TALENT IS NEVER ENOUGH
DISCOVER THE CHOICES THAT WILL TAKE YOU BEYOND YOUR TALENT
JOHN C. MAXWELL

INTRODUCTION – WHEN IS TALENT ALONE ENOUGH?

When we observe talented people...
1. We should marvel at their giftedness
2. We should recognize their contribution to society
3. We should separate what they can do from who they are

Too many talented people who start with an advantage over others lose that advantage because they rest on their talent instead of raising it. They assume that talent alone will keep them out front.

Do you have what it takes?
1. Everyone has talent
2. Develop the talent you have, not the one you want
   a. Stop working on your weaknesses and start working on your strengths
3. Anyone can make choices that will add value to talent

13 key choices that can be made to maximize any person’s talent:
1. Belief lifts your talent
2. Passion energizes your talent
3. Initiative activates your talent
4. Focus directs your talent
5. Preparation positions your talent
6. Practice sharpens your talent
7. Perseverance sustains your talent
8. Courage tests your talent
9. Teachability expands your talent
10. Character protects your talent
11. Relationships influence your talent
12. Responsibility strengthens your talent
13. Teamwork multiplies your talent

Ohio State has “The Winner’s Manual.” Has an article in it titled, “Things That Do Not Require Talent.” Punctuality, effort, patience, and unselfishness were important to the OSU football program.

People who neglect to make the right choices to release and maximize their talents continually underperform. Their talent allows them to stand out, but their wrong choices make them sit down.

Life is a matter of choices, and every choice you make makes you.
TALENT IS NEVER ENOUGH – JOHN C. MAXWELL – NOTES BY MATT McMahan

TALENT + RIGHT CHOICES = A TALENT-PLUS PERSON

THE TALENT-PLUS PEOPLE ARE THE ONES WHO MAXIMIZE THEIR TALENT, REACH THEIR POTENTIAL, AND FULFILL THEIR DESTINY.

CHAPTER 1 – BELIEF LIFTS YOUR TALENT

IF YOU WANT TO BECOME YOUR BEST, YOU NEED TO BELIEVE YOUR BEST. YOU NEED TO:

1. BELIEVE IN YOUR POTENTIAL
   a. YOUR POTENTIAL IS A PICTURE OF WHAT YOU CAN BECOME
   b. YOUR POTENTIAL IS REALLY UP TO YOU. IT’S ABOUT WHAT LIES WITHIN YOU AND WHETHER YOU CAN BRING IT OUT
   c. TO REACH YOUR POTENTIAL, YOU MUST FIRST BELIEVE IN YOUR POTENTIAL, AND DETERMINE TO LIVE WAY BEYOND AVERAGE

2. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

3. BELIEVE IN YOUR MISSION…
   a. WILL EMPOWER YOU
   b. WILL ENCOURAGE YOU
   c. WILL ENLARGE YOU

HOW DO YOU BECOME A TALENT-PLUS PERSON? YOU TAP INTO A NATURAL CHAIN OF ACTIONS THAT BEGINS WITH BELIEF AND ENDS WITH POSITIVE ACTION:

1. BELIEF DETERMINES EXPECTATIONS
   a. IF YOU WANT YOUR TALENT TO BE LIFTED TO ITS HIGHEST LEVEL, THEN YOU DON’T BEGIN BY FOCUSING ON YOUR TALENT. YOU BEGIN BY HARNESSING THE POWER OF YOUR MIND. YOUR BELIEFS CONTROL EVERYTHING YOU DO.
   b. YOU WILL BECOME ON THE OUTSIDE WHAT YOU BELIEVE ON THE INSIDE
   c. YOUR BELIEFS DETERMINE YOUR EXPECTATIONS, AND YOUR EXPECTATIONS DETERMINE YOUR ACTIONS
   d. A BELIEF IS A HABIT OF MIND IN WHICH CONFIDENCE BECOMES A CONVICTION THAT WE EMBRACE
   e. IF YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING IN LIFE, YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO BE DISAPPOINTED
   f. YOU NEED TO MAKE CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF A PRIORITY

2. EXPECTATIONS DETERMINE ACTIONS
   a. WE CANNOT LIVE IN A WAY THAT IS INCONSISTENT WITH OUR EXPECTATIONS OF OURSELVES
   b. THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD:
      i. THOSE WHO WANT TO GET THINGS DONE
      ii. THOSE WHO DON’T WANT TO MAKE MISTAKES
   c. THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN RISE TO MEET THE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY IS TO EXPECT TO.
   d. YOU DON’T OVERCOME CHALLENGES BY MAKING THEM SMALLER. YOU OVERCOME THEM BY MAKING YOURSELF BIGGER

3. ACTIONS DETERMINE RESULTS
   a. “IF YOU DON’T LIVE IT, YOU DON’T BELIEVE IT.” – PAUL HARVEY
b. Hope is not a strategy. If you want good results, you need to perform good actions. If you want to perform good actions, you must have positive expectations. To have positive expectations, you have to first believe.

c. Try to see yourself as you could be, and then do everything in your power to believe that you can become that person.

