I wrote this for myself,

but I can't stop you from reading it

Intro

Hello world, I am Rusu Adrian, a student of life. Everything that you read in this book is not my personal thoughts... It's the combination of acquired knowledge that went through a process of reshaping. What you read right now is the mix of all the books that I've read, the people that I had conversations with, the things I saw, the ideas that I deduced, etc.

Until one point in my life, I was considering my journey pretty boring. I had the illusion that I'm just an average kid that likes doing fun stuff and is pretty lazy when it comes to his responsibilities, basically the definition of an average Joe. I feel like this characteristic would fit everyone, but the main point is this: Everything you believe, it's true. It simply is, but it's true for YOU. If you believe something, it's because your experiences made you believe this, however it's not necessarily the truth in all cases. You can make yourself think a certain way to act in a certain way.

I believe I'm a good human being, but this is only my perspective. Some people are considering me dumb, even if they don't say this to me. This is ok. Every opinion is based on experience, and if in their life journey I did something un-according to their beliefs, I might come up as uneducated, dumb or simply weird. They might tell me this, they might not, but this is not the point. The point is that everyone has the right to have their own opinion, and everyone should have their own opinion even though they might not be true. At this point you might not agree with me, you can say that it's irrational to believe a lie, and you are totally correct, but you know what's more irrational, living in this lie, believing that it's true, without wanting to debunk it. The way you can destroy your world of lies is by expressing your opinions to somebody else that is willing to correct you or analyze it yourself. The rational approach to stop living in a lie for your whole life is to have a dose of: "What if I am believing a lie?".

Now we come to the main point of the introduction: I believe there is no right or wrong. Objectively, things are just happening: outside is dark, I am writing, I just got a text, etc. If we consider something either good or bad, we are just labeling the event based on our beliefs. And we also act based on our beliefs! The idea is to work on improving your beliefs, and your actions

will slowly transpose accordingly. This is why I will compress all the acquired knowledge to shift some of the common beliefs that are destined to make you fail.

Yin and yang

If we start to take things in life as they are, without saying: "this is good and that is bad", we start seeing everything that we have as a tool that either can be used, changed or accepted. The main idea here is to take things as they are, without judging or labeling. When you catch yourself considering something bad or good, at least try to also analyze it through the filter question: **"How does this help me?"**

If you figured out that the "event" might be helpful to you, you are already halfway done, use it as a tool to attain your goals. If the "event" doesn't help you at first sight, think about what you can improve or change if necessary in regard to it. If you think it is in need of a change - congratulations, you've got yourself a goal. When you are not able to change anything, for example the rain outside, you have to accept it and find ways to cooperate with the inevitable (take an umbrella), or at some point turn it to your advantage (collect the water from the rain, if it will help you). You have the goal to accept the event as it is and not judge it. This doesn't mean you should be "actionless". Find ways to cope with it. The rain has no need to stop your journey towards your personal goals. Obstacles are there to make you get out of your comfort zone, but definitely not a threat to you (most of them). Everything your life offers you is either a lesson or a test.

You should always catch yourself thinking about something that will not move you towards your goals, let alone something that moves you away from your goals. It's way easier said than done, but if you get introspective, you will find a lot of your actions that are destined to make you fail in the long run. The way I see things, you have to have at least one purpose, and yes, I believe it is sometimes beneficial to have multiple purposes. If we take a step back and dissect the word "purpose", it means: The reason behind, your fuel, your motivation. As Mark Manson, an awesome author, would say: everything we are doing has a purpose. We, humans, have a great ability to think, examine, inspect and deduce things. We are very rational. If you want to understand why you are still doing this, just ask the question: **What is the purpose of the thing that you're doing?**, **what's the reason behind?**, your fuel, your motivation. You

don't simply start bad habits by accident. Something happened. Dig into yourself to really understand: **WHY am I doing this?** The honest answer of this question is the first and most important step to become aware.

Awareness

First and foremost it is important to ask why is awareness important? I'll answer this question from the start. It helps you establish your position. When you understand the reason something is happening you have the power to change it. As an example, if you don't like to talk about your harmful addictions or don't want to even think about them, you will never be able to consciously get free from this said addiction.

