

Foreword

If you want to achieve your highest aspirations and overcome your greatest challenges, identify and apply the principle or natural law that governs the results you seek. How we apply a principal will vary greatly and will be determined by our unique strengths, talents, and creativity, but, ultimately, success in any endeavor is always derived from acting in harmony with the principles to which the success is tied. Time-tested, principled solutions often contrast common practices:

- Fears and insecurity: people worry about a lot of things: job security, financial independence, personal reputation, etc. A cultural response is to become independent, which leads to an isolated mindset of "me and mine". The problem is we live in an interdependent society, where accomplishments require interdependency skills well beyond our abilities
- I want it now: everyone wants things and they want them now. Everyone, you, me, your bosses, and Wall Street, want results today. It is easy to oversee sustainability and growth in everything we do. Sure, we are driving results today, but are we doing the necessary investments that will sustain those results in years to come?
- Blame and victimism: Wherever there is a problem, there is a finger-pointing of blame. Show me someone who is humble enough to accept and take responsibility for his own circumstances and courageous enough to take whatever initiative is necessary to creatively work his or her way through or around these challenges, and I will show you the supreme power of choice
- Hopelessness: when we succumb to believing that we are the victims of our circumstances, we lose hope and drive. Do not lower your expectations of life to the point that you are not disappointed by anyone or anything. You are creative force of your life
- Lack of life balance: balance and peace of mind or not produced by coming in early and staying later. They are developed by someone who knows their highest priorities and live with focus and integrity toward them
- What's in it for me: in today's world, even your family could be seen as competition. We think that the more others win, the less there is for us. But the greatest opportunities and boundless accomplishments are reserved for those who master the art of the we. True greatness will be achieved through the abundance of mine that works selflessly - with mutual respect, for mutual benefit
- The hunger to be understood: listen more, talk less. Don't prepare your next response while listening to others. Make them feel like they are understood and you are influenced
- Conflict and differences: people share so much in common, yet are or so magnificently different. The human nature is 4-dimensional: body, mind, heart, and spirit.

Part 1: Paradigms and Principles

Inside-Out

- We all have very deep internal problems despite our professional or academic successes. Sometimes we don't know if the sacrifices made in exchange for those successes are worth it. This has a lot to do with how we perceive the world and how it perceives us.
- Pygmalion effect: a phenomenon whereby higher expectations lead to more quality results; named after a Greek sculptor who fell in love with a statute he carved

The Personality and Character Ethics

- The Character Ethic: there are basic principles of effective living and people can only experience true success and enduring happiness when they learn and integrate these principles into their basic character
- The Personality Ethic: success is a function of personality, public image, attitudes, skills, and techniques. Mindsets like "whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe it can achieve."
- Thought: don't measure any individual according to any standard social mold. The net result of doing that is encapsulated in Personality Ethic, where you inadvertently force the expectations

onto the individual. This might not always work. Consider letting the personality shape itself at the individual's own pace and speed.

Primary and Secondary Greatness

- Thought: the fundamental personality of a person is his/her primary greatness, while skills and techniques and the likes are only secondary.
- You can play the system by learning how to deal with people, pretend to be interested in their hobbies. You'll get by in the short term, but in the long run, real personality shows. Think of your personality as a the foundation and your skills/techniques as the upper layers that are built onward. There is no shortcut in cultivating your personality, just like there is no shortcut when it comes to crop harvesting. It is a process with a natural system in place; you might be able to get by by playing the system, but if you learn how to play with the system naturally, your success on all fronts will be solid
- This is why we trust some people with our money or projects even if they are the most socially awkward or seemingly anti-social. It's their trustworthy personality that we count on, not any system or techniques that they put on

The Power of Paradigm

- A paradigm, just like in programming, is a concept, a theory, a model. In this context, a paradigm is a frame of reference by which we base our perceptions of the world on. It is very important that we understand what our paradigm is and how it affects the way we see things
- A paradigm is analogous to a map. If you were looking to navigate around Chicago but were given a map of Detroit, you would be pretty frustrated. You may find ways to make yourself feel better by making the best of the situation, but you are still on the wrong direction. This is why people often feel empty and lost despite how successful they are. It's important to get the right map first.
- People with different paradigms will perceive things differently. Neither is wrong, just different. It is important to understand other paradigms as well.

The Power of a Paradigm Shift

- Paradigm shifts are key to advancement and breakthroughs. The germ theory, theory of relativity, etc, all of these required a paradigm shift; a new way of thinking. When we shift paradigms, we see things differently. Imagine how angry you are when a man and his children came on a bus, yelling and running around obnoxiously, until you have learned from the man that his wife just passed away and they didn't know how to cope with it.

