The Top 200 Secrets of Success and the Pillars of Self-Mastery
By Ashish Ranjan Samal (Author of "The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari")

1. Sleep less. This is one of the best investments you can make to make your life more productive and rewarding. Most people do not need more than 6 hours to maintain an excellent state of health. Try getting up one hour earlier for 21 days and it will develop into a powerful habit. Remember, it is the quality not the quantity of sleep that is important. And just imagine having an extra 30 hours a month to spend on the things that are important to you.

2. Set aside one hour every morning for personal development matters. Meditate, visualize your day, read inspirational texts to set the tone of your day, listen to motivational tapes or read great literature. Take this quiet period to vitalize and energize your spirit for the productive day ahead. Watch the sun rise once a week or be with nature. Starting the day off well is a powerful strategy for self-renewal and personal effectiveness.

3. Do not allow those things that matter the most in your life be at the mercy of activities that matter the least. Every day, take the time to ask yourself the question "is this the best use of my time and energy?" Time management is life management so guard your time with great care.

4. Use the rubber band method to condition your mind to focus solely on the most positive elements in your life. Place a rubber band around your wrist. Each time a negative, energy sapping thought enters your mind, snap the rubber band. Through the power of conditioning, your mind will associate pain with negative thinking and you will soon possess a strongly positive mindset.

5. Always answer the phone with enthusiasm in your voice and show your appreciation for the caller. Good phone manners are essential. To convey authority on the line, stand up. This will instill further confidence in your voice.

6. Throughout the day we all get inspiration and excellent ideas. Keep a set of cards (the size of business cards; available at most stationary stores) in your wallet along with a pencil to jot down these insights. When you get home, put the ideas in a central place such as a coil notepad and review them from time to time. As noted by Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."

7. Set aside every Sunday evening for yourself and be strongly disciplined with this habit. Use this period to plan your week, visualize your encounters and what you want to achieve, to read new materials and inspirational books, to listen to soft soothing music and to simply relax. This habit will serve as your anchor to keep you focused, motivated and effective throughout the coming week.

8. Always remember the key principle that the quality of your life is the quality of your communication. This means the way you communicate with others and, more

importantly, the way you communicate with yourself. What you focus on is what you get. If you look for the positive this is what you get. This is a fundamental law of Nature.

9. Stay on purpose, not on outcome. In other words, do the task because it is what you love to do or because it will help someone or is a valuable exercise. Don't do it for the money or the recognition. Those will come naturally. This is the way of the world.

10. Laugh for five minutes in the mirror each morning. Steve Martin does. Laughter activates many beneficial chemicals within the body that place us into a very joyous state. Laughter also returns the body to a state of balance. Laughter therapy has been regularly used to heal persons with varied ailments and is a wonderful tonic for life's ills. While the average 4 year old laughs 500 times a day, the average adult is lucky to laugh 15 times a day. Revitalize the habit of laughter, it will put far more living into your life.

11. Light a candle beside you when you are reading in the evening. It is most relaxing and creates a wonderful, soothing atmosphere. Make your home an oasis from the frenzied world outside. Fill it with great music, great books and great friends.

12. To enhance your concentration and powers of focus, count your steps when you walk. This is a particularly strong technique. Take six steps while taking a long inhale, hold your breath for another six steps, and then exhale for six steps. If six steps is too long for the breaths, do whatever you feel comfortable with. You will feel very alert, refreshed, internally quiet and centered after this exercise. So many people allow their minds to be filled with mental chatter. All peak performers appreciate the power of a quiet, clear mind which will concentrate steadily on all important tasks.

13. Learn to meditate effectively. The mind is naturally a very noisy machine which wants to move from one subject to another like an unchained monkey. One must learn to restrain and discipline it if one is to achieve anything of substance and to be peaceful. Meditation for twenty minutes in the morning and twenty minutes in the evening will certainly provide you with exceptional results if regularly practiced for six months. Learned sages of the East have been advancing the many benefits of meditation for over 5000 years.

