

Think and Grow Rich Summary

By Napoleon Hill

This may just be the book that started it all.

Think and Grow Rich introduced the world to the power of positive thinking, becoming the foundation for numerous other books of this genre. The premise is if you visualize goals, embrace a positive mental attitude, and act with purpose; you'll be successful and fulfilled.

Andrew Carnegie allegedly inspired Hill to write the book, and it was published during the Great Depression. Despite having a financial and economic angle, as many individuals have proved, the lessons in this book extend far beyond wealth. To get the full benefit of the book, we should interpret richness in a much more analytical and metaphorical manner.

This summary will look at the power of positive thinking, positive mental attitude, visualization, and how Napoleon Hill unwittingly influenced the hardcore punk scene.

Researching The Rich

To gain insight into success, Hill researched 500 wealthy people. Through doing this, he formulated a set of guidelines and action steps to achieve wealth.

Hill was primarily influenced by Carnegie, who set him the challenge of

interviewing and researching successful men, and then distilling the key attributes in order to emulate them. The idea was that after finding out the essence of success, other people could put these ideas into practice.

The cornerstone of what he learned was that we all have great agency. We can control our thoughts, and if we shift towards positivity, our lives will change in profound ways. If we let our thoughts control us, then we spiral into negativity and a victimhood mindset. In short, if we believe we will fail, we're destined to fail.

The lasting impact and staying power of *Think and Grow Rich* is that it can, and probably should be recontextualized. Written in 1937, many of the book's anecdotes and case studies appear to be outdated for a contemporary audience. However, if we view the basic principles and lessons in this book more metaphorically, it's clear to see how it has had such a far-reaching and universal appeal.

Think Positive and Grow Punk

The universal appeal of *Think and Grow Rich* is exemplified by the American hardcore punk scene. It seems unbelievable to imagine that the quintessential white guy writing in the 1930s would have such a profound impact on a black punk rock band. However, as it turns out, Hill's message was assimilated into the ethos of punk.

Bad Brains are among the pioneers of the hardcore punk scene, and H.R the singer, attributes Napoleon Hill as one of his earliest influences. When H.R was young, his father told him to read *Think and Grow Rich*, and the idea of the power of the mind had a poignant effect on him. Dr. Know the guitarist, says, 'The *Think and Grow Rich* concept was just a positive

influence, and that was the catalyst to just make us fine guys.' Hence, the band drew on the central tenets of positive thinking, and how our attitude defines us. Their hit song "Attitude" was in response to the importance of having P.M.A, or positive mental attitude, and it was a song that inspired numerous other bands such as Minor Threat and H2O. Front man Toby Morse of H2O explains, 'When I was a teenager, one of the songs that made a tremendous impact on the way I would live my life and the important choices I was to make, was the song *Attitude* by the legendary band Bad Brains.'

There's a misconception that punk music is aligned with drugs and alcohol. On the contrary, bands such as Minor Threat advocate for the Straight Edge lifestyle. The Straight Edge lifestyle is a counter-movement that goes against the popular narrative of "sex, drugs, and rock and roll." It calls for no drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or addictive substances, and some followers embrace a vegan way of life. The philosophy of P.M.A has come to be associated with this mindset, and much of the hardcore punk scene calls for living to your full potential and overcoming obstacles.

What We Think Is What We Get

Napoleon Hill provides an easy-to-follow step-by-step guide for achieving our goals, and explains that anyone can benefit from the lessons. You don't have to be wealthy or well connected to achieve wealth and success; you just have to have the right mindset.

The central message is that our thoughts are our reality. So how we relate to ourselves, the world, and other people, will determine how we experience the world. If we're happy and positive, we'll lead a happy and positive life. Conversely, if we're miserable and expect the worst to happen, this will likely occur.

Success Over Failure

Are you a glass half full, or a glass half empty type of a person?

Hill explains that all of us need to adopt the perspective that the glass is overflowing. Instead of being failure-conscious, we should adopt a success-conscious attitude.

To begin this process, we need to have a clearly defined sense of purpose. While many of us may have a multitude of things that interest us, and we believe could add value to the world, we need to be a lot more specific. If we're focused on a range of things, this dilutes our focus, and we end up trying to do too much, which leads to half-hearted attempts at fulfilling goals. Hence, choose one thing to focus on, pour your energy into it, and attack it wholeheartedly.

As we learned from *The 10X Rule*, when we attack our goals, we need to do so with passion and discipline. We need to focus on them and set about achieving them, not just with energy but also with *extraordinary* effort. Hill suggests that the path to achieving goals is to make them all-consuming. And while there will be numerous hurdles and obstacles along the way, we need to be resilient and believe that no matter what happens, we will succeed.

According to the book, Thomas Edison experienced 10 thousand failures before he successfully invented the lightbulb. Not many of us would have exhibited this level of determination and persistence.

So how do we cultivate a spirit of success?