**Chapter 2 – Passion Energizes Your Talent**

Passion is more important than a plan. Passion creates fire. It provides fuel. I have yet to meet a passionate person who lacked energy.

Passion can energize every aspect of a person’s life – including his talent. A passionate person with limited talent will outperform a passive person who possesses greater talent. Passionate people act with boundless enthusiasm, and they just keep on going! Talent plus passion energizes.

**The Power of Passion:**

1. **Passion is the first step to achievement**
   a. Loving what you do is the key that opens the door for achievement
   b. The only way you can achieve anything of significance is to really want it

2. **Passion increases willpower**
   a. Discover your passion
      i. What do you sing about?
      ii. What do you cry about?
      iii. What do you dream about?
   b. Passion is the fuel for the will
   c. Passion turns your have-to’s into want-to’s
   d. The secret to willpower is what someone once called wantpower. People who want something enough usually find the willpower to achieve it
   e. Champions become champions from within, not from without

3. **Passion produces energy**
   a. Without passion, a part of us becomes dead
   b. If we’re not careful, we could end up like the person whose tombstone read, “Died at 30. Buried at 60.”

4. **Passion is the foundation of excellence**
   a. Martin Luther King asserted, “If a man hasn’t discovered something that he will die for, he isn’t fit to live.”

5. **Passion is the key to success**

6. **Passion makes a person contagious**

If you don’t possess the energy that you desire, then you need to fire up your passion. Here is how I suggest you proceed:

1. Prioritize your life according to your passion
2. Protect your passion
3. **Pursue Your Passion with Everything You’ve Got**
   a. Your passion has the potential to provide you energy far beyond the limitations of your talent
   b. In the end, you will be remembered for your passion
   c. Passion will energize your talent. It is what will empower you to make your mark

**CHAPTER 3 – Initiative Activates Your Talent**

If you want to reach your potential, you have to show initiative. Here’s why:
1. **Initiative is the first step to anywhere you want to go**
2. **Initiative closes the door to fear**
   a. We all have fears. The question is whether we are going to control them or allow them to control us
3. **Initiative opens the door to opportunity**
4. **Initiative erases life’s difficulties**
   a. The longer we let things slide, the harder they become
   b. The hardest work is often the accumulation of many easy things that should have been done yesterday, last week, or last month
   c. The only way to get rid of a difficult task is to do it
5. **Initiative is often the difference between success and failure**
   a. Talent without initiative never reaches its potential

When it comes to initiative, there are four kinds of people:
1. **People who do the right thing without being told**
2. **People who do the right thing when told**
3. **People who do the right thing when told more than once**
4. **People who never do the right thing, no matter what**

To become a talent-plus person, you must be the first kind of person. Why?
1. **People who lack initiative fail to see the consequences of inaction**
2. **People who lack initiative want someone else to motivate them**
   a. What happens when a coach, a boss, or other inspirational person doesn’t show up? We need a better plan than that
3. **People who lack initiative look for the perfect time to act**
   a. Chinese proverb, “He who deliberates fully before taking a step will spend his entire life on one leg.”
4. **People who lack initiative like tomorrow better than today**
   a. Anything worth doing is worth doing immediately
   b. Remember that for people who never start, their difficulties never stop

To be a talent-plus person in this area:
1. **Accept responsibility for your life**
2. **Examine your reasons for not initiating**
   a. Eliminate excuses
3. **Focus on the benefit of completing a task**
a. PROCRASTINATION IS THE FERTILIZER THAT MAKES DIFFICULTIES GROW

4. SHARE YOUR GOAL WITH A FRIEND WHO WILL HELP YOU
   a. THERE IS NO WAY TO PUT A VALUE ON THE ASSISTANCE THAT OTHERS CAN GIVE
      YOU IN ACHIEVING YOUR DREAMS
   b. SHARE YOUR GOALS AND DREAMS WITH PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT YOU AND WILL
      ENCOURAGE YOU AND ASSIST YOU IN ACCOMPLISHING THEM
   c. IT MEANS TAKING A RISK BECAUSE YOU WILL HAVE TO BE VULNERABLE IN SHARING
      YOUR HOPES AND AMBITIONS. BUT THE RISK IS WORTH TAKING

5. BREAK LARGE TASKS DOWN INTO SMALLER ONES
   a. DIVIDE IT BY CATEGORIES
   b. PRIORITIZE IT BY IMPORTANCE
   c. ORDER IT BY SEQUENCE
   d. CREATE A TIMETABLE, GIVE YOURSELF DEADLINES, AND STICK TO THEM
   e. ASSIGN IT BY ABILITIES
   f. ACCOMPLISH IT BY TEAMWORK

