Good evening friends and today we will be summarizing the book ‘The ONE Thing’ by Gary Keller.

The book introduces the readers to the concept of ‘ONE Thing’ by the help of quotations, stories, and results from researches.

The first quotation that appears in the book is:

**“IF YOU CHASE TWO RABBITS... YOU WILL NOT CATCH EITHER ONE,” which is a Russian proverb.**

Following up with it is the Domino effect and right next would be how it works for us in life.

**THE DOMINO EFFECT**

On November, 2009, Weijers Domino Productions coordinated the world record domino fall by lining up about 4.5 million dominoes in a dazzling display. In this instance, a single domino set in motion a domino fall that cumulatively unleashed more than 94,000 joules of energy, which is as much energy as it takes for an average-sized male to do 545 pushups.

Another research showed that a single domino is capable of bringing down another domino that is actually 50 percent larger.

This idea was then replicated in an experiment with 8 dominoes.

The first was a mere two inches, the last almost three feet tall. The resulting domino fall began with a gentle tick and quickly ended “with a loud SLAM.” Imagine what would happen if this kept going.

The 10th domino would be almost as tall as NFL quarterback Peyton Manning. By the 18th, you’re looking at a domino that would rival the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Number 57 would practically bridge the distance between the earth and the moon!

Each standing domino represents a small amount of potential energy; the more you line up, the more potential energy you’ve accumulated. Line up enough and, with a simple flick, you can start a chain reaction of surprising power. When one thing, the right thing, is set in motion, it can topple many things.

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**GETTING EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS: Success is built sequentially.**

So when you think about success, shoot for the moon. The moon is reachable if you prioritize everything and put all of your energy into accomplishing the most important thing. Getting extraordinary results is all about creating a domino effect in your life. Toppling dominoes is pretty straightforward. You line them up and tip over the first one. In the real world, though, it’s a bit more complicated. The challenge is that life doesn’t line everything up for us and say, “Here’s where you should start.” Highly successful people know this. So every day they line up their priorities anew, find the lead domino, and whack away at it until it falls.

Success builds on success, and as this happens, over and over, you move toward the highest success possible.

When you see someone who has a lot of knowledge, they learned it over time. When you see someone who has a lot of skills, they developed them over time. When you see someone who has done a lot, they accomplished it over time. When you see someone who has a lot of money, they earned it over time.

The key is over time. Success is built sequentially. It’s one thing at a time.

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Now the book talks about six lies that lie between you and success. We are going to cover them one by one. So the first one is:

**Lie #1. Everything Matters Equally**

Equality is a lie.

Understanding this is the basis of all great decisions. So, how do you decide? When you have a lot to get done in the day, how do you decide what to do first?

**The 80/20 Principle**

It says the minority of your effort leads to the majority of your results. It points us in a very clear direction: the majority of our results are due to 20% of our activities.

A to-do list becomes a success list when you apply Pareto’s Principle to it.

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**Lie #2. Multitasking**

So, if doing the most important thing is the most important thing, why would you try to do anything else at the same time? It’s a great question.

In the summer of 2009, Clifford Nass (Stanford University professor) set out to answer just that, “how well so-called multitaskers multitasked”.

Nass told the New York Times that he had been “in awe” of multitaskers and deemed himself to be a poor one. So he and his team of researchers gave 262 students questionnaires to determine how often they multitasked. They divided their test subjects into two groups of high and low multitaskers and began with the presumption that the frequent multitaskers would perform better. They were wrong.

“I was sure they had some secret ability” said Nass. “But it turns out that high multitaskers are suckers for irrelevancy.” They were outperformed on every measure. Although they’d convinced themselves and the world that they were great at it, there was just one problem. To quote Nass, “Multitaskers were just lousy at everything.”

Multitasking is a lie.

Every time we try to do two or more things at once, we’re simply dividing up our focus and dumbing down all of the outcomes in the process.

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**Lie #3. A Disciplined Life**

There is this pervasive idea that the successful person is the “disciplined person” who leads a “disciplined life.”

It’s a lie.

The truth is we don’t need any more discipline than we already have. We just need to direct and manage it a little better.

Success is not a marathon, but actually a short race—a sprint fueled by discipline just long enough for habit to kick in and take over. When we know something that needs to be done but isn’t currently getting done, we often say, “I just need more discipline.”

Actually, we need the habit of doing it. And we need just enough discipline to build the habit.

When you discipline yourself, you’re essentially training yourself to act in a specific way. Stay with this long enough and it becomes routine—in other words, a habit. So when you see people who look like “disciplined” people, what you’re really seeing is people who’ve trained a handful of habits into their lives. This makes them seem “disciplined” when actually they’re not. No one is.