You should become as aware as possible of the present moment. When you catch yourself in shallow activities or slacking off, ask yourself this: **What am I doing right now and why?** I know you expected a deeper question, but the thing is that by answering it, you will bring back awareness to the present moment, and soon you will realize that you are not doing the things that you actually want, if that's the case. It is important however to go deeper than: *"I am watching TikTok right now because I have some free time", and go on continuing doing the same thing*. This question is supposed to make you understand how you start the activity that you are occupied with, why you started it, what triggered it, was I fully aware when I decided to do it and why should I continue doing this? If it was an unconscious decision, you will want to take back the power for your own life, stop the unproductive activity that is just draining your energy and time, and do something more meaningful.

When you understand the reason something is happening, you are able to develop another important tool besides changing your actions. It's called prediction. Being able to predict by objectively inspecting the past events makes you a superhuman, because at this point you cannot be stopped. By being aware and understanding the reasons of your own and outside events you are able to predict as easily as you would predict that heating food in a microwave will make the food hotter. This example is the simplest and you might not even think of it as a prediction: It's simple logic. You are right, because after doing this over 300 times, you cannot get a different outcome than the hot food. This basic example proves that the same income will produce the same outcome. This is how everything works. You cannot expect different things by doing the same thing. Going back to predictions, my example was on a very small scale. It was just a

phenomenon, but by going deeper and understanding the macro (how electricity works, in this case), you incorporate more micro-processes. By understanding the microwave (just the fact that it heats your food), you are unable to transpose this knowledge to other things. This is surface-level information. However, by understanding electricity, you are able to understand not only how the microwave works, but also the oven, the fridge, your laptop, phone, etc. Think about the world, relationships or any aspect as an isolated lake. The surface of the lake will have waves and the things on top are moving around because of this, water is splashing the beach and the shore, but the bottom of the lake stays the same, no matter the things that are happening on the surface. When you understand more of the deep lake, the surface becomes obvious, but only by understanding the surface you cannot comprehend what's happening at the bottom.

There was a moment when I didn't realize how you can beat your un-productivity just with awareness. Beating action with thoughts, but now I understand how this happens. You have to think of your unconscious mind as the dark, because you cannot see clearly or at all. The conscious mind and awareness state is the light, because you are able to see and understand the state that you are in. You know the saying "You can't beat fire with fire". The same principle works here. You beat darkness with light. For some of you it is hard to be aware all of the time. Hell, for me sometimes it is hard to stay aware for long periods of time, but the thing is that only awareness and alertness is going to be the path towards doing what you actually want and need to do. I hope that by now you understand the importance of being aware, or being in control of your own self. I want to further suggest a practice that will help you in this journey.

A good idea to bring more awareness into your life would be to start a journal. Set 2-3 alarms throughout the day, as equally dispersed as possible. When the alarm goes off, take 2-5 minutes to write in a physical journal, phone notes or your laptop what you did from the previous alarm until now. There are only two rules you have to follow: You have one hour to take 5 minutes off your day to write what you did; and you have to be the most honest person on the planet when you write. I want to further talk about the importance of being honest, first of all, to yourself. *Let's say you want to do 50 push-ups a day. You say to yourself that you are going to do it, and you end up not doing it. You say the same thing the next day, but you also didn't do it. By the 3rd or 5th day you are not going to say that anymore. Why? Because you are ashamed of yourself and embarrassed. You cannot trust yourself anymore, you have no control over your*

actions. You say you will wash the dishes and go play video games like nothing even happened. Your words will have no value to you. And if your words have no value for you, how can they have any value for other people? It's a dangerous place to be - not trusting yourself and your abilities, so be very careful what you say, and do everything that you say that you will do. Be aware of your words and bring back their value if you weren't honest with yourself.

Honesty

Be honest as much as possible, at least with yourself. This is the main idea that I live by. This is tightly correlated with awareness. Being honest is seeing the things as they truly are, without labeling or judging. It is also a good idea to be honest with other people. If you have nothing to hide you become truly invulnerable. Anything someone might say to you about you will either:

- be a truth that you know or don't (in the second case this actually might help you grow and become better);
- or something that is ridiculously untrue, in which case you can all share a good laugh.