6. ALLOCATE SPECIFIC TIMES TO TASKS YOU MIGHT PROCRASTINATE
   a. DAWSON TROTMAN OBSERVED, “THE GREATEST TIME WASTED IS THE TIME
      GETTING STARTED.”
   b. TRY SCHEDULING A SPECIFIC TIME FOR SOMETHING YOU DON’T LIKE DOING

7. REMEMBER PREPARATION INCLUDES DOING

**CHAPTER 4 – FOCUS DIRECTS YOUR TALENT**

**SOME FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FOCUS:**
1. FOCUS DOES NOT COME NATURALLY TO MOST PEOPLE
   a. WHEREVER YOU ARE, BE ALL THERE
2. FOCUS INCREASES YOUR ENERGY
   a. ATTEMPTING EVERYTHING, LIKE ATTEMPTING NOTHING, WILL SUCK THE LIFE OUT
      OF YOU
3. FOCUS LIFTS YOU
4. FOCUS EXPANDS YOUR LIFE
5. FOCUS MUST BE INTENTIONALLY SUSTAINED

MAKE FOCUS YOUR FRIEND. HERE’S HOW:
1. BE INTENTIONAL – MAKE EVERY ACTION COUNT
2. CHALLENGE YOUR EXCUSES
3. DON’T LET YESTERDAY HIJACK YOUR ATTENTION
   a. “DON’T LET YESTERDAY TAKE UP TOO MUCH OF TODAY.” – WILL ROGERS
   b. ELLEN HUBBARD WROTE, “THE ABILITY TO FORGET IS THE TRUE TOKEN OF
      GREATNESS. SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE FORGET. THEY KNOW THE PAST IS IRREVOCABLE.
      THEY’RE RUNNING A RACE. THEY CAN’T AFFORD TO LOOK BEHIND. THEIR EYE IS ON
      THE FINISH LINE … IT’S ONLY THE SMALL PEOPLE WHO CHERISH REVENGE. BE A
      GOOD FORGETTER. BUSINESS DICTATES IT, AND SUCCESS DEMANDS IT.”
4. FOCUS ON THE PRESENT
a. IF YOU’RE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT TOMORROW, THEN YOU’LL NEVER GET ANYTHING DONE TODAY. YOUR FOCUS NEEDS TO REMAIN IN THE ONE AREA WHERE YOU HAVE SOME CONTROL – TODAY
b. READ DAILY TO DEVELOP IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE
c. LISTEN TO OTHERS DAILY TO BROADEN YOUR PERSPECTIVE
d. SPEND TIME THINKING DAILY TO APPLY WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING
e. WRITE DAILY SO THAT YOU CAN REMEMBER WHAT YOU LEARNED

5. STAY FOCUSED ON RESULTS
6. DEVELOP AND FOLLOW YOUR PRIORITIES
7. FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS, NOT YOUR WEAKNESSES
   a. GO WITH YOUR GREATEST ASSETS; DON’T WASTE YOUR TIME
8. DELAY REWARDS UNTIL THE JOB IS DONE

CHAPTER 5 – PREPARATION POSITIONS YOUR TALENT

PREPARATION POSITIONS PEOPLE CORRECTLY, AND IT IS OFTEN THE SEPARATION BETWEEN WINNING AND LOSING. “ALL’S WELL THAT BEGINS WELL.”

SPECTACULAR ACHIEVEMENT COMES FROM UNSPECTACULAR PREPARATION

WHY PEOPLE FAIL TO PREPARE?
1. THEY FAIL TO SEE THE VALUE OF PREPARATION BEFORE ACTION
2. THEY FAIL TO APPRECIATE THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINE
   a. DISCIPLINE IS DOING WHAT YOU REALLY DON’T WANT TO DO SO THAT YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU REALLY DO WANT TO DO
   b. DISCIPLINE IS REQUIRE TO KEEP PREPARING LONG HOURS FOR SOMETHING THAT WILL BE OVER QUICKLY

PREPARATION PRINCIPLES
1. PREPARATION ALLOWS YOU TO TAP INTO YOUR TALENT
   a. I’VE FOUND THAT EVERY MINUTE SPENT IN PREPARATION SAVES TEN IN EXECUTION
2. PREPARATION IS A PROCESS, NOT AN EVENT
3. PREPARATION PRECEDES OPPORTUNITY
   a. YOU CAN CLAIM TO BE SURPRISED ONCE; AFTER THAT, YOU’RE UNPREPARED
   b. YOU MUST BE PREPARED WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY ARISES. ONCE THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF, IT’S TOO LATE TO GET READY
4. PREPARATION FOR TOMORROW BEGINS WITH THE RIGHT USE OF TODAY
5. PREPARATION REQUIRES CONTINUALLY GOOD PERSPECTIVE
6. GOOD PREPARATION LEADS TO ACTION
   a. “NO PLAN IS WORTH THE PAPER IT IS PRINTED ON UNLESS IT STARTS YOU GOING.”
      - WILLIAM DANFORTH

THE ONLY THING THAT RELIEVES PRESSURE IS PREPARATION.

