, “I have an idea. I have something that I can share with the world. I have what it takes to follow through with my ideas, to put them into action, and to push my passion into the world for others to see.”

Now, take a look at something that is missing that magical element. It could be a business idea that people need a solution for, a product that you could create, or a book that hasn't been written on a very specific niche that could bring in thousands of dollars in passive income.

There are new inventions and products released every day. Many of them fail and some succeed. But don't be intimidated by the great stuff you see people bringing out. Feel empowered by it. Look to see what works and what doesn't. Learn from other people's mistakes as well as your own.

There is no such thing as a bad idea; even good stuff can come from ideas that failed at first. Not every idea you have is going to be a winning lottery ticket. The trick is to just keep exercising that idea muscle. Put it to work every day. Come up with ideas across a wide variety of niches. Work your "idea muscle" everyday and don't let it atrophy.

#2: Take Responsibility For Your Life

This is a big order. If someone ever said this to me, I'd get defensive...at first. But the truth is, our society has been moving further and further away from being responsible. When something goes wrong, we look for someone to pin it on. By taking responsibility for your life, you can improve your attitude and mindset. In fact, responsibility is what separates the weak from the strong. If you are not responsible for your own life, who is? When things go wrong because you failed to take action and instead gave into procrastination, who is to blame?

From this day forward, I encourage you to question your actions. What can you do to make your own situation better? It's not what can "they" do for you to satisfy your needs, but what are you going to do? What decisions can you make that are going to change the course of your life and the people associated with you?

Responsibility is a tall order. But you can do this. Just stay the course, grind out your ideas, and work towards something that is going to make you happy. Know what you want before anyone else does. The best way you can be

responsible is to know what you want and develop a plan for getting it. People who ignore this advice will have no plan and then they'll be left to the mercy of a plan someone else has made for them. You are either in charge of your destiny or someone else is.

#3: Let Yourself Fail...Again and Again

Edison failed many times, and he was the world's best inventor. Don't be afraid to fail. It's part of the process. Nothing has ever been achieved without failing at it first. Condition yourself to love the ideas and thoughts you have. We are often so critical of ourselves that we tend to throw out our ideas before anyone else has had the chance to reject them. We end up rejecting ourselves first before anyone else can.

Fearing failure and letting it stop you from taking action is going to result in doing the things that matter least. If you resist trying something different because you really "suck" at it, that is perfectly okay. Let yourself do something badly. Fail at it as many times as it takes. You'll get better and make adjustments. When you allow yourself to be defeated by your negative self-doubt it's going to make you retreat.

You want to write a book but you are afraid it will be the worst book ever written? Do it anyway. Let it suck. Doing something and not doing it well is better than doing nothing and just talking about the things that never get done.

Experiment with your life. You will discover real freedom when you let go of that need to "do it perfectly."

You have nothing to lose.

Keep pushing forward.

Stay empowered and never give up,

I'll see you again in the next book coming soon!

All the best!

Scott Allan

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If you have any questions or wish to start a discussion of any kind on any topics you are interested in, you can check out my Amazon page here:

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My Blog: Don't forget to visit my blog Obstacle Crushers at <http://www.scottallansite.com> where you will receive quality free content and weekly blog posts to help with your ongoing success and busting through tough obstacles holding you back.

I wish you all the best for today and in all your future endeavors!

Scott Allan

About the Author

Hi, my name is Scott Allan. I write books that focus on changing old routines, behaviors and overcoming all levels of self-defeating behavior. I also run the blog Obstacle Crushers at scottallansite.com where I post engaging content to help you master self-discipline, develop positive habits and implement strategies by taking immediate action.

My goal is to help you to design the lifestyle you want by choice, and not just by default actions that result in failing to reach your goals.

I believe that successful living is a series of small actions taken consistently to build a thriving lifestyle that is full of rich quality. My purpose is to push you towards taking the necessary actions and eliminating distractions that keep you stuck by focusing on building clarity of purpose, having a vision and taking immediate action. When you eliminate the unnecessary noise in your life, it leaves you free to focus on the essentials.

My passion is in working with people to build more freedom into life, trying to do things that challenge all limitations, and engaging with awesome people who are not afraid to go the extra mile and do things differently to get different results.

Come and join me on this journey today!

You can learn more about Scott at:

<http://amazon.com/author/scottallan>

More Books by Scott Allan

Hey! You can check out my other books here on Amazon!

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I wish you all the best in your future success!

Sincerely,

Scott Allan

Oblictuspublishing@yahoo.com

<http://www.scottallansite.com>