Seeing and Being

- Paradigm shifts aren't always instantaneous. They take time. Learn how to identify and react to them.

The Principle-Centered Paradigm

- There are fundamental principles that govern the person's effectiveness. Like gravity, these principles are natural and cannot be broken. They aren't practices or values, which have to depend on particular situations. Principles are fundamental at all circumstances.

The Way We See The Problem Is The Problem

- Many people admire the successful ones and always wonder what the secrets are. What these people are actually looking for are quick fixes and/or hacks that will cure all their problems. They all look at their problems as if they were caused from some external sources and there would always be some sort of quick remedies out there that would do the trick. That is certainly not true. People with happy marriages don't have any secret books or seminars that they follow. It all starts with their personal paradigms, or the code or idea that they live by. It takes years and years to even understand the paradigms, let alone putting them to practice. Stop looking for social-aspirins and bandaids; first find the underlying causes and cure them.

A New Level of Thinking

- "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." - Einstein
- This new level of thinking is what this book is all about. It's a principle-centered, character-based, and inside-out approach. Start with yourself: your paradigm, your character, your motives, your why. If you want to be loved by employees, be a more understanding and sympathetic boss. If you want to be financially independent, be more financially responsible. If you want to be trusted, be more trustworthy.

The Seven Habits - An Overview

- "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." - Aristotle
- Habits dictate our character, which in turn dictates our destiny. Like a rocket pushing against gravity, forming habits take a tremendous amount of work and commitment. Like a rocket in orbit, it doesn't take a whole lot of work once the habit is formed.

"Habits" Defined

- Habit is the intersection of knowledge, skill, and desire. Knowledge is the theoretical paradigm; it's the "what to do and why". Skill is the "how to do". Desire is the "want to do".

The Maturity Continuum

- The continuum consists of 3 stages: dependence, independence, and interdependence. This is the natural law of growth. For example, you start out as an infant or an intern; you depend on others for your well being and growth. Then, you become an adult or a full-timer; you can more or less be self-reliant. Ultimately, you want to be interdependent. I haven't figured out this stage yet, so I don't have a good example.
- Modern society enthrones independence. It is seen as the most supreme form of maturity. It is an impressive stage, but is not the most supreme form of maturity. Learn to be interdependent.
- Nature is interdependent. Society is interdependent. Why shouldn't you be? It is not a sign of weakness; it's the evidence of supreme maturity and self-awareness

Effectiveness Defined

- The classic fable of the golden goose: a man kills a goose that lays golden eggs in hope of obtaining them all at once, only to realize that's not how it works
- People focus way too much on the golden-eggs paradigm: the more you produce, the more you do, the more effective they become. Or so they think.
- Effectiveness is a balance of both the golden-eggs and the goose paradigms. This maps to the P/PC principle: production/ production capacity

Three Kinds of Assets

- They are physical, financial, and human. Balance them well between production and production capacity for maximum effectiveness
- Everyone has a gate of change that could only be opened from the inside. No one can make or persuade you to change a habit. You have to be the one who does all the work
- Consider teaching what you learn here to others to maximize what you get out of this book

Part 2: Private Victory

Habit 1: Be Proactive: Principles of Personal Vision

- We are the only class of animals that are self-aware. We are not our feelings, moods, or thoughts
- There are three theories of determinism that explain the nature of man: genetic (biological), psychic (how you were raised), and environmental (your surrounding). These are different kinds of stimulus that more or less dictate our responses
- But unlike the dogs in Pavlov's experiment, between the stimulus and the response, humans have the freedom to choose. This is a unique power to humans, lifting us above the animal kingdom. Animals aren't aware of their freedom to choose between stimulus and response, so

act the part.