14. Learn to be still. The average person doesn't spend even 30 minutes a month in total silence and tranquility. Develop the skill of sitting quietly, enjoying the powerful silence for at least ten minutes a day. Simply think about what is important to you in your life. Reflect on your mission. Silence indeed is golden. As the Zen master once said, it is the space between the bars that holds the cage.

15. Enhance your will-power; it is likely one of the best training programs you can invest in. Here are some ideas to strengthen your will and become a stronger person:
    a. Do not let your mind float like a piece of paper in the wind. Work hard to keep it focused at all times. When doing a task, think of nothing else. When walking to work, count the steps that it takes to get all the way to the office. This is not easy but your mind will soon understand that you hold its reins and not vice versa.

Your mind must eventually become as still as a candle flame in a corner where there is no draft.

b. Your will is like a muscle. You must first exercise it and then push before it gets stronger. This necessarily involves short term pain but be assured that the improvements will come and will touch your character in a most positive way. When you are hungry, wait another hour before your meal. When you are labouring over a difficult task and your mind is prompting you to pick up the latest magazine for a break or to get up and go talk to a friend, curb the impulse. Soon you will be able to sit for hours in a precisely concentrated state. Sir Issac Newton, one of the greatest classical physicists the world has produced, once said: "if I have done the public any service, it is due to patient thought." Newton had a remarkable ability to sit quietly and think without interruption for very long periods of time. If he can develop this so can you.

c. You can also build your will-power by restraint in your conduct with others. Speak less (use the 60/40 Rule = listen 60% of the time and speak a mere 40%, if that). This will not only make you more popular but you will learn much wisdom as everyone we meet, every day has something to teach us. Also restrain the urge to gossip or to condemn someone who you feel has made a mistake. Stop complaining and develop a cheerful, vital and strong personality. You will greatly influence others.

d. When a negative thought comes to your mind, immediately replace it with one that is positive. Positive always dominates over the negative and your mind has to be conditioned to think only the best thoughts. Negative thinking is a conditioned process whereby the negative patterns are established over and over. Rid yourself of any limitations and become a powerful positive thinker.

16. Make an effort to be humorous throughout the day. Not only is it beneficial from a physical viewpoint but it diffuses tension in difficult circumstances and creates an excellent atmosphere wherever you are. It was recently reported that members of the Tauripan tribe of South America have a ritual where they awake in the middle of the night to tell each other jokes. Even tribesmen in the deepest sleep wake to enjoy the laugh and then return to their state of slumber in seconds.

17. Become a highly disciplined time manager. There are roughly 168 hours in a week. This surely allows plenty of time for achievement of the many goals we desire to accomplish. Be ruthless with your time. Set aside a few minutes each morning to plan your day. Plan around your priorities and focus on not only those tasks which are immediate but not important (i.e., many telephone calls) but especially on those which are important but not urgent, for these allow for the greatest personal and professional development. Important but not immediate activities are those which produce long-term, sustainable benefits and include exercise, strategic planning, the development of relationships and professional education. Never let the things which matter most be placed in the backseat as compared to those that matter least.

18. Associate only with positive, focused people who you can learn from and who will not drain your valuable energy with complaining and uninspiring attitudes. By developing

relationships with those committed to constant improvement and the pursuit of the best that life has to offer, you will have plenty of company on your path to the top of whatever mountain you seek to climb.

19. Stephen Hawking, one of the great modern physicists of the world, is reported to have said that we are on a minor planet of a very average star located within the outer limits of one of a hundred thousand million galaxies. Are your problems really significant in light of this? You walk this Earth for but a short time. Why not become devoted to having only a wonderful experience. Why not dedicate yourself to leaving a powerful legacy to the world? Sit down now and write out a list of all that you have in your life. Start first with your health or your family - the things we often take for granted. Put down the country we live in and the food we eat. Do not stop until you have written down fifty items. Once every few days, go through this list - you will be uplifted and recognize the richness of your existence.

20. You must have a mission statement in life. This is simply a set of guiding principles which clearly state where you are going and where you want to be at the end of your life. A mission statement embodies your values. It is your personal lighthouse keeping you steadily on the course of your dreams. Over a period of one month, set a few hours aside to write down five or ten principles which will govern your life and which will keep you focused at all times. Examples might be to consistently serve others, to be a considerate citizen, to become highly wealthy or to serve as a powerful leader. Whatever the mission statement of your life, refine it and review it regularly. Then when something adverse happens or someone tries to pull you off course, you quickly and precisely return to your chosen path with the full knowledge that you are moving in the direction that you have selected.

