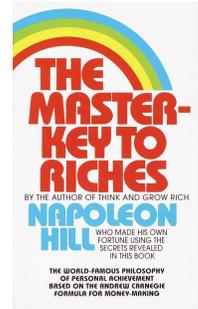


The Master Key to Riches

Napoleon Hill (1965)

Notes by Bob Evely
Wilmore, Kentucky; 2021.



Published in 1965, *The Master Key to Riches* by Napoleon Hill outlines many of the principles he had discovered in his study of successful businesspeople. These principles had previously been shared by Hill in his most popular work *Think & Grow Rich*, published in 1937. But here he elaborates a bit more on the principles.

In compiling these notes, I'll begin at page 146 where Hill itemizes the 17 Master Key principles and will then add additional information from throughout the book.

Positive Mental Attitude

At the onset, before itemizing the Master Key principles, Hill stresses the importance of nurturing a *positive mental attitude* (p. 19). It is important to have the right mental attitude in all circumstances.

1. The habit of going the extra mile.

Going the extra mile is the rendering of more and better service than that for which one is paid, and giving it in a positive mental attitude. (p. 59)

It must be remembered that there are two forms of compensation available to the one who works for wages. One is the wages received in money. The other is the skill attained from one's experiences. The proper attitude recognizes that one is receiving pay for schooling ones-self for a better position and greater pay. (p. 65)

This "key" is given first position because it aids in conditioning the mind and prepares the way for the other principles. Some failures begin with a definite major purpose, but that purpose is deserted when one is overtaken by temporary defeat or strenuous opposition.

Andrew Carnegie's first test when considering a person for promotion to a supervisory position was determining to what extent they were willing to go the extra mile. His second test was to determine whether or not they had their mind fixed upon a definite goal. Carnegie once stated, "If you have your heart fixed on what you want there is nothing I can do to stop you from getting it." (p. 34)

Carnegie paid to retain Charles Schwab more than had been promised – because he knew Schwab had earned the additional pay, but also because he did not want to lose so valuable a man. (p. 65)

The one who goes the extra mile and does it in the right kind of mental attitude never spends time looking for a job. They do not have to, because the job is always looking for them. (p. 83)

2. Definiteness of purpose.

When an idea, plan, or purpose is emotionalized with a burning desire for its realization, the mind is taken over by the subconscious part of the mind and acted upon. (p. 38)

Definiteness of purpose makes one more alert in the recognition of opportunities related to the object. It inspires the cooperation of other people. It overcomes the destructive habit of procrastination. It leads directly to the development of a *positive mental attitude*. (p. 40)

Write out your clear, definite plan by which you intend to begin the attainment of your definite major purpose. But be flexible enough to permit changes to that plan when inspired to do so. (p. 41)

Ideas are the beginning of all achievement. All ideas begin as a result of definiteness of purpose. (p. 42)

Make up your mind what you desire of life, and desire to get just that without substitutes. But this desire must be no mere wish or hope. It must be a burning desire – and you must be willing to pay whatever price its attainment may cost. (p. 55)

Desire, based on a definite motive, is the beginning of all voluntary thought action associated with individual achievement. (p. 191)

3. The master mind.

Definition: An alliance of two or more minds blended in a spirit of perfect harmony and cooperating for the attainment of a definite purpose. (p. 87) The key to its power may be found in the word “harmony.”

Thru this medium one may procure the full benefit of the experience, training, education, specialized knowledge, and native ability of others – just as completely as if their minds were one’s own. (p. 87)

The Master Mind principle made it possible for Thomas Edison to become a great inventor despite his lack of education and his lack of knowledge of the sciences with which he had to work. With the aid of this principle one may understand the history and the structure of this earth on which we live through the knowledge of skilled geologists. Through the knowledge and experience of the chemist one may make practical use of chemistry without being a trained chemist. (p. 88)

The one with a constructive Definite Major Purpose will never envy their superiors but will study their methods and learn to acquire their knowledge. (p. 95)

If one looks about themselves intelligently, they will discover that their place of daily labor is literally a school room in which they may acquire the greatest of all educations – that which comes from observation and experience. (p. 96)