- Proactive means much more than just taking the initiative. It means you are responsible for your lives, therefore you do not blame the circumstances, conditions, or conditionings for your behaviors. Be value-driven instead of reactive. You don't base your reactions or responses on the circumstances; you base them on your code of values.
- Reactive people are driven by feelings, environments, circumstances, conditions. Proactive people are driven by carefully thought about, selected, and internalized values
- Proactive people are still affected by external stimuli, but how they choose to respond sets them apart from reactive losers
- I am what I am today because of the choices I made yesterday
- What matters most is how you respond to shits that happen in life. These events create paradigm shifts that make you a better person
- Taking initiative means finding the solutions instead of complaining about not knowing how to arrive at the solution. Way too many people want to get better at dev but don't take the time to read or practice
- Act or be acted upon. Always face the facts and reality, but then choose to respond in a courageous and positive manner
- Reactive language is a disease. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy that makes people victimize themselves
- Focus on things you have control over and less on things you can't do anything about. Maximize the radius of the Circle of Influence and minimize that of the Circle of Concern
- Where the problem is direct (involving our own behaviors), indirect (involving others' behaviors), or no control (can't do nothing about), focus on what can and should be done instead of worrying about what is out control
- Again, proactive people are value-driven. They look beyond the excuses to not be responsible for their own well-being or lack thereof. They work with the circumstances instead of against them
- Work on changing from the inside out. Start thinking "If I could *be more* ____" instead of "If I could *have more* ____". The moment you think the problem is out there, you become reactive. Start working from the inside. Be more diligent, sympathetic, understanding, etc
- We have the freedom to choose the course of our action, but not always the consequences that come with. When you pick up one end of a stick, you pick up the other one too.
- Acknowledge the mistakes and correct them immediately
- Make small daily commitments toward your goals and commit to them. A little, no matter how small or insignificant, is always more than none. Those add up overtime

Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind: Principles of Personal Leadership

- "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."
- Imagine yourself at a funeral - of yourself. What would you want the speakers at the service to say about you? What kind of person or impacts did you have on these people and the world? How would you *want* to have affected these people and the world?
- When you begin with the end in mind, you have a clear understanding of how you want to be remembered and what sort of behaviours you'd expect to have to achieve just that
- Everything is created twice: in the planning stage and the execution. Follow the carpenter's rule: measure twice, cut once. Begin with the end in mind forces you to envision the entire plan thoroughly
- By the same logic, you are the first creation of many other standards and conditions. You don't have a conscious design over your first creation. But, you are self-aware and thus capable of writing your own script
- Leadership is the first creation; management is the second. Management is doing things right;

leadership is doing the right things. Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall

- It takes a lot to be the leader who climbs up to the tallest tree and yell "wrong jungle" to the men cutting trees down below, who stubbornly yell back "we're making progress."
- You have the power to rescript yourself. Throughout your life, you have been given many scripts from various sources, but you have the power to do a paradigm shift. Imagination and conscience are the 2 assets that will help you visualize your integrity and values, clear from all of emotion and circumstances. Anwar Sadat, former president of Egypt, is a good example. He has been handed the Israeli-Hatred script all his life, but he made a paradigm shift, which led to drastic improvement in the two countries' relationship
- Try to come up with a mission statement, a code of conduct, or a set of values that you will live by with integrity and consistency. In order to do this, consider the 4 factors that make up the center of your life: security, guidance, power, and wisdom
 - security is your self-esteem, your self-worth. It ranges from extreme insecurity and worthlessness to complete control over the intrinsic worth
 - guidance is your sense of direction of the world. It ranges from complete mirror or being a social puppets to accurate and certain sense of self direction
 - power is how much will-energy you possess to make your own call. It ranges from being reactive and submissive, waiting to be acted upon to complete control over one's own behaviors
 - wisdom is your perspective on the world. It ranges from where everything you perceive doesn't fit to an accurate map of life where all principles live together in harmony
- A person's centeredness is consisted of many types: family, spouse, money, work, possession, church, enemy, friend, self, etc. For example, I am a mix of money- and work-centered because my security depends on my economic independence, guidance on profitability and accomplishments, power on what I can do with my wealth and talents, and wisdom on that of my superiors and role models. A good balance is needed to achieve optimal productivity
- If you are a principle-centered person, all 4 factors above are based on the principles. But... What are some concrete examples of a principle? Can't we have a list of these?
- Use the entire brain to solve problems and write your mission statement. As research shows, the left hemisphere of the brain is used for more logical and analytical tasks, while the right hemisphere is for more intuitive and creative ones. Being able to utilize both will turn your problem solving skills up a notch. "He who is good with a hammer thinks everything is a nail" - try to look at things from different perspective and get out of the comfort zone. If you're left-brain dominant, use the right more and vice versa
- Use the right brain to "begin with the end in mind". Visualize, imagine, or create imageries in your head of how things are going to be the way you want them to be. Be as specific and detailed as possible. And write or draw them on paper
- Almost all world-class athletes and peak performers are visualizers. They imagine it, feel it, and think it before actually doing it.
- Organizations whose members are clear of the shared mission statements are far more superior. When everyone believes in the same ideal, effectiveness is maximized