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**SELECTED DISCIPLINE WORKS SWIMMINGLY**

Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps is a case study of selected discipline. When he was diagnosed with ADHD as a child, his kindergarten teacher told his mother that he will never be able to focus on anything. Bob Bowman, his coach since age 11, reports that Michael spent a lot of time on the side of the pool by the lifeguard stand for disruptive behavior. That same misbehavior has cropped up from time to time in his adult life as well. Yet, he’s set dozens of world records winning gold medals in every Olympics. Talking about Phelps, one reporter said, “**If he were a country he’d be ranked 12th over the last three Olympics.**”

Now, how did this happen? How did the boy who would “never be able to focus on anything” achieve so much? Phelps became a person of selected discipline.

From age 14 through the Beijing Olympics when he was 23, Phelps trained seven days a week, 365 days a year. He figured that by training on Sundays he got a 52-training-day advantage on the competition. He spent up to six hours in the water each day.

It is not a stretch to say that Phelps channeled all of his energy into one discipline that developed into one habit—swimming daily. The payoff from developing the right habit is pretty obvious.

Michael Phelps found his sweet spot in the swimming pool.

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**TODDLER TORTURE**: In the late ’60s, researcher Walter Mischel began methodically tormenting four-year-olds at a nursery school. The devilish experiment was called “The Marshmallow Test.” It was an interesting way to look at willpower.

Kids were offered a treat — the now infamous marshmallow. The child was told that the researcher had to step away, and if he could wait 15 minutes until the researcher returned, he’d be awarded a second treat. One treat now or two later.

**On average, kids held out less than three minutes.**

**And only three out of ten managed to delay their gratification until the researcher returned.**

It was pretty apparent most kids struggled with delayed gratification. Willpower was in short supply.

Initially no one assumed anything about what success or failure in the marshmallow test might say about a child’s future.

Starting in 1981, Mischel began systematically tracking down the original subjects to measure their relative academic and social progress. His hunch was correct—willpower or the ability to delay gratification was a huge indicator of future success.

**So, when your mother told you “all good things come to those who wait,” she wasn’t kidding.**

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**Lie #4. Willpower Is Always on Will-Call**

Willpower is like the power bar on your cell phone.

A research showed just how fleeting our willpower can be. Researcher divided 165 undergraduate students into two groups and asked them to memorize either a two digit or a seven-digit number.

Subjects could take as much time as they needed. When they were ready, students would then go to another room where they would recall the number. Along the way, they were offered a snack for participating in the study. The two choices were chocolate cake or a bowl of fruit salad—guilty pleasure or healthy treat. Here’s the kicker: students asked to memorize the seven-digit number were nearly twice as likely to choose cake. This tiny extra cognitive load was just enough to prevent a prudent choice.

The implications are staggering. The more we use our mind, the less minding power we have. Willpower is like a fast-twitch muscle that gets tired and needs rest. It’s incredibly powerful, but it has no endurance.

**A measly five extra digits is all it takes to drain our willpower dry. While decisions tap our willpower, the food we eat is also a key player in our level of willpower.**

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**The brain makes up 1/50th of our body mass but consumes a staggering 1/5th of the calories we bum for energy.**

A 2007 article detailed nine separate studies on the impact of nutrition and willpower.

In one set, researchers assigned tasks that did or did not involve willpower and measured blood-sugar levels before and after each task. Participants who exercised willpower showed a marked drop in the levels of glucose in the bloodstream.

Subsequent studies showed the impact on performance when two groups completed one willpower-related task and then did another. Between tasks, one group was given a glass of Kool-Aid lemonade sweetened with real sugar (buzz) and the other was given a placebo, lemonade with Splenda (buzzkill). The placebo group had roughly twice as many errors on the subsequent test as the sugar group.

The studies concluded that willpower is a mental muscle that doesn’t bounce back quickly. If you employ it for one task, there will be less power available for the next unless you refuel. To do our best, we literally have to feed our minds. Foods that elevate blood sugar evenly over long periods, like complex carbohydrates and proteins, become the fuel of choice for high-achievers.

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**Lie #5. A Balanced Life**

COUNTERBALANCING

When we say we’re out of balance, we’re usually referring to a sense that some priorities—things that matter to us—are being underserved or unmet. The problem is that when you focus on what is truly important, something will always be underserved. Leaving some things undone is a necessary tradeoff for extraordinary results. But you can’t leave everything undone, and that’s where counterbalancing comes in. The idea of counterbalancing is that you never go so far that you can’t find your way back or stay so long that there is nothing waiting for you when you return.