Being honest lets you free from judgment. You understand that people's opinion about you is only their perspective of you that they projected in their mind. This is not you, as an essence, this is just a part of you that someone got lucky to see. If you think people have no reason to judge you, (it's not smart, but it's their right to do so) if you consider yourself the most perfect human being from the day you were born and you think that you didn't change at all, check your messages when you were 5-10 years younger. The amount of cringe and laughs is unbelievable. Once again, don't judge yourself (for you it's not the smart way to do things), identify the things that changed and the things that stayed. This way you will become more aware of your path that you took. Everything is tied up.

As I mentioned, the journal is an awesome tool to develop your honesty, but you have to be willing to pour your soul onto the pages of the daily journal. I want to further explain the advantages a journal can give you. *Not long ago I was at the beach with my family. We were playing cards because the water was too cold and wavy. Nobody was in the water and I have to be honest. I didn't want to go out of my comfort zone. My brother then told me: "Why not? It would be such a cool thing to write in your journal". In the next 10-15 seconds me and my brother were in the water swimming. I felt like a champion, and believe when I tell you that I wrote the longest paragraph in my journal.* The journal might help you do the things that you

actually want to do and the things that are beneficial to you. It will push you to do something different everyday, because you will enjoy writing about what you enjoyed today.

There are also a lot of mental benefits to journaling, like decrease in depression, memory developpement, even some diseases, but I don't want to talk about that too much because I am too lazy to cite the articles. If you want to further analyze this aspect, there are a lot of research papers on people that have tried journaling as an experiment. I want to further talk about another advantage that journaling gives you. If you didn't do much from the previous alarm until now, and you wrote about it sincerely and tried to understand why did that happen, in most cases you will feel like you wasted your time, and if you didn't want to lose your time, you will be way more productive after you finished writing the journal.

The journal also helps you understand yourself. There were countless moments that I wanted to analyze some aspects regarding my life or pretty much anything else. I just started to write about that, asked questions and genuinely identified what I have to do or what I have to acquire. It gave me a better understanding of the situation that I described. In other words, it made me light up everything that was in the dark beforehand, which brought me

Happiness

Let's start by looking into the moments that you felt unhappy. When was that? Who or what caused that? Maybe it was a tragic event, maybe it was your disappointment in yourself or in somebody else. Maybe it happened when you were harmed, physically or emotionally? You know what all of the listed unhappiness sources have in common? They are all external. Meaning something happened and it triggered in you an amount of discomfort. But all the external events happen for 2 reasons: either to teach you something or to test you. List all the bad things that happened to you and you overcame eventually. Now write what they taught you, how you transformed by overcoming them, what have you learned. To make it easier, I'll give a story of mine as an example.

When I was in Germany in a ERASMUS+ programme I procrastinated for 2 months on my projects. At the point that I started to plan my work for the projects I had one more month. I don't want to go into details, but the night I realized that I'm way behind, I hardly fell asleep. I was thinking that this is it. I am not going to be able to finish my projects, my parents are going to be disappointed in me, I will let down the teachers from my University, and if I am going to fail in the University, how am I going to succeed in life? While trying to fall asleep I struggled a lot. I knew that at this exact moment I couldn't do anything because I needed sleep if I wanted to accomplish my goals, but my brain was in this constant stress. Thoughts weren't stopping living rent-free in my head. From the next day, it felt like I signed a 12-7 workweek contract. I didn't care whether it was a bad day, a good day, raining, holiday, anything. I knew I had to do the work. During the last week I was not living healthy, gently said. I was eating food that was made the fastest, I would rarely go outside and I was tired most of the day. I struggled, but I knew it is important and I have to do it. Long story short, I passed everything. I partied hard for some days, but soon I realized that I don't want all that momentum to go back into the nothingness that happened in the first 2 months. It would only mean that this cycle would repeat again and again, and I definitely didn't want that much stress anymore. I started working out, reading. While working on the projects I had to have a plan broken down into daily tasks, that was now transformed into a habit tracker. I started running, which I never did before, due to the fact that I

am a skinny guy and I didn't see any benefit in running. Don't get me wrong, I still partied sometimes, but it just didn't feel right to me anymore.