21. No one can insult or hurt you without your permission. One of the golden keys to happiness and great success is the way you interpret events which unfold before you. Highly successful people are master interpreters. People who have attained greatness have an ability which they have developed to interpret negative or disempowering events as positive challenges which will assist them in growing and moving even farther up the ladder of success. There are no negative experiences only experiences which aid in your development and toughen your character so that you may soar to new heights. There are no failures, only lessons.

22. Take a speed reading course. Reading is a powerful way to gain many years of experience from a few hours of study. For example, most biographies reflect the strategies and philosophies of great leaders or courageous individuals. Read them and model them. Speed reading will allow you to digest large quantities of material in relatively small periods of time.

23. Remember people's names and treat everyone well. This habit, along with enthusiasm, is one of the great success secrets. Everyone in this world wears an imaginary button that screams out "I WANT TO FEEL IMPORTANT AND APPRECIATED!".

24. Be soft as a flower when it comes to kindness but tough as thunder when it comes to principle. Be courteous and polite at all times but never be pushed around. Ensure that you are always treated with respect.

25. Never discuss your health, wealth and other personal matters with anyone outside of your immediate family. Be very disciplined in this regard.

26. Be truthful, patient, persevering, modest and generous.

27. Soak in a warm bath at the end of a long, productive day. Reward yourself for even the smallest of achievement. Take time out for renewal of your mind, body and spirit. Soon all your more important goals will be met and you will move to the next level of peak performance.

28. Learn the power of breathing and its relationship with your energy source. The mind is intimately connected with your breathing. For example, when the mind is agitated, your breathing becomes quick and shallow. When you are relaxed and focused, your breathing is deep and calm. By practising deep, abdominal breathing, you will develop a calm, serene demeanour that will remain cool in the hottest of circumstances. Remember the rule of the Eastern mountain men: "to breathe properly is to live properly."

29. Recognize and cultivate the power of autosuggestion. It works and is an essential tool in maintaining peak performance. We are all performers in one way or another and it is particularly valuable to use such techniques of athletes and public figures for our own enhancement. If you want to become more enthusiastic, repeat "I am more enthusiastic today and am improving this trait daily". Repeat it over and over. Purchase a legal notepad and write out this mantra 500 times. Do it for three weeks with regular practice and feel that this quality is developing. Very soon it will come. This is a strategy that Indian sages have employed for thousands of years to aid their spiritual and mental development. Do not be discouraged if the results are not immediate, they will certainly develop. The spoken word is a powerful influencer of the mind.

30. Maintain a diary to measure your progress and to express your thoughts. Writing out not only your successes but your troubles is one of the world's most effective methods of erasing the worry habit, staying in optimum state and developing precision of thought.

31. Stress is simply a response which you create in the interpretation of an event. Two people might find that a given event results in quite different responses. For example, an after dinner speech might strike fear into the heart of an inexperienced speaker while a strong orator views it as a wonderful opportunity to share his thoughts. Understanding that the perceived negative effects of an event or task may be mentally manipulated and conditioned towards the positive, will allow you to be a peak performer in all instances.

32. Read "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey. It contains a wealth of wisdom and powerful insights into further developing your character and enhancing your personal relationships.

33. Become a committed audio-tape user. Most personal-mastery programs and books are now offered in this format. Listen to these inspirational materials on your way to work, whilst waiting in the line at a bank or while you wash dishes in the evening. Make your car a college on wheels and use the drive time to make knowledge your best friend. All down time can be very effectively used in this productive fashion. Use such opportunities to learn and continually expand your mind and its vast potential.

34. Try fasting one day every two weeks. During these fast days, drink fruit juice and eat fresh fruits only. You will feel more energetic, cleansed and alert. Fasting also has a salutary effect on your will-power as you are subverting the otherwise pressing impulses in your mind calling on you to eat more.