MAXWELL APPLIED TOM KITE’S PRE-SHOT GOLF ROUTINE:
1. ASSESSMENT – AM I EVALUATING CORRECTLY?
a. WHERE DO I NEED TO GO?
  b. HOW FAR IS MY GOAL?
  c. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS?
  d. WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO GET THERE?
2. ALIGNMENT – AM I LINED UP CORRECTLY?
3. ATTITUDE – AM I VISUALIZING CORRECTLY?
  a. PEOPLE DON’T GET A SECOND CHANCE TO SEIZE A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

CHAPTER 6 – PRACTICE SHARPENS YOUR TALENT

YOU PLAY AT THE LEVEL AT WHICH YOU PRACTICE. CONSISTENTLY GOOD PRACTICE LEADS TO CONSISTENTLY GOOD PLAY. SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE VALUE PRACTICE AND DEVELOP THE DISCIPLINE TO DO IT. IF YOU WANT TO SUM UP WHAT LIFTS MOST SUCCESSFUL INDIVIDUALS ABOVE THE CROWD, YOU COULD DO IT WITH FOUR LITTLE WORDS: A LITTLE BIT MORE. SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE PAY THEIR DUES AND DO ALL THAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM – PLUS A LITTLE BIT MORE.

TOM MULLINS WROTE “THE LEADERSHIP GAME”, WHICH CONTAINS PRINCIPLES FROM EIGHT COLLEGE NATIONAL CHAMPION FOOTBALL COACHES. “ALL THE NATIONAL CHAMPION COACHES TOLD ME THE KEY TO GOING FROM GOOD TO GREAT CAME IN TWO AREAS: THE PREPARATION OF THE TEAM AND THE PRACTICE OF THE PLAYERS. THEY WERE FOREVER UPGRADING THEIR PREPARATION AND SHARPENING THEIR PRACTICES.”

THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PRACTICE:
1. PRACTICE ENABLES DEVELOPMENT
   a. DONE CORRECTLY, PRACTICE KEEPS MAKING YOU BETTER THAN YOU WERE YESTERDAY
   b. IF YOU DON’T PRACTICE, YOU SHORTCHANGE YOUR POTENTIAL
2. PRACTICES LEADS TO DISCOVERY
   a. IF YOU COMMIT YOURSELF TO PRACTICE, HERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU ARE LIKELY TO LEARN:
      i. PRACTICE BOTH SHOWS AND BUILD COMMITMENT
      ii. YOUR PERFORMANCE CAN ALWAYS BE IMPROVED
      iii. THE “SHARPENING” PROCESS IS BETTER IN THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT
          1. YOU CAN’T DISCOVER YOUR ABILITIES AND IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO MAKE MISTAKES
          2. IMPROVEMENT ALWAYS REQUIRES SOME DEGREE OF FAILURE
             iv. YOU MUST BE WILLING TO START WITH SMALL THINGS
             v. VERY SMALL DIFFERENCES, CONSISTENTLY PRACTICE, WILL PRODUCE RESULTS
             vi. THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY TO REACH THE NEXT LEVEL
3. PRACTICE DEMANDS DISCIPLINE
   a. DEVELOPING DISCIPLINE ALWAYS BEGINS WITH A STRUGGLE
   b. THERE IS NO EASY WAY TO BECOME A DISCIPLINED PERSON
   c. IT IS A MATTER NOT OF CONDITIONS, BUT OF CHOICE
d. Once the choice is made and practice becomes a habit, two things become obvious:
   i. A separation between the person who practices and the one who doesn’t
   ii. The second thing that emerges is a winning spirit

ARISTOTLE observed, “Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those things because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

THE FIVE PILLARS OF PRACTICE

1. Pillar #1: An Excellent Teacher or Coach
2. Pillar #2: Your best effort
   a. ANDREW CARNEGIE DECLARED, “There is no use trying to help people who do not help themselves. You cannot push anyone up a ladder unless he is willing to climb himself.”
3. Pillar #3: A Clear Purpose
4. Pillar #4: The Greatest Potential
   a. WHEN I EVALUATE PEOPLE’S POTENTIAL, I ASK TWO QUESTIONS:
      i. CAN THEY?
      ii. WILL THEY?
   b. ONE WAY THAT YOU CAN GET THE BEST FROM YOURSELF IS TO SET HIGH STANDARDS FOR YOUR GREATEST POTENTIAL
5. Pillar #5: The Right Resources

WHAT IT TAKES FOR SOMEONE TO BECOME A TALENT-PLUS PERSON IN THE AREAS OF PRACTICE:

1. A Little extra effort
2. A Little extra time
   a. SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE PRACTICE HARDER AND PRACTICE LONGER THAN UNSUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO
3. A Little extra help
   a. ANYBODY WHO SUCCEEDS AN ANYTHING DOES SO WITH THE HELP OF OTHERS
4. A Little extra change
   a. MAX DEPREE SAID, “We cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are.”