In the world of professional success, it’s not about how much overtime you put in; the key ingredient is focused time over time. To achieve an extraordinary result you must choose what matters most and give it all the time it demands. This requires getting extremely out of balance in relation to all other work issues, with only infrequent counterbalancing to address them.

You never forsake your personal life for work and vice-versa. You can move back and forth quickly between these and often even combine the activities around them, but you can’t neglect any of them for long.

In your professional life, go long and make peace with the idea that the pursuit of extraordinary results may require you to be out of balance for long periods.

Going long allows you to focus on what matters most, even at the expense of other, lesser priorities.

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**Lie #6. BIG IS BAD**

“We are kept from our goal, not by obstacles but by a clear path to a lesser goal.” —Robert Brault

For more than four decades, Stanford psychologist Carol S. Dweck has studied the science of how our self-conceptions influence our actions. Her work offers great insight into why thinking big is such a big deal.

Dweck’s work with children revealed two mindsets in action —a “growth” mindset that generally thinks big and seeks growth and a “fixed” mindset that places artificial limits and avoids failure.

Growth-minded students, as she calls them, employ better learning strategies, experience less helplessness, exhibit more positive effort, and achieve more in the classroom than their fixed-minded peers. They are less likely to place limits on their lives and more likely to reach for their potential. Dweck points out that mindsets can and do change. Like any other habit, you set your mind to it until the right mindset becomes routine.

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**PURPOSE, PRIORITY AND PRODUCTIVITY**

Think of purpose, priority, and productivity as three parts of an iceberg.

With typically only 1/9 of an iceberg above water, whatever you see is just the tip of everything that is there. This is exactly how productivity, priority, and purpose are related. What you see is determined by what you don’t.

You see the productivity, what you don’t see is ‘priority’ and ‘purpose’.

And to help you in prioritizing, there is one question that repeatedly posed in the book, try to answer this for yourself:

**“What is the one thing I can do such that by doing it everything else will be easier or unnecessary?”**

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**THE BEGGING BOWL**:

Upon coming out of his palace one morning and encountering a beggar, a king asks, “What do you want?” The beggar laughingly says, “You ask as though you can fulfill my desire!” Offended, the king replies, “Of course I can. What is it?”

Note that this is not an ordinary beggar but a saint dressed as one. After a long conversation that was belittling to the king, beggar asked the king to fill his bowl.

“That’s it?” asked the king, and he instructed his vizier to “fill the man’s begging bowl with money.”

But now whatever, no matter what the king poured in the bowl, it disappeared and the bowl would be empty.

Word spread throughout the kingdom, and a huge crowd gathered. The prestige and power of the king were at stake, so he told his vizier, “If my kingdom is to be lost, I am ready to lose it, but I cannot be defeated by this beggar.” He continued to empty his wealth into the bowl. Diamonds, pearls, emeralds. His treasury was becoming empty. And yet the begging bowl seemed bottomless.

Finally, as the crowd stood in utter silence, the king dropped at the beggar’s feet and admitted defeat. “You are victorious, but before you go, fulfill my curiosity. What is the secret of this begging bowl?”

The beggar humbly replied, **“There is no secret. It is simply made up of human desire.”**

One of our biggest challenges is making sure our life’s purpose doesn’t become a beggar’s bowl, a bottomless pit of desire continually searching for the next thing that will make us happy.

Over the ages, our greatest minds have pondered happiness, and their conclusions are much the same: having money and things won’t automatically lead to lasting happiness.

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**SUCCESS IS AN INSIDE JOB**

One evening, a young boy hopped up on his busy father’s lap to seek for his attention and time. Now the father quickly started racking his brain and he hits upon a promising idea. He grabbed his son, gave him a huge hug, and announced that their first game would be to put a puzzle together, and when that was done they will head outside to play.

Earlier while reading the newspaper, he had seen a full-page ad with a picture of the world. He quickly found it, tore it into little pieces, and spread them out on the table. He found some tape for his son and said, “I want to see how fast you can put this puzzle together.” The boy enthusiastically dove right in, while his father, confident that he had now bought some extra time, buried himself back in his paper.

Within minutes, the boy once again yanked down his father’s newspaper and proudly announced, “Dad, I’m done!” The father was astonished. The man was looking at the picture, not a single piece out of place. In a voice mixed with parental pride and wonder, the father asked, “How on earth did you do that so fast?”

What had happened here was that the pieces were lying on a glass-top table and the boy had dropped a piece on the floor. While picking this piece, he noticed the picture of a man on the back of the pieces. That was it! When the boy put the man together, the world just fell into place.

The lesson of this story is that “**Success is an inside job”.** Put yourself together, and your world falls into place.

**You are the first domino.**