Habit 3: Put First Things First: Principle of Personal Management

- If Habit 2 is the imagination process, Habit 3 is the actualization phase by which you have to live by day in and day out to become principle-centered
- Besides self-awareness, imagination, and conscience, independent will is another thing that makes effective self-management possible
- Leadership besides what first things are, it is management that puts them first, day by day, moment by moment

- If you're defective manager of yourself, your discipline comes from within; it is a function of your independent will. You are a disciple, a follower, of your own deep values. You have the will, the integrity, to subordinate to your feelings, your impulses, your moods to those values.
- The successful person has the habit of doing the things failures don't like to do. They don't like doing them either necessarily. But their disliking is subordinated to the strength of their purpose
- Effective people feed the opportunities and starve problems. They are opportunity-minded instead of problem-minded. They focus on long-term planning and preventive measures instead of constantly putting out fire. Kind of similar to coding defensively. You think of all the shit things that might or most likely will happen and prepare for impact
- Identify the priorities -> Organize around the priorities -> Have the discipline to execute
 - coherence: there is harmony and integrity between your vision and mission, your roles and goals, your priorities and plans, and your desire and discipline
 - balance: wealth is not that fun when you have no one to share it with. Trust me on this
 - calendar: plan for the week. The key is not to prioritize what's on the schedule, but to schedule the priorities. Develop that guilt when a scheduled event is missed
 - flexibility: the calendar should be your servant, not master. But don't use this as a BS excuse
- Habit 1 says "you're the programmer", 2 says "write the program", then habit 3 says "run the program". Running the program is the function of independent will, self-discipline, integrity, and commitment, not to short-term goals and schedules or to the impulse of the moment, but to the correct principles and the deepest values
- You can't think *efficiency* with *people*. You think *effectiveness* with *people* and *efficiency* with *things*
- The key to effective management is delegation.
 - gofer delegation
 - "go for this, do this, do that, and let me know when it's done"
 - very micro-managing, not scalable because it focuses too much on the methods instead of the results
 - stewardship delegation
 - "here's what I need to be done by <time>, here are the constraints. Let me know when it's done"
 - set clear desired results and guidelines
 - identify the resources, set up accountability, and specify consequences
 - stewardship means "a job with a trust"
 - trust is the highest form of human motivation. It brings out the best in people, but it takes a lot of time and patience

Part 3: Public Victory

Paradigms of Interdependence

- Public victory comes after private victory. You have to master self-discipline and integrity before you can move on to other areas
- Effectiveness is again the balance between P and PC. Just like the golden goose, you can't have good relationships if you don't maintain them right on a daily basis. There's no shortcuts here. You can't just parachute your way down to the good part
- Trust is like deposits in a bank account. If you deposit more courtesy and respect, your trust amount is stable and there is more room for error when mistakes are made. But when trust is overdrawn, relationship is then like a mine field. It takes character to be proactive, to stay in the circle of influence, and to not pull the roots to see how the flowers are growing
 - Understand the individuals. Understand who they are and what they need, then treat them

- like you would like to be treated and understood
- Attend to the little things. People are tender inside regardless of their exteriors. Little kind gestures go a really long way
- Keep commitments
- Make expectations clear and explicit
- Show personal integrity. Defend those who are absent, for that you gain the trust of those who are present
- If you are going to bow, bow low. Make sincere apologies when you are at fault
- View problems not just as hassles, but opportunities to invest in a relationship

Habit 4: Think Win/Win: Principles of Interpersonal Leadership

- You can't change the fruit without changing the root. When seeking cooperation among your people, don't stimulate a competitive arena. One man's success needs not happen at another's expense
- There are other inferior alternatives to Win/Win like Win/Lose, Lose/Win, or Lose/Lose. Remember that not everything is a zero sum game. Thinking in term of these paradigms is counter effective, making the pie a whole lot smaller. People who can't think Win/Win either use their power, credentials, and other means of superiority to win or they just succumb to being losers
- Deciding which option is best depends on the reality. Sometimes Win/Win doesn't work out, although it is the most viable option. Do understand when the situation forces parties to agree to disagree, then just exit gracefully - no deal or emotional string attached
- It takes a great deal of courage and consideration to adopt the mutual benefits, mutual learning, and mutual influence since everyone is so rooted in the Win/Lose mentality. Win/win thinking consists of 5 dimensions:
 - character: integrity, maturity, and abundance mentality are the foundation upon which everything else about Win/Win thinking is built upon. Integrity builds trust and instills the commitments both parties agree upon. Maturity, the ability to express one's own feelings and convictions balanced with consideration for the thoughts and feelings of others, is another corner stone. Have an abundance mentality - there is plenty out there for everybody. Thinking that there are more than one pie out there for everybody and life is not a zero-sum game make collaboration more enjoyable and more effective. It opens up more doors for creativity and opportunities
 - relationships: based on these characters, a Win/Win relationship is built. It's full of trust and openness. Everyone places their cards facing up on the table. This allows open discussion because there is an implied trust that you will respect my descriptions of the young lady while I respect yours of the old woman
 - agreements: set compromised guidelines and step out of their ways. It's better to create a high trust system and have people judge and measure themselves
 - supportive systems: good people in bad systems will still yield subpar results. Create an environment where trust is high and incentives for success are overlapped between layers of management