35. Keep a radio-cassette player at your office and listen to soft, soothing music throughout the day. Place pleasant scents and inspirational pictures in your workplace. By the magic of association, your work will become something you enjoy even more and arouse a very pleasant feeling within you. Budget your time on trips such that you can spend half an hour in the airport bookstore. They always contain the latest and best self-mastery books and tapes given that those who travel by air are of a group that finds value in these materials.

36. Read "As a Man Thinketh" by James Allen. And don't just read this little book once, read it over and over again. It contains an abundance of timeless wisdom on living a fuller and happier life.

37. Remember that forgiveness is a virtue that few develop, but one that is most important to maintaining peace of mind. Mark Twain wrote that forgiveness is the fragrance the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it. Practice forgiveness especially in those situations where it is seemingly difficult. By using your emotional forgiveness muscles more regularly, petty wrongs, remarks and slights will not touch you and nothing will penetrate your concentrated, serene mindset.

38. Empty your cup. A full cup cannot accept anything more. Similarly, a person who believes that he cannot learn anything else will stagnate quickly and not move to higher levels. A true sign of a secure, mature individual is someone who sees every opportunity as a chance to learn. Even the teachers have teachers.

39. The Two Minute Mind is an excellent exercise for developing concentration. Simply stare at the second hand on your wristwatch for two minutes and think about nothing else for that time. At first your mind will wander but after 21 days of practice, your attention will not waver during the routine. One of the greatest qualities a person can develop to ensure his success is the ability to focus for extended periods of time. Learn to build up your concentration muscles and no task will be too difficult for you.

40. Drink a cup of warm water before a speech. Ronald Reagan employed this strategy to ensure that he maintained his honey-smooth voice. Mastery of the art of public speaking

is a noble goal. So dedicate yourself to it. You will be judged by the calibre of your communication skills.

41. When you stand and meet someone, stand firm and steadfast. A telling sign of an unfocused, weak mind is constant fidgeting, shifting of the eyes and shallow breathing.

42. Act tough and you will be tough. Have courage and inspire others with your actions. But always be considerate.

43. Ask not what this world can do for you but, rather, what you can do for this world. Make service an important goal in your life. It is a most fulfilling investment of time. Remember, in the twilight of your life, when all is said and done, the quality of your life boils down to the quality of your contribution to others. Leave a rich legacy for those around you to savour.

44. Once a week, arise at dawn. It is a magical time of day. Be still, go for a walk or simply listen to an old Ella Fitzgerald recording. Take a long, hot shower and do 100 pushups. Read one of the classics. You will feel alive and invigorated.

45. Remain slightly aloof. Do not let everyone know everything about you. Cultivate a mystique.

46. Master the art of public speaking. There are few natural speakers. One great trial lawyer stammered dreadfully but through courage and strength of conviction, he developed into a brilliant orator. Role model anyone you think is a highly effective, influential communicator. Visualize a picture of this person. Stand like him, smile like him, and talk like him. The results will startle you.

47. Seek out motivational speakers committed to character training and lifelong success. Make it a point to attend inspirational lectures each month to consistently renew the importance of personal growth in your mind. In a two hour seminar, you can learn powerful techniques and strategies that others have spent many years learning and refining. Never feel that you have no time for gathering new ideas, you are investing in yourself.

48. Read the wonderful book "Discovering Happiness" by Dennis Wholey. It will certainly open up new horizons for you in your quest for an optimal state of health and happiness.

49. To enhance your concentration, read a passage in a book you have never explored. Then try to recite it verbatim. Practice this for only 5 minutes a day and enjoy the results which follow after a few months of effort.

50. Try entering a 5 km running race and then a 10 km event. The adrenaline that flows from the experience of racing with several hundred other fitness-minded people is exhilarating. By constantly pushing the envelope of your capacity, your potential will quickly unfold. Remember, the body will give you only what you ask of it.

51. Aromas have been proven to be an effective means of entering a state of relaxation. Scents have a very noticeable effect on your mindset and moods. Purchase the essential oils of orange and clove bud from your local health food shop. Put a few drops of either oil within a cup of boiling water and inhale the sweet smelling steam for a few minutes. Then let the mixture sit in the room where you are resting. You will gain a sense of peace and serenity. A little apple spice in the air has recently been shown to induce a far more restful sleep.