Hill says that successful people become wealthy because they're success-conscious. We can cultivate success-consciousness by removing the word "impossible" from our vocabulary. We also need to break free from our own beliefs and experiences of the world. If we're accustomed to a particular lifestyle, it's hard to envisage an alternative. Hence, we need to envision a better and bigger future for ourselves.

Dream Big and Cultivate a Strong Desire

If you had one wish, what would it be?

Often, the language of wishes is that they're the improbable or impossible fantasies that we create for ourselves. We don't take them seriously, and we usually think about them as if they're a bit of fun, but not likely to amount to anything. Desires on the other hand, are purposeful, and they encourage us to pour our energy into reaching our goals. Desire is fueled by a hunger and passion for succeeding.

Once we identify our primary purpose or goal, we then cultivate a desire to reach this goal and work relentlessly to achieve it. The book highlights many examples of individuals who have been driven by a strong desire and work ethic, and all of them had a very specific and clear goal.

Hill suggests that when setting goals, we need to visualize them as vividly as possible. We need to create a picture of what exactly it looks like, down to the smallest detail. For example, if you want to achieve wealth, how much money is that? What are you willing to sacrifice to achieve this, and how long will it take? Set a specific date for when you want to reach your goal, and start immediately. So many people put off their goals until "tomorrow," and tomorrow never comes. We procrastinate, move the goalposts, and make excuses about why today is the wrong time.

It's also crucial to be utterly focused on your goal. Don't just write down your goal and forget about it. Read it every day, fixate on it, and visualize it coming to fruition. Finally, don't be afraid of dreams. With enough courage, persistence, and hard work, the right dream will become a reality.

Don't Underestimate Faith and Belief

Many of us take for granted how important it is to truly believe in our goals and abilities. Believing that we can do something is the difference between success and failure. And, the more faith we have in ourselves, the more likely we are to achieve success.

If we adopt a doom and gloom mindset, we will never fulfill our potential. A negative attitude means that we're too scared to pursue our goals wholeheartedly, and sometimes we adopt a victimhood mindset. This mindset is dangerous because we create numerous reasons (read excuses) for not committing to our goals.

To train ourselves to have a greater sense of self-belief, we can use auto-

suggestion where we recite daily affirmations. Hill suggests telling ourselves that we have what it takes, 'I am talented, and I have the ability to reach this goal.' Then focus on the time we're committing to the task. 'I will focus on who I want to become for at least half an hour,' and 'I will spend a few minutes each day focusing on all of my strengths and talents to develop self-confidence.' Finally, we should shift our attention to gratitude and positive thoughts. Think about other people, and cultivate a success mindset with an abundance of positivity.

Knowledge Is Power

Cultivating a broad knowledge base is essential to achieving success. According to Hill, there are two types of knowledge – general and specific. General knowledge is what we learn at school and college, and the problem is that it often lacks practical application. Hill argues that if you want to achieve wealth, you need specialized knowledge.

Specialized knowledge comes from training, research, experience, and experimentation. The crucial thing is to make your general knowledge practical, and to have enough imagination to figure things out and be creative with achieving goals.

Furthermore, develop a "Master Mind Group." Collaborate with others and combine resources. So often we think that we need to do things single-handedly, but most of the time success comes from drawing on people with specialized knowledge. We don't have the capacity to be experts at everything, so by creating a group of Master Minds, we'll be more likely to solve problems and innovate.

Those who studied history may be aware of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Brain

Trust," where he recruited the brightest minds to solve the economic crisis. He knew that he couldn't do it alone, so he gathered a group of people to Washington who had the high levels of expertise needed. Relying and trusting other people is one of the cornerstones of good leadership.

Remember that we may have all of the knowledge in the world, but it's nothing without action. And action comes through having a plan. Therefore we need to create a solid plan, set specific goals within a time frame, and above all be disciplined.

In Conclusion

Think and Grow Rich is a comprehensive guide to achieving our greatest desires and fulfilling our ultimate purpose and potential.

It's about celebrating thinking and using our imagination. Whether it's looking at an old problem in a new way, or creating new exciting things and ideas, the message is that we should act on our instincts. So think about what inspires you. Many people are inspired by love because this provides them with meaning and purpose. We're often inspired by loved ones to be better and to be the best versions of ourselves, so tap into this as a source of motivation.

Finally success depends on perseverance, work ethic and discipline. We need to persevere and be as decisive as we can. How many times have you thought of an idea and not pursued it? All too often ideas don't get off the ground because we get spooked or can't make decisions quickly enough. In *The Lean Startup*, we learned the importance of getting to market quickly. It's human nature to want everything to be perfect, but

this causes huge delays. Have the discipline to work swiftly and decisively, and trust your Master Minds.

We've learned that we can change bad habits into good ones, but in order to do this we need to want to change. So why not begin by writing down your deepest desire, and then all of the excuses you've told yourself why you can't achieve it. With a positive mental attitude you can focus on solutions rather than problems, and negate fear and negative influences.

As the song *Attitude goes*, 'Don't care what they may say, we got that attitude! Don't care what they may do, we got that attitude! Hey, we got that P.M.A!'