We could go into more specifics about that time, because it taught me a lot, but it's not necessary to do that at this time. Now we are trying to understand happiness by looking at the opposite. The night that I couldn't fall asleep, by definition, was an unhappy situation, but if we really look into it, not the situation itself was making me unhappy, but my thoughts about the situation. Even though you could argue that you can't have positive thoughts in certain situations, I will agree with you. But the sole reason for having these "unhappy" thoughts is my view on the world. Now that I look back at what happened, it was an important transformation that had a huge impact on my life and I wouldn't want it to be different. It made me want to be productive, to have goals and to live healthy. As I said, life situations will only teach you something, if you encounter it for the first time, or test you, to make sure that you are able to overcome it.

Biologically, happiness comes from the secretion of dopamine. You get that by doing something exciting, achieving goals or doing something that you usually don't do. The second option is doing drugs, but I wouldn't suggest that, since you might come off worse than before and see the "drug path" as the only salvation, until it becomes no salvation. It's dangerous, that's why it's important to further learn about dopamine, not happiness. Dopamine is the bottom of the lake, happiness is the surface.

In conclusion, what I want you to take out of this chapter is this: the situation that you are in is not the problem, your thoughts are the problem because they create it. Go deeper to understand what is happening inside you. The pressure of the deadline surely puts you in a very uncomfortable situation, but you have to stop letting the thoughts create the problems.

Thoughts vs emotions

If you are able to turn off your thoughts most of the time, you are a lucky guy like me. When you use your thoughts as a tool, you are not manipulated by them. Now a lot of people think that they are their thoughts because it comes from the brain, but let me debunk that for you. To say that you are your thoughts is to say that you don't exist in the absence of your thoughts. Read the previous phrase until it sinks in, please. But if you can turn off your thoughts machine at least for some seconds, you will realize that you still exist. That means that you are actually the source of your thoughts. You are the governor, so you are the boss of your thoughts. Now you need to take back the power over your thoughts. You have to use them as a tool, only when you need it, and after the task is done, turn off the machine.

I don't know any specific rituals or exercises to practice turning off your thoughts, however a simple general idea that applies when learning something is: Start little and increase as you go. Catch the moment your thoughts get a grip on you and bring awareness and control over your tool, cald thinking. I would recommend a book that explains in more detail this state of consciousness: "The Power of NOW" by Eckart Tolle, where he explains how to reach the state of Enlightenment and full awareness of the present moment. I would really suggest this read, because it will make you better understand the state of acceptance and lucidity. It also speaks about emotions and how to deal with unwanted emotions. One quote from his book that stayed with me till' this day is: "Your thoughts are going to be the lie and your feelings are going to be the truth". I really believe that, because the emotion externalizes your inner state, but the thought can be a way of manipulating your behavior in order to make you want to do the things that you don't really want to do. I know it sounds unrealistic, but think about your thoughts before doing something extremely out of your comfort zone. You felt scared, that was the truth, but the thoughts were trying to stop you with all of its tools. You don't have to fight the emotions, because they are telling how you are feeling, just observe it and understand where it came from. Don't reject it, don't fight it, don't deny it, understand it, shine the full light over it, to acknowledge what triggered it, what does it want to tell me and how can I cope with it, if needed? All of this was explained a lot more in depth in the up-mentioned book, so if you want

to better understand your feelings and be more in touch with your emotions, this book is a must, but first of all you have to be honest with yourself to understand your situation in regards with your ability to control your thoughts and be aware of your feelings.

Fear

Simply put, fear is your perception of being unprepared for an event. Even if it's the case (being unprepared), living in the present is living without fear, because you are not worried about what might happen, because you have no control over it, so you can only accept it. When you know that you're always giving your full potential and you make the most out of the present moment, there is no place for complaints when you did all that you could do at that moment in time. Sometimes, however, it happens that you didn't put all your effort into it, and that's where the disappointment about what you could have done better kicks in. This time, you are referring to the past, that, once again, you cannot change and have no control. It happened, you can only learn and adjust based on your experiences.