CHAPTER 7 – PERSEVERANCE SUSTAINS YOUR TALENT

PERSEVERANCE IS ABOUT FINISHING.

TO BECOME A TALENT-PLUS PERSON, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND SOME THINGS ABOUT PERSEVERANCE:

1. Perseverance means succeeding because you are determined to, not destined to
1. **Joseph Lanier** said, “We are determined to win the battle. We will fight them until hell freezes over, and then, if we have to, we’ll fight them on the ice.”

2. **Perseverance recognizes life is not a long race, but many short ones in succession**
   a. **Laddie F. Hutar** said, “Success consists of a series of little daily victories.”

3. **Perseverance is needed to release most of life’s rewards**

4. **Perseverance draws sweetness out of adversity**
   a. Giving up when adversity threatens can make a person bitter. Persevering through adversity makes one better.

5. **Perseverance has a compounding effect on life**

6. **Perseverance means stopping not because you’re tired but because the task is done**
   a. **Robert Strauss** commented, “Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don’t quit when you’re tired – you quit when the gorilla is tired.”
   b. To successful people, fatigue and discouragement are not signs to quit. They perceive them as signals to draw on their reserves, rely on their character, and keep going.

7. **Perseverance doesn’t demand more than we have but all that we have**
   a. It means more than trying. It means more than working hard. Perseverance is an investment.
   b. Perseverance demands a lot, but here’s the good news: everything you give is an investment in yourself.

**Perseverance begins with the right attitude — an attitude of tenacity.**

**The Five Enemies of Perseverance**

1. **A lifestyle of giving up**
   a. If you desire to be successful and to maximize your talent, you need to be consistent and persistent.
   b. Talent without perseverance never comes to full fruition

2. **A wrong belief that life should be easy**

3. **A wrong belief that success is a destination**
   a. **Pat Riley** writes, “Complacency is the last hurdle any winner, any team must overcome before attaining potential greatness. Complacency is the success disease: it takes root when you’re feeling good about who you are and what you’ve achieved.”

4. **A lack of resiliency**
   a. **Jerry West** said, “You can’t get much done in life if you only work on the days you feel good.”

5. **A lack of vision**

If you want to be able to sustain your talent, take the following steps:

1. **Purpose: Find One**
2. **Excuses: Eliminate Them**
a. IT IS EASIER TO MOVE FROM FAILURE TO SUCCESS THAN IT IS FROM EXCUSES TO SUCCESS
b. DON’T ALLOW YOURSELF TO OFFER EXCUSES WHEN YOU DON’T PERFORM AT THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.
c. TAKE COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR ACTION

3. STAMINA: DEVELOP SOME

**CHAPTER 8 – COURAGE TESTS YOUR TALENT**

1. OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … AS WE SEEK A TRUTH THAT WE KNOW MAY BE PAINFUL
2. OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … WHEN CHANGE IS NEEDED BUT INACTIVITY IS MORE COMFORTABLE
   a. BEING INACTIVE AND NEVER LEAVING WHAT IS FAMILIAR MAY MEAN THAT YOU ARE COMFORTABLE, BUT HAVING THE WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUALLY LET GO OF THE FAMILIAR MEANS THAT YOU ARE COURAGEOUS
   b. OUR SITUATION DOESN’T MAKE US; WE MAKE OUR SITUATION
   c. OUR CIRCUMSTANCES DON’T HAVE TO DEFINE US; WE CAN REDEFINE OUR CIRCUMSTANCES BY OUR ACTIONS
   d. IF WE ARE WILLING TO LEAVE OUR COMFORT ZONE AND BRAVELY KEEP STRIVING, WE CAN REACH HEIGHTS WE THOUGHT WERE BEYOND US
3. OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … WHEN OUR CONVICTIONS, ONCE EXPRESSED, ARE CHALLENGED
   a. ANYTIME YOU ARE WILLING TO STAND UP FOR SOMETHING, SOMEONE ELSE WILL BE WILLING TO TAKE A SHOT AT YOU
   b. IT’S NOT ENOUGH JUST TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING. WE NEED TO LIVE FOR SOMETHING.
   c. YOU CANNOT REALLY LIVE UNLESS THERE ARE THINGS IN YOUR LIFE FOR WHICH YOU ARE WILLING TO DIE FOR
4. OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … WHEN LEARNING AND GROWING WILL DISPLAY OUR WEAKNESS
   a. DON SHULA STATED, “LEARNING IS DEFINED AS A CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR. YOU HAVEN’T LEARNED A THING UNTIL YOU CAN TAKE ACTION AND USE IT.”
   b. THE LEARNING PROCESS CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING FIVE STEPS:
      i. OBSERVE
      ii. ACT
      iii. EVALUATE
      iv. READJUST
      v. GO BACK TO STEP 2
5. OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … WHEN WE TAKE THE HIGH ROAD EVEN AS OTHERS TREAT US BADLY
   a. WHEN IT COMES TO DEALING WITH OTHERS, THERE ARE REALLY ONLY THREE ROUTES WE CAN TAKE:
      i. THE LOW ROAD – WHERE WE TREAT OTHERS WORSE THAN THEY TREAT US
      ii. THE MIDDLE ROAD – WHERE WE TREAT OTHERS THE SAME AS THEY US
      iii. THE HIGH ROAD – WHERE WE TREAT OTHERS BETTER THAN THEY TREAT US
6. OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … WHEN BEING “OUT FRONT” MAKES US AN EASY TARGET
a. **IF YOU ARE A LEADER, YOU WILL OFTEN BE AHEAD OF THE CROWD, AND THAT WILL**
**AT TIMES MAKE YOU AN EASY TARGET. THAT REQUIRES COURAGE.**