The one whose Definite Major Purpose is of noteworthy proportions must remain always a student, and must learn from every possible source, especially those sources from which he may acquire specialized knowledge and experience related to the major purpose. (p. 96)

Through harmonious relationships with the minds of others, an individual may have the full use of their capacity to create ideas. (p. 103)

Surround yourself with those who have no reason to feel antagonistic toward each other – not in competition with one another. (p. 112)

Andrew Carnegie’s Master Mind alliance was made up of more than twenty men, each of whom brought to the alliance some quality of mind, experience, education, or knowledge which was directly related to the object of the alliance and not available through any of the other members of the alliance. (p. 162)

4. Applied faith.

The Infinite Intelligence reveals itself through silence more readily than through the boisterousness of one’s struggles. With my bank account vanished and my bank collapsed, I

was richer than most millionaires because I had discovered a direct approach to Faith. With this power behind me I can accumulate other bank balances sufficient for my needs. (p. 119)

When the mind has been cleared of a negative mental attitude, the power of Faith moves in and begins to take possession. The power attained by applying the habit of going the extra mile, definiteness of purpose, and the Master Mind is feeble in comparison with that which is available through the combined application of these principles with the state of mind known as Faith. (p. 120)

Every adversity carries with it the seed of an equivalent benefit. Temporary defeat is not failure until it has been accepted as such. (p. 121)

Faith makes it possible to achieve that which one can conceive and believe. (p. 122)

Affirm the objects of your desires through prayer and inspire your imagination to see yourself already in possession of them. (p. 123)

Let not a single day pass without making at least one definite move toward the attainment of your Definite Major Purpose. Your watchword must be persistence. (p. 124)

Enthusiasm is faith in action. It is the intense emotion known as burning desire. It comes from within, though it radiates outwardly in the expression of one’s voice and countenance.

5. Pleasing personality.

Personality is the sum-total of ones mental, spiritual, and physical traits and habits that distinguish one from all others. It is the factor that determines whether one is liked or disliked by others.

A pleasing personality enables one to sell himself and his ideas to others. Observe how the four preceding principles tend to give one a pleasing personality.

6. The habit of learning from defeat.

The mind that is properly disciplined and directed to definite ends is an irresistible power that recognizes no such reality as permanent defeat. (p. 174)

7. Creative vision.

To build plans for attaining hopes and aims thru the workshop of the imagination.

8. Personal initiative.

The principle that starts action and keeps it moving toward definite ends. It insures against the destructive habits of procrastination, indifference, and laziness.

Personal initiative is the power that inspires the completion of that which one begins. It is the power that starts all action. No person is free until he learns to do his own thinking and gains the courage to act on his own.

Thoughts do not organize and direct themselves.

9. Accurate thinking.

Insures against errors of judgment, guess-work, and premature decisions. It also protects against the influence of one’s undependable emotions.

The first step in accurate thinking is separating facts from fiction and hearsay evidence. The second step is that of separating facts into two classes – important and unimportant. (p.190)

The power of thought is the most dangerous or the most beneficial power available, depending on how it is used.

10. Self-discipline.

This is the product of carefully established and carefully maintained habits which in many instances can be acquired only by many years of painstaking effort. Self-discipline is solely a product of the will.

Self-discipline begins with the mastery of thought. If one does not control their thoughts, they cannot control their actions. Self-discipline calls for a balancing of the emotions of the heart with the reasoning faculty of the head.

Control of the will requires persistence, faith, and definiteness of purpose. In the field of salesmanship, for example, the persistent salesperson heads the list in sales production.

Persistence in selling or any other calling is a matter of strict self-discipline.

Successful people commit themselves to a stricter system of self-discipline than any which is forced upon them by circumstances beyond their control. They work when others sleep. They go the extra mile. They need no taskmaster to drive them on. (p. 196)

11. Concentration of endeavor.

This saves one from the dissipation of energies, and aids in keeping the mind focused upon the object of one's Definite Major Purpose until it has been taking over by the subconscious section of the mind.