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then To Be Understood: Principles of Empathetic Communication

- When you go see an optometrist for eyesight issues, he doesn't just hand you his glasses. He prescribes before taking any action
- We spend most of our waking hours communicating. We spent years learning how to read, write, and speak. But how often do we get training on listening?
- We often project our own autobiography onto others while listening to them. We often think just because we experienced something similar, we saw the world and everything else in it. We often filter everything through our lenses while listening
- People listen on different levels. Some "skilled" communicators use reflective listening, which with enough practice, can get you by. Not many listen empathetically - listening with an intent to understand
- Empathy isn't sympathy. The latter is a form of agreement; it makes people dependent. Empathy means fully understanding the other person's point of views both intellectually and

emotionally

- Satisfied needs do not motivate. Next to physical survival needs, psychological ones are what humans crave: the needs to be understood, to be affirmed, to be appreciated, and to be validated
- Diagnose before prescribe. You have to understand the problems and the needs before proceeding. This applies to pretty much all industries: sales, law, engineering, etc. Seek to understand the problems, then have the knowledge to prescribe the most efficient solution and the integrity to say you don't have an appropriate solution. Amateur sells products and services; professionals sell solutions
- Since we speak autobiographically, we listen the same way. We probe, evaluate, interpret, and advise based on our own frame of reference. This is the root cause of many ineffective communications
- Empathetic listening takes time, but that's still less time and effort than trying to fix the problems ineffective communications cause
- Ethos (others' trust in your integrity and competency), pathos (others' empathy in you), and logos (the logical presentation). That's the order that you should present your ideas. Show that you understand their paradigms, then to the logical parts

Habit 6: Synergize: Principles of Creative Cooperation

- Synergy combines the 4 human endowments, the will of Win/Win thinking, and empathetic communication skills. It means the whole is greater than the sum of all its parts
- If you plant 2 trees close to each other, their roots mingle and the soil becomes much richer than if the tree was grown separately. If you put two blocks of wood together, they hold more weight than the total amount of what each can hold separately. The whole is greater than the sum of all its parts
- When you become authentic, the way you express your feelings and personal experiences make others feel safer and more inclined to share theirs
- Create an environment where people are ready to listen instead of present. Then, people should be more comfortable contributing and accepting others' ideas. Since there is no need to defend anything, ideas flow and get exchanged
- Valuing the difference is the essence of synergy. It takes a lot of effort to be objective and to want to celebrate differences, but the result is worth while
- When you see only 2 alternatives to a problem: yours and the "wrong" one, try hard to see a third alternative. There is almost always a third alternative. Think Win/Win and synergize

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw: Principles of Self-Balanced Renewal

- A man unsuccessfully cuts down a tree because he has no time to sharpen the saw
- Renewal comes in 4 dimensions:
 - physical: exercise daily to enhance your endurance, flexibility, and strength. Try to work your heart rate to 60% of 220 less your age for 10-20 minutes a day. Flexibility involves stretching your muscles to prepare for more rigorous exercises. Building strength requires more work. Work until your muscle fibers feel the pain. Nature overcompensates, so broken fibers are fixed and made stronger next time
 - mental: watching tv can be a serious time waster; beware of what and how much you watch. Schooling is the traditional way of learning, but is not always the best. Figure out ways through which you will learn new skills. Start reading more. The person who doesn't read is no better off than the person who can't read. Writing is another form of sharpening the mental saw. Write down things you want to express or keep a journal of what you learn. Organizing is another way to mentally prepare and to begin with the end in mind.
 - social: integrity is the most fundamental source of personal worth. Peace of mind comes from the harmony of principles and values. Service is the rent we pay for living on this planet
 - spiritual: important just like the others. Write your worries on the sand and walk away
- Do all this in a balanced way. Neglecting any aspect will cause unintentional problems that might be too hard to fix later on. Keep learning, doing, and committing little by little, like an upward spiral