7. **OUR COURAGE WILL BE TESTED … WHENEVER WE FACE OBSTACLES TO OUR PROGRESS**
   a. **ADVERSITY IS ALWAYS THE PARTNER OF PROGRESS**

**IF YOU DESIRE TO BECOME A MORE COURAGEOUS PERSON, THEN DO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. **LOOK FOR COURAGE INSIDE, NOT OUTSIDE, YOURSELF**
   a. “**IF WE COULD KICK THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF OUR TROUBLES, WE**
   **WOULDN’T BE ABLE TO SIT DOWN FOR A WEEK.**”
   b. **COURAGE, LIKE ALL OTHER CHARACTER QUALITIES, COMES FROM WITHIN**

2. **GROW IN COURAGE BY DOING THE RIGHT THING INSTEAD OF THE EXPEDIENT THING**

3. **TAKE SMALL STEPS OF COURAGE TO PREPARE YOU FOR GREATER ONES**

4. **RECOGNIZE THAT A LEADERSHIP POSITION WON’T GIVE YOU COURAGE, BUT COURAGE CAN**
   **MAKE YOU A LEADER**
   a. **MARGARET THATCHER REMARKED, “BEING A LEADER IS A LOT LIKE BEING A LADY.**
   **IF YOU HAVE TO PEOPLE YOU ARE ONE, YOU AREN’T.”**
   b. **THE POSITION DOESN’T MAKE THE LEADER; THE LEADER MAKES THE POSITION**

5. **WATCH YOUR HORIZONS EXPAND WITH EACH COURAGEOUS ACT**

**COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP SIMPLY MEANS I’VE DEVELOPED:**

1. **CONVICTIONS THAT ARE STRONGER THAN MY FEARS**

2. **VISION THAT IS CLEARER THAN MY DOUBTS**

3. **SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY THAT IS LOUDER THAN POPULAR OPINION**

4. **SELF-ESTEEM THAT IS DEEPER THAN SELF-PROTECTION**

5. **APPRECIATION FOR DISCIPLINE THAT IS GREATER THAN MY DESIRE FOR LEISURE**

6. **DISSATISFACTION THAT IS MORE FORCEFUL THAN THE STATUS QUO**

7. **POISE THAT IS MORE UNتشكABLE THAN PANIC**

8. **RISK TAKING THAT IS STRONGER THAN SAFETY SEEKING**

9. **RIGHT ACTIONS THAT ARE MORE ROBUST THAN RATIONALIZATION**

10. **A DESIRE TO SEE POTENTIAL REACHED MORE THAN TO SEE PEOPLE APPEASED**

**CHAPTER 9 – TEACHABILITY EXPANDS YOUR TALENT**

**TEACHABILITY IS NOT SO MUCH ABOUT COMPETENCE AND MENTAL CAPACITY AS IT IS ABOUT**
**ATTITUDE. IT IS THE DESIRE TO LISTEN, LEARN, AND APPLY. IT IS THE HUNGER TO DISCOVER AND**
**GROW. IT IS THE WILLINGNESS TO LEARN, UNLEARN, AND RELEARN.**

**AS JOHN WOODEN SAID, “IT’S WHAT YOU LEARN AFTER YOU KNOW IT ALL THAT COUNTS.”**

**TEACHABILITY TRUTHS:**

1. **NOTHING IS INTERESTING IF YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED**
   a. **TEACHABLE PEOPLE ARE FULLY ENGAGED IN LIFE**
   b. **THERE IS A DEFINITE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PASSION AND POTENTIAL**

2. **SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE VIEW LEARNING DIFFERENTLY FROM THOSE WHO ARE UNSUCCESSFUL**
   a. **TEACHABLE PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND ARE WILLING TO LEARN**
   **FROM ANYONE WHO HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER**
3. **Learning is meant to be a lifelong pursuit**
   a. We can choose to be teachable and continue to learn them, or we can be closed-minded and stop growing. The decision is ours.
4. **Talented people can be the toughest to teach**
5. **Pride is the number one hindrance to teachability**