Fear is a coping mechanism that tries to keep you in your comfort zone. Now we have to understand why it is important and why sometimes it stops us from doing what we actually want. The number one goal of human beings is to survive. Based on the fact that you read my book, (thank you) I can assume that you are alive, so all your actions didn't end up with your death, yet. You've succeeded so far, so the brain thinks that if you keep doing what you were doing, you're going to stay alive. The same input equals the same output, so the brain will naturally try to stop you from doing the things that you didn't do before. So even though public speaking is a good thing and I don't think that it kills that many people, your brain still wants to convince you why you shouldn't do it. Remember, the surviving mechanism doesn't care about your passions, aspirations and all of that. It just wants this living organism to keep living for as long as possible, so the things that are new to him are automatically labeled as a threat to your security because you don't yet know the outcome of the situation. By being aware of this survival mechanism, you can start to cope with it, remember light over darkness.

Let's analyze a specific situation, the fear of public speaking, as it was already brought up. You logically understand that unless you make some wild accusations and threats to your public, you are probably going to end up alive. However, here comes the fear of public speaking: "What if they are going to be bored by my speech?", "What if they will start to leave?", "What

if I see someone related to me and I disappoint them?". The fear of performing is a fear of the future that you cannot control, but it's once again your surviving mechanism trying to stop you from giving 100%. Let's even go further, let's assume that all of what you expected did happen. People were getting bored of your speech about the importance of chlorophyll, they started leaving and your relatives from the room didn't even want to admit that they know you. Pretty embarrassing, huh? I bet. Assuming you gave 110% and were living in the present and very enthusiastic about your speech, something just didn't go as planned. It happens, but you gained something much more important: experience. A bad experience, you might say, but "bad experiences" in the eyes of a professional are nothing more than learning experiences. Now you have to introspect and find out what actually made people leave in disappointment. Every outcome has a cause found in the income. Maybe they already knew everything, or the subject is too surface-level, maybe they weren't interested in chlorophyll at all, maybe it was you that treated the subject without any interest. It is your duty to find out what did go wrong, and how you are going to do something different next time. By applying the same strategy to the 2nd and 3rd attempt, you will become better every time, and eventually transform into a "natural" public speaker.

Now tell me, would that be possible without the first step, going on stage and failing miserably? Of course not, how can you learn anything if you are not doing anything? So go out there, get out of your comfort zone (if it doesn't actually end up with your death), because if you choose the comfort zone you will only achieve one thing: survival, and I hope that you are not going to settle for that.

The process

The process is very important in achieving your goals. The process is the journey of obtaining your desired results. It is incredible how good of a result you can get with intentionally obtained information. And I mean intentionally by finding out yourself, coming up with a version that fits you the best. Let the information pass through you, changing you for the person you want to become, in correlation with your goals. This way you will become the perfect type of human to achieve the desired result. Just then you will be prepared and worthy of claiming the fruits of your work. In order to get the specific results, you have to be the specific person that deserves them. Every achievement is actually a hidden burden, because, first of all, the journey doesn't end because you accomplished your goals, second of all, you have to be responsible enough to at least keep and preserve the obtained results. Let's take a general example:

You have a goal to gain a million dollars. You set up a team, start a business, and in some time you achieve it. Celebration time, you did it, you made your dreams come true, but for how much time do you think that feeling will stay? A day, one week? If it extends to one month, it's a high probability that you don't have that million anymore and on top of that you lost all the momentum that built up to this immense result. The spiral might go down pretty quick. Your customers and investors might not trust you anymore, thinking that you are not as reliable as they thought. I might be wrong, in case you automated your business and you have a delegation system that works in your absence, however one thing is certain, the achievement itself is not the salvation from your burdens. Of course it will help you in some areas in your life, but it will also show you the areas of your life where you need to work more. It's a constant game of improving yourself and the people around you.

This is why it's important to set big goals, even impossible goals, because this way you will always have things to do. And it's not the result that builds us and teaches us. It's the process. This is why you have to appreciate the process and appreciate the opportunity that you got to work on this big goal. Yes, you have to appreciate the opportunity that you GET to work on your big goal. I'm pretty sure that for some of you this: "I get to work" sounds very similar to

"I have to work", but it changes the whole dynamic. This is why your vocabulary has a huge impact on the way you formulate your thoughts and on the way you act.

Your vocabulary

Why is it important to possess a rich and diverse vocabulary? Well, try to go to Germany without any friends and without any knowledge of German language. I can tell you that's a pretty uncomfortable position. I'm not saying it's definitely a bad idea, I'm saying that it's going to be harder to get your way around without communication, this is why correctly expressing your ideas and thoughts is very important. You have to bring clarity with your words. They are designed to establish a connection between people that facilitate collaboration. But enough of the fancy words, it's time to understand how to develop your vocabulary.