52. Cultivate the art of walking half an hour after you have finished eating your evening meal. Walks in natural settings are the very best. Walking is, perhaps, nature's ideal exercise. And when you walk, do not think about work or about the bills or about the challenges you might be facing - this will neutralize many of the benefits. Simply enjoy the walk. Notice the richness of your surroundings. Let your senses drink in the beauty of nature and the crispness of the air for a change. So many people who have mastered the art of growing younger have also mastered the habit of a daily walk.

53. Start a program of weight lifting at the gym. Strong people are mentally tough people. As you age, you need not lose your physical nor your mental strength. 75 year-old men are running marathons, 80 year-old women have scaled mountains and 90 year-old grandparents are living rich, productive lives. Whether you are 19 or 93, stay fit, stay motivated and stay passionate about life.

54. Never argue with the person you work for - you will lose more than just the argument.

55. In terms of business attire, dark suits (navy blue and charcoal grey) reflect power, sophistication and authority. Have you ever seen a prime minister or president in a tan suit?

56. Regularly send handwritten notes to your business clients and your other relations to strengthen the bond. Develop a system which reminds you to send something valuable to this network at least once every four months. Send them postcards when you are away on vacation. If you have to buy a few hundred postcards and spend an hour writing, don't worry. This is an exceptionally good investment of your time. Another idea is to send a recent article of interest to your contacts with a handwritten note saying that you thought this would interest them and that you continue to value their friendship. Relationship building should always be a central focus whether you are a CEO, a student, a salesperson or a parent.

57. Two of the fundamentals for a happy, joyful life are balance and moderation. One must maintain a balance of all activities and do nothing to extremes.

58. Drink Jasmine tea which can be obtained from any Chinese herbal shop. It is excellent for your general health and is very relaxing. Also try placing a few slices of fresh ginger in a cup of hot water for a superb tea that will restore vitality and keep you in a peak physical condition.

59. Remember that effective time management makes you more rather than less flexible. It allows you to do the things that you really want to do rather than the things you really have to do.

60. Do not take personal development books as gospel. Read them and take whatever useful ideas you need. Some people feel they must do everything suggested and take the techniques to extremes. Every book has at least one tool or strategy of benefit. Take what you need and what works for you and discard what doesn't suit you.

61. Become an adventurer. Revitalize your spirit and sense of playfulness. Become a kid again. Once every few months, plan to enjoy a new, thrilling activity such as white water rafting, scuba diving, windsurfing, rockclimbing, joining a martial arts club, sailing, deep sea fishing or camping. This will keep your life in perspective, bring you closer to those you share the activity with and keep you feeling invigorated and young.

62. Spend time with Nature. Natural settings have a powerful effect on your senses which in turn will lead to a sense of renewal, refreshment and peacefulness. Peak performers through the ages have understood the importance of getting back to Nature. Start camping or simply taking quiet walks in the forest. Rest by a sparkling stream. Cultivate your own little garden which will serve as your personal oasis in the middle of a crowded city. By cultivating a friendship with Nature, you will quickly find more serenity, contentment and richness in your life.

63. Recall the wise saying "mens sana in corpore sano" which means in a sound body rests a sound mind. Never neglect the body which is intimately connected to the mind. This is your temple. Feed it the finest fuels, exercise daily and care for it as you would your prized possession - because it is.

64. Be so strong that nothing interferes with your peace of mind. A well-known boxer was once unhappy. When asked why, he said that he had allowed himself to think a negative thought. Curb your desires and stay centered and focused - it gets easier with practice. You truly cannot afford the luxury of even one negative thought.

65. Do not eat three hours before sleep. This allows for smoother digestion and a more restful sleep. For deeper, more renewing sleep, remember that a daily dose of exercise promotes good sleep as does a period of relaxation an hour before bed. Also do not bring work to bed with you or think about anything which might agitate you. Ease yourself into sleep like a baby being sung a soft, soothing lullaby. And finally, as Leonardo da Vinci said: "a well-spent day brings happy sleep."