**The negative effects of pride as they relate to teachability:**
1. Pride closes our minds to new ideas
2. Pride closes our minds to feedback
3. Pride prevents us from admitting mistakes
4. Pride keeps us from making needed changes

**How to overcome a pride problem:**
1. Recognize and admit your pride
2. Express gratitude often
3. Laugh at yourself

**To pursue teachability and become a talent-plus person:**
1. **Learn to listen**
   a. Being a good listener helps us to know people better, to learn what they have learned, and to show them that we value them as individuals
   b. Remember that you can’t learn if you’re always talking
2. **Understand the learning process**
   a. Understand the learning process in order to grow and learn
      i. Act
      ii. Look for your mistakes and evaluate
      iii. Search for a way to do it better
      iv. Go back to step 1
3. **Look for and plan teachable moments**
   a. Cultivate friendships with people who challenge and add value to you, and try to do the same for them. It will change your life.
4. **Make your teachable moments count**
5. **Ask yourself, am I really teachable?**
   a. “Everything we know we learned from someone else.” — John Wooden

**Chapter 10 – Character Protects Your Talent**

Absence of strong character eventually topples talent because people cannot climb beyond the limitations of their character.

Character is what they think and never share with others. It’s what they do when no one else is watching them. It’s how they handle failure and success.

**What comprises character?**
1. **Self-discipline**
a. **Self-discipline** is the ability to do what is right even when you don’t feel like doing it
b. The battle for self-discipline is won from within

2. **Core values**
   a. Core values are the principles that we live by every day
   b. They define what we believe and how we live
   c. **John Wooden’s Seven-Point Creed:**
      i. Be true to yourself
      ii. Help others
      iii. Make each day your masterpiece
      iv. Drink deeply from good books, especially the Bible
      v. Make friendship a fine art
      vi. Build a shelter against a rainy day
      vii. Pray for guidance and give thanks for your blessings every day
   d. Core values give order and structure to an individual’s inner life, and when that inner life is in order, a person can navigate almost anything the world throws at him

3. **A sense of identity**
   a. Each of us must answer the critical question, “Who am I?”

4. **Integrity**
   a. An alignment of values, thoughts, feelings, and actions

**Character** creates a foundation upon which the structure of your talent and your life can build. If there are cracks in that foundation, you cannot build much.

**Character communicates**
1. **Character communicates consistency**
2. **Character communicates choices**
3. **Character communicates influence**
4. **Character communicates longevity**

**How to become a talent-plus person in the area of character:**
1. **Don’t give up or give in to adversity**
   a. Anyone who does what he must only when he is in the mood or when it is convenient isn’t going to develop his talent or become successful
   b. The core foundation of character is doing what you don’t want to do to get what you want
   c. It is paying a higher price than you wanted to for something worthwhile
   d. Every time you face adversity and come through it with your core values affirmed and your integrity intact, your character becomes stronger
   e. If you want your talent to take you far, then don’t quit under duress. Don’t give up in the midst of a storm. Don’t bail out in the middle of conflict.
2. **Do the right thing**
a. Dr. Dale Bronner said, “Honesty is not something you do; honesty is who you are.”

3. Take control of your life
   a. While your circumstances are beyond your control, your character is not. Your character is always your choice.
   b. Developing character is your personal responsibility

**Chapter 11 – Relationships Influence Your Talent**

John Wooden writes, “There is a choice you have to make in everything you do, so keep in mind that in the end, the choice you make makes you.”

People can trace the successes and failures in their lives to their most significant relationships.

Almost all sorrows can be traced to relationships with the wrong people and our joys to relationships with the right people.

The relationships in our lives really do make or break us. They either lift us up or take us down. They add, or subtract. They help to give us energy, or they take it away.

1. Some relationships take from us
   a. Ways to tell whether a relationship is positive or negative:
      i. Note whether a person makes you feel better or worse about yourself
      ii. How much energy does the relationship require
   b. If a relationship saps your energy all the time, then that relationship has a negative effect on you
   c. It dilutes your talent because it robs you of energy that you could be using toward your best gifts and skills
   d. It distracts you from your purpose
   e. It detracts from your best efforts

2. Some relationships add to us
   a. Positive relationships take us to a higher level
   b. They encourage us and bring out the best in us

3. Some relationships are pivotal to our lives

Five signs of a solid relationship:

1. Mutual enjoyment
2. Respect
3. Shared experiences
4. Trust
5. Reciprocity
   a. Friendships are like bank accounts. You cannot continue to draw on them without making deposits
If you desire to become a Talent-Plus person in the area of relationships:
1. Identify the most important people in your life
2. Assess whether they are influencing you in the right direction
   a. “In prosperity our friends know us. In adversity we know our friends.”
3. If your friends aren’t friends, then make new friends

**Chapter 12 – Responsibility Strengthens Your Talent**

If you desire success, make responsibility your choice.