First of all, I assume that you already know the basics of the English language if you are reading this book, so now you have to be interested in finding out and learn about specific things that are interesting to you: astronomy, religion, sports, money, your will is your only limit. By doing so, you will develop a specific vocabulary that is used in the domain of interest to you. You can do the same while learning a new language, but there are some specifics at the start, because you have to have a starting point and there are a lot more specifics that we are not going to get into. Our goal is to express ourselves as freely as possible and as concise as possible. I learned the English language in school for 8 years, but I wasn't attracted by the methods used there, so I started to watch Minecraft gameplays. Gameplays in English, of course. This is why now, even though English isn't my native language, I can express myself pretty well.

Opinion matters

We all have opinions. We think we know most of the things that we need to know. When it's necessary, we're dating experts, technical specialists and life gurus, however sometimes when it comes to having an opinion, we choose to stay silent. This is mostly relevant for shy people. I used to be shy, and think that it's not my job to correct people or even worse, to be corrected and be judged. However, by expressing your opinion you are actually doing a great service for the world, no matter if you are right or wrong. If you are wrong and you don't know that, but you are fully aware and open-minded, you will be called out on your false ideas and you will be a better person walking out of that conversation. This goes the other way around too. If you believe you are right and what you hear is not objectively correct, call it out. You are doing your companion a great favor. You actually are trying to help him figure out the actual truth. He might not appreciate that, getting called out, and that's alright. You have the moral obligation to help the people that want to be helped or need to be helped. Your companion might see the correction as a threat to his belief system that helped him survive until this point, remember. So it's natural that he wants to contradict you and prove you wrong as a way to payback. It's not the smart way to do it, but it's more important to understand **WHY this happens**.

Conclusion

In conclusion, everything ties up: Don't be scared to be correct or to be corrected when you express yourself freely and as objectively as possible. Trust the process and the journey that you started. Be aware and honest with yourself all the time, so you can always readjust in the process towards reaching your goals. Don't label the things that happen to you, just observe them and learn. Stay happy, because it's your choice to do fun and enjoy different things. There's no reason not to be happy. Upgrade as much as possible, so you can upgrade others as well. And last but not least, don't forget the most important thing: have fun, because you know where everyone will end up, that's why you have to make it worthwhile.

Only those who are dedicated and willing to put in the work in the direction they want will achieve the things they want. This is the simplest equation. I know you waited for a way better answer, but everything in theory is simple, however in practice, it's very specific. But to better understand the specifics, you should first understand the macro that incorporates all the specifics or as many specifics as possible. In other words, there are exceptions to the rules, but that doesn't change the value of the rule. It's not about competition, it's about YOU, as it always has been. That's why you have to become better by every second of your life. But how do you become better every time? That is the question that I will leave for you.

If you like this book, I don't want you to recommend it to everyone. As I said in the title: I wrote this for myself, but I guess I was also right about the fact that I wasn't able to stop you from reading it. What I actually want you to do is this: Take the most important aspects highlighted in this book, and start changing your behavior. I will guarantee you that a lot of things will change when you will implement the ideas that you found the most attractive to you. So, to do a small recap, try to change in tandem with the ideas from this book that resonated with you. Once you do, believe me, it will get noticed by a lot of people. I guarantee you that. The people that are going to notice this and they will want to become like you, or at least to some degree implement some changes in their life. These are the people that I want you to give this book to.

Thank you very much for taking your time to read my book. I know that time is the most valuable resource that we have, because it's always ticking down, no matter what and I would really appreciate it if you would change at least something in your life after reading this book. It doesn't have to be something specific that I wrote in it. Maybe it was a simple phrase that sparked your interest towards a subject, maybe it was a good introspective question that you are going to meditate on. Believe me when I say that the most valuable thing that you can do with this book is apply it to your life, at least to some degree. Thank you again for taking this journey with me and I wish you the best in your awesome life, and I'll end this small book with one of my favorite quotes: "**We are defined by our actions, *not our inactions*"**.

Ciao.