66. Be careful about your reputation. If it is good it will take you to the highest of heights. But once tarnished, it will be difficult to retrieve. Always reflect on your course of action. Never do anything you wouldn't be proud to tell your mother about. Have fun always but temper it with common sense and prudence.

67. Find mentors to model who will guide you in your progress. The mistakes of the world have all been made once before - why shouldn't you have the benefit of the experience of others? Find someone who has both courage and consideration for others, someone who is therefore mature. Your mentor must have only your best interests in mind and should be sufficiently senior to offer you good guidance on the subjects you seek assistance with. Everyone needs to feel appreciated and even the busiest of executives will find time to assist a person who respects them and values their advice.

68. Make a list of all your weaknesses. A truly confident and enlightened person will note a weakness and seek to methodically improve. Bear in mind that even the greatest and most powerful people have weaknesses. Some are better than others in hiding them. On the other hand, get to know your best qualities and cultivate them.

69. Never complain. Be known as a positive, strong, energetic and enthusiastic person. Someone who complains, is cynical and always looks for the negative in everything, will scare people away and rarely will succeed at anything. From a purely psychological viewpoint, things are always created twice: once in the mind and then in reality. Focus on the positive. Be so mentally tough that nothing takes you off your planned course to success. Visualize and firmly believe in what you want. It will most certainly come true.

70. Overlook the weaknesses of your friends. If you look for flaws you will most surely find them. Be mature enough to ignore the petty failings of others and see the good that each one inherently possesses. We can learn from everyone. Everyone has a story to tell, a joke to share and a lesson to learn. Open your mind to this and you will learn a tremendous amount. Friends are so very important to a happy existence - especially those who have shared many experiences and laughs with you. Work hard to make friendships, and all your relationships for that matter, stronger and richer. Call your friends, buy them small gifts of books or other items you believe they might enjoy. The "law of the farm" applies to relationships as well as to the rest of life - you reap what you sow and to have great friends you must first be one.

71. Be kind, considerate and courteous. But also be shrewd and know when to be tough and courageous. This is the mark of a well-defined character and you will surely command respect. It is most useful to read books on friendliness and enhancing relationships by being a good listener, showing others sincere appreciation and refining other inter-personal skills. But, to truly succeed, one must also recognize that worldly wisdom and shrewdness are essential skills to foster. Become an expert in human psychology and be able to read the essence of people. Never be taken advantage of and be aware of the politics around you. Stay above petty gossiping and office politics but appreciate that they indeed exist and know what goes on behind your back. Every great leader does.

72. Create your image as a highly competent, strong, disciplined, calm and decent individual. Find that crucial balance between working on the image that you project to the rest of the world and your inner character. Create a sense of mystery about yourself as the truly wise never show their hand. Do not tell everyone everything about yourself, your strategies and your aspirations. The successful citizens of this world think thrice before they speak

because a word uttered can never be retrieved. Make things look easy and people will say you are naturally gifted. Speak only good things and people will flock to you. Never speak ill of others and all will know you will not malign them behind their backs. Build your character and live a highly principled life.

73. Familiarity breeds contempt is a very good rule. The stars remain far above the Earth. You must keep a distance from all but your closest of relations. Once people see everything of a leader he loses his aura and with it the authority and mystique he may have created. For example, Ronald Reagan was known to many as an excellent leader. He carefully cultivated his image of a folksy, considerate politician who kept the interests of the United States first and foremost in his mind. At gatherings of world leaders, he commanded attention and respect in his dark suits, surrounded by the trappings of power such as political aides, security officers and a convoy of limousines. As soon as he appeared, thoughts of authority and power came to our minds. Did you ever see the President with his shirt off swimming at his pool? How about in his dressing gown after waking up after one of his long sleeps, hair tousled and beard grown? Reagan's handlers never allowed such glimpses because they detract from the perception of authority. The American nation was not exposed to these sights. In the Clinton Era things changed and you saw the President eating Big Macs and wearing baseball caps with a full business suit. Whilst these scenes may be endearing to the public, there is little doubt that President Clinton was more familiar to us, merely another one of us and, unlike the stars above, much closer to the ground.