The strength of responsibility:
1. Responsibility provides the foundation of success
2. Responsibility, handled correctly, leads to more responsibility
3. Responsibility maximizes ability and opportunity
4. Responsibility, over time, builds a solid reputation
   a. The longer you know a person who lacks responsibility, the less you trust him

To become a Talent-Plus person when it comes to responsibility:
1. Start wherever you are
   a. Aristotle observed, “We become what we are as persons by the decisions that we ourselves make.”
   b. Responsibility is always a choice, and only you can make it
2. Choose your friends wisely
3. Stop blaming others
   a. Don’t make excuses
   b. Don’t look to others to blame
   c. Just focus on the present and do your best
4. Learn responsibility’s major lessons – 4 core lessons
   a. Recognize that gaining success means practicing self-discipline
      i. The first victory we must win is over ourselves
      ii. We must learn to control ourselves
      iii. John Weston said, “I’ve always tried to live with the following simple rule: Don’t do what you wouldn’t feel comfortable reading about in the newspaper the next day.”
   b. What you start, finish
      i. There are two kinds of people in the world: those who do and those who might. Responsible people follow through.
   c. Know when others are depending on you
      i. The first step in making yourself the kind of person others can depend on is being dependable
      ii. The second is taking the focus off yourself and become aware that others are depending on you
      iii. Intentions aren’t enough, your actions need to come through
   d. Don’t expect others to step in for you
5. Make tough decisions and stand by them
a. Sign on Rudy Giuliani’s desk, “I’m responsible.”
b. Abraham Lincoln said, “You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.”

6. Live beyond yourself
   a. John F. Kennedy said, “For of those to whom much is given, must is required.”
   b. If you want your life to be a magnificent story, then realize that you are its author
   c. Every day you have the chance to write a new page in that story

**Chapter 13 – Teamwork Multiplies Your Talent**

**Teamwork Truths:**

1. **Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect**
2. **Talent wins games, but teamwork wins championships**
   a. Sign in the New England Patriots locker room, “Individuals play the game, but teams win championships.”
   b. Red Auerbach said, “One person seeking glory doesn’t accomplish much; everything we’ve done has been the result of people working together to meet our common goals.”
3. **Teamwork is not about you**
   a. Harvard Business School recognizes a team as a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.
   b. The true measure of a leader is getting people to work together
4. **Great teams create community**
   a. All effective teams create an environment where relationships grow and teammates become connected to one another … they create a sense of community
   b. That environment of community is based on trust
   c. On good teams, trust is nonnegotiable
   d. They hold themselves to a higher standard
   e. When everyone gives freely and bonds of trust develop and are tested over time, players begin to have faith in one another
   f. They believe the person next to them will act with consistency, keep commitments, maintain confidences, and support others
   g. The stronger the sense of community becomes, the greater their potential to work together
   h. Developing a sense of community in a team does not mean there is no conflict
   i. All teams experience disagreements. All relationships have tension
   j. When a team shares a strong sense of community, team members can resolve conflicts without dissolving relationships
5. **Adding value to others adds value to you**
a. IF YOU DESIRE TO SUCCEED, THEN LIVE BY THESE FOUR SIMPLE WORDS: ADD VALUE TO OTHERS

ALL TALENTED PEOPLE HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE: DO THEIR OWN THING AND GET ALL THE CREDIT, OR DO THE TEAM THING AND SHARE IT.

IF IT IS YOUR DESIRE TO CHOOSE TEAMWORK OVER SOLO EFFORTS, THEN DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. BUY INTO THE LAW OF SIGNIFICANCE
   a. THE LAW OF SIGNIFICANCE STATES, “ONE IS TOO SMALL A NUMBER TO ACHIEVE GREATNESS.”

2. INCLUDE A TEAM IN YOUR DREAM

3. DEVELOP YOUR TEAM
   a. IF YOU ARE A LEADER ON YOUR TEAM, THEN YOU MUST MAKE IT YOUR GOAL TO DEVELOP YOUR TEAMMATES OR PLAYERS

4. GIVE CREDIT FOR SUCCESS TO THE TEAM
   a. IN GOOD TO GREAT BY JIM COLLINS, HE POINTS OUT THAT LEADERS OF THE BEST ORGANIZATION (WHAT HE CALLS “LEVEL-5 LEADERS”) ARE CHARACTERIZED BY HUMILITY AND A TENDENCY TO AVOID THE SPOTLIGHT
   b. WHEN THINGS DON’T GO WELL, TAKE MORE THAN YOUR FAIR SHARE OF THE BLAME, AND WHEN THINGS GO WELL, GIVE ALL OF THE CREDIT AWAY

NEVER FORGET THAT THE CHOICES YOU MAKE IN THE END MAKE YOU.