12. Cooperation.

Human relationships are needed for success. Customer “good-will” and friendly cooperation brings a merchant's customers back as repeat purchasers of his wares, and insures a continuance of patronage from clients.

13. Enthusiasm.

This is a contagious state of mind.

14. The habit of health.

This begins with a health consciousness that can be developed only by the right habits of living, sustained thru self-discipline.

15. Budgeting of time and money.

Time and money are precious resources, and few people striving for success ever believe they possess either one in excess.

16. The Golden Rule applied.

If one is truly great, they will love all mankind. (p. 69)

17. Cosmic habitforce.

The law of Cosmic Habitforce is nature's method of giving fixation to all habits so they may carry on automatically once they have been set into motion. (p. 141) This is the principle by which all habits are fixed and made permanent in varying degrees.

Repetition is the means by which any habit is begun. A habit of thought can be created by repeatedly submitting a thought to the imagination with a burning desire for its fulfillment, until the imagination creates a practical plan for attaining the desire.

The building of voluntary positive habits calls for the application of self-discipline, persistence, will-power, and faith. Voluntary habit-forming is self-discipline in its highest and noblest form. All voluntary positive habits are the products of will-power directed toward the attainment of definite ends.

Habits represent the real cause of every individual's economic, social, professional, occupational and spiritual condition in life. We are where we are and what we are because of our established habits of thoughts and deeds. (p. 141, 154)

One must surround himself with every possible physical means of impressing his mind with the nature and the purpose of the ego he is developing. For example, the author should setup their workshop in a room decorated with pictures and the works of authors in their field whom they most admire. They should fill their bookshelves with books related to their own work. They should surround themselves with every possible means of conveying to their ego the exact picture of themselves which they expect to express, because that picture is the pattern which the law of Cosmic Habitforce will pick up; the picture which it translates into its physical equivalent. (p. 163)

The Sub-Conscious Mind (p. 177)

The sub-conscious section of the mind operates automatically. It acts upon all impulses of thought, carrying out to their logical conclusion all thoughts which are definitely shaped by the conscious mind, but it gives preference to thoughts inspired by emotional feeling such as the emotion of fear or the emotion of Faith.

The sub-conscious section of the mind gives preference also to the dominating thoughts of the mind – those thoughts which one creates by the repetition of ideas or desires.

Your thought habits evolve from the food that your mind dwells upon. (p. 182)

The Emotions (p. 178)

The emotions are tricky and undependable and may be very dangerous if they are not modified by the faculty of reason under the direction of the faculty of the will.

The emotions, however, are the source of all enthusiasm, imagination, and creative vision.

Accurate thinking is not possible without complete mastery of the emotions. Mastery is attained by placing the emotions under the control of the will, thus preparing them for direction to whatever ends the will may dictate, modifying them when necessary through the faculty of reason.

Uncontrolled imagination is the stuff that daydreams are made of. Control of the imagination begins with the adoption of definiteness of purpose based on definite plans.

The Twelve Riches of Life (p. 18)

1. A positive mental attitude.
2. Sound physical health (which begins with a “health consciousness.”).
3. Harmony in human relationships.
4. Freedom from fears.
5. The hope of achievements (some yet unattained desire).
6. The capacity for faith.

7. Willingness to share one’s blessings.
8. A labor of love.
9. An open mind on all subjects.
10. Self-discipline.
11. The capacity to understand people.
12. Economic security (attained by the service one renders, for useful service may be converted into all forms of human needs).

Hill proceeds to itemize what he refers to as “the Eight Princes” (p. 27) which have been the conditioners of his mind – the builders of his positive mental attitude. Every night, as the last order of the day’s activities, he would have a round-table session with these Princes. He would begin these sessions with a sense of gratitude.

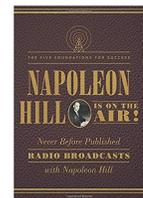
1. The Prince of material prosperity.
2. The Prince of sound physical health.
3. The Prince of peace of mind.
4. The Prince of hope.
5. The Prince of faith.
6. The Prince of love.
7. The Prince of romance.
8. The Prince of overall wisdom.