74. Learn to organize your time. It is incorrect to say that by becoming a meticulous time manager and living by a carefully defined schedule you become rigid and non-spontaneous. Rather, proper organization allows one to accomplish those goals which are truly important as well as enjoy leisure time. Good time management offers more time for fun and relaxation - not less. These important periods are scheduled into the week just like other commitments which may appear more pressing. Neither are sacrificed. Also, discipline yourself and stop wasting time on all those immediate and pressing but unimportant tasks (i.e., the ringing phones) and concentrate on the activities that are truly meaningful to your life's mission. Such activities include time for self-renewal and reflection, time forging relationships built on trust and mutual respect, time for physical fitness, time to read and think deeply and time serving others in your community.

75. Keep well-informed about current events, the latest books and popular trends. Many peak performers read five or six papers a day. You don't have to read every story of every paper. Know what to focus on, what to pass by and what to clip out and read at another time (many successful people scan scores of magazines and papers, clipping out articles of interest; these articles go into a file folder which can be read in your down time). Knowledge is power. Whether you are an entrepreneur, a corporate leader or someone leading a family, you can profoundly change your life and the lives of those around you with a single idea. Just ask Gates, Edison and Bell.

76. When choosing your life partner, remember that this is the most important decision of your lifetime. The marriage relationship offers 90% of all your support, happiness and

fulfillment so choose it wisely. Consider qualities such as affection, sense of humor, intelligence, integrity, maturity, temperament, compatibility and that indescribable characteristic of chemistry. If these are present, your relationship stands an excellent chance of great success. Move slowly and let no one press you into an uncomfortable decision.

77. Never discuss your personal development activities with anyone. Your strategies for expanding your mind and spirit are your own. Others might not understand the value of personal-mastery and, further, will take away your credit when you meet with success by saying that you relied on techniques. Keep these self-development activities to yourself.

78. Schedule relaxation time into your week and be ruthless in protecting it. You would not schedule another activity into the time planned for an important meeting with the president of your company or your best client so why would you put off a period to invest in yourself? We must have time for ourselves to reflect, unwind and recharge our batteries. These are the renewal activities that allow us to maintain peak performance and are exceptionally valuable periods.

79. 83% of our sensory input comes from our eyes. To truly concentrate on something, shut your eyes and you will remove much distraction.

80. Be the master of your will but the servant of your conscience.

81. Develop the wonderful habit of a daily swim. It will promote excellent health, keep you relaxed and concentrated, lean and trim. Swimming is not stressful on the body, provides a great workout for the lungs and requires little time to do effectively. Remember that in a fit body resides a fit mind.

82. People who are doing good today are ensuring their happiness for tomorrow.

83. The key to successful time management is doing what you planned to do when you planned to do it. Keep your mind fully on the task at hand. Only then will you achieve all your goals and have time for the things that matter most. Although it is imperative to be flexible (a bow too tightly strung will soon break), following your planned schedule requires no more than simple discipline.

84. An excellent visualization technique: if you are worrying about something, picture the words of your worry on a piece of paper. Now ignite a match to the paper and watch the worry dissipate into flames. Bruce Lee, the great martial arts master employed this mental control device regularly.

85. Compartmentalize your worry. Set aside a certain amount of time to ponder over a problem and map out an effective plan of attack and your options. Once this is done, have the mental fortitude not to come back to the problem and go over it again and again. The human mind is a strange creature - things we want to forget keep coming back and those things we want to remember are not there when we want them. But the mind is similar to

a muscle and the more you flex it the stronger it will become. Make it your servant. Feed it only the best nutrition and information. It will serve you well and perform magic if you believe in it.

86. Peak performers are physically relaxed and mentally engaged.

87. To be at your performance peak mentally, your body must be loose physically and relaxed. It is now beyond dispute that there is a mind-body connection and when the body is supple, free from tension, the mind is clear, calm and focused as well. This is why yoga is such a beneficial activity. It keeps the body relaxed so that the mind can follow. Basic stretching for 15 minutes a day is also an excellent way to release tension that builds up as a result of our life in this highly complex and fast moving, but wonderful world. Try having a massage or power lounging in a Jacuzzi. Relax the body and you relax the mind.