You now have at your command a complete philosophy of life, sufficient for the solution of every individual problem. (p. 170)

Napoleon Hill is On the Air

Napoleon Hill (2017)

*Notes by Bob Evely
Wilmore, Kentucky; 2022.*



In 2017 a book was published that consisted of transcripts from a series of radio messages delivered in 1953 by Napoleon Hill, author of a number of books including “Think & Grow Rich” which is perhaps his best known. In his radio broadcasts, Hill highlights what he called the “Big Five” of the 17 principles of success he identified from his research that involved interviews with many highly successful businesspeople of his day.

1. Definiteness of purpose

“The Master Key consists of 17 success principles I organized from the lifetime experiences of more than five hundred of the top-ranking businessmen of America. The first and most important of these 17 success principles is a definite major purpose.”

Definiteness of purpose is the starting point of all achievement. This is the one particular aim in life that stands out over and above all minor desires. (23)

Definiteness of purpose is the dominating idea, plan, or purpose held in the mind through repetition of thought and emotionalized with a burning desire for its realization. (40)

2. The Mastermind

Andrew Carnegie claimed his success was the result of the efforts of his Mastermind group. Carnegie had some twenty men making up his group. Each had a distinct background and contribution to the group. Each played a part in helping Carnegie to carry out the object of his major purpose in life, which was the making of steel.

“My job,” said Carnegie, “is that of keeping these associates of mine working together in a spirit of perfect harmony.” (51)

“Here is a good definition of the Mastermind. It is an alliance of two or more people working in harmony, *perfect* harmony, with a positive mental attitude for the attainment of a definite end.” (63)

Carnegie elaborated. “The Mastermind is not made up of any one mind; it’s made up of more than twenty men, whose background, experience, education, temperament, and ability have been combined and blended and directed to a definite end in a spirit of perfect harmony, and that end is the making and the marketing of steel.” (63)

Hill’s own Mastermind group while in Chicago was referred to as his “Big Six” and included William Wrigley and Mr. Hertz. They met every Saturday night and went into a discussion on each man’s definite major purpose. (67)

3. Applied faith

“Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve.” (76)

“The vast majority of people keep their mind trained on all the things they fear and do not want, such as the fear of poverty, the fear of ill health, the fear of criticism, the fear of the loss of love and affection of someone, and the fear of old age; and these fears have a strange way of materializing. People who have found the way to successful achievement keep their minds trained on things they do want.” (77)

When working on the light bulb, Edison had 10,000 different failures; and his mind still kept on searching. (78)

“Faith is a mental attitude wherein the mind is cleared of all fears and doubts and directed toward the attainment of something definite.” (79)

“How important is mental attitude? It is the main control over the power of faith. Your mental attitude is the major factor that attracts people to you or can repel them. Mental attitude is the major factor in the maintenance of sound health.” (100-101)

4. Going the extra mile

This is the action of rendering more and better service than that for which you are presently paid.

5. Creative vision

Creative vision “seldom operates unless it is quickened and inspired through a burning desire or some very definite and intense motive.” (143)

“Master Key to Riches & On the Air” (Napoleon Hill)

Clarence Saunders of Memphis had a vision to turn a grocery store into a self-help store. He borrowed the idea from the cafeteria plan of serving meals and founded the Piggly Wiggly self-help grocery store chain. (148-9)

Henry Ford combined the ideas of a horse-drawn buggy and a steam-propelled threshing machine. (150)

There are two kinds of imagination – synthetic imagination and creative imagination. Creative imagination consists of new facts or ideas. (158)

“Synthetic imagination consists of a combination of recognized old ideas, concepts, plans, or facts arranged in a new combination.” (157)

The Big Five

“I have the formula of success, which is as definite as the formula for water – H₂O. The formula consists of the 17 principles of personal achievement and, most importantly, the Big Five I have mentioned in these broadcasts.” (154)

Notes by Bob Evely



Evely Enterprises LLC

Bob Evely, President

(p) 859.967.9955

bob@EvelyLLC.com

www.EvelyLLC.com

www.linkedin.com/in/bobevely