88. Prepare a detailed financial plan for the next few years and follow it. Seek out financial advice if you need it. A powerful strategy for financial mastery is also a simple one: save 10% of all you make for long-term growth (take this off the pay cheque before you have a chance to spend it). If you can invest $200 a month for the next 30 years at an annual return rate of 15%, you will end up with $1.4 million dollars. Being wise with your money is one of the very best investments to make. Financial security leads to personal freedom.

89. Readers are leaders. U.S. President Bill Clinton read more than 300 books during his short time at Oxford University. Some top performers read a book a day. Seek out knowledge and information. We have truly entered the age of massive information and those who are proactive can use this to their advantage. The more you know, the less you fear.

90. Get into the excellent habit of reading something positive and inspirational before you go to bed and as soon as you awake in the morning. You will soon note the benefits as these thoughts will be supporting you throughout the day.

91. Make it one of your goals to develop a dynamic, charismatic personality. Such a quality is something each one of us has the potential to develop but few do. President Kennedy was a sickly youth but rose above his physical problems to be the most charismatic and exciting political figure in the history of the United States. Start off small. Take a Dale Carnegie course on public speaking. Go to the library where you will find books on the fine art of conversation and personal grooming. Learn three clean and witty jokes and get in the habit of socializing. You will have fun and build a lasting network of friends and associates.

92. On the subject of conversation, a Chinese proverb states as follows: "a single conversation across the table with a wise man is worth a month's study of books." Seek out the wise and learn from them. They are just waiting for that small spark of interest to tell you all that you need to know.

93. Lao-Tzu prized three essential qualities for a person of greatness: "the first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle and you can be bold; be frugal and you can be liberal; avoid putting yourself before others and you can become a leader among men."

94. "When you cannot make up your mind which of two evenly balanced courses of action you should take - choose the bolder," said W. J. Slim. There is no substitute for courage and though the chance of stubbing your toe increases the more you walk, it is always better than going nowhere by standing still. Take chances, take smart risks and you will meet with success beyond your dreams.

95. Become your spouse's number one supporter, the one who is always there supporting and fueling hopes and dreams. Develop together and march confidently through the world as an army of two.

96. Think of three people who can provide you with inspiration, motivation and support for your goals and aspirations. Plan to meet with each one of them over the next few weeks. Listen enthusiastically to them and brainstorm with them. Map out a strategy and take their wise counsel.

97. Make every one of your days a true masterpiece. Remember the old saying: "it's not who you think you are that holds you back but what you think you're not."

98. Just as valuable energy is wasted by spending time on activities that are of no value, energy can be wasted on loose thinking. Imagine that your mind has an energy measure of 1000 watts at its disposal. Each time your mind wanders off the project at hand, to a nagging worry, to all the things to do by the end of the day, 100 watts is lost. Quite soon the entire energy supply is gone. This is the nature of the mind. Fail to discipline it and your energy levels will be depleted and your accomplishments will be minimal. Control it and you will see great things happening. You will feel more powerful and achieve difficult tasks with ease. The 19th century philosopher Henri Frederic Amiel summed it up nicely: "for purposes of action, nothing is more useful than narrowness of thought combined with energy of will."

99. It has been rightly said that "you sow an action, you reap a habit. You sow a habit, you reap a character. You sow a character, you reap a destiny." The essence of a person is his character - make yours unique, unblemished and strong. Do not say you will do anything unless you will indeed do it. Speak the truth and measure your words wisely. Be humble, straightforward and peaceful.

100. Remember the overriding law of nature: positive overcomes the negative.

101. A contented mind is a continual feast. Greed and material desires must be curbed to achieve lasting happiness and serenity. Be happy with what you have. Do you really need all of those material possessions? One can develop contentment just as one develops patience, courage and concentration - with daily practice and sincere desire.

102. Make a new friend or acquaintance every day. Keep an updated list of all contacts close at hand. Rich relationships are the DNA of a rich, rewarding life.

103. Remember this ancient Indian proverb: "if you conquer your mind, you conquer the world."

104. Place greater importance on staying happy than amassing material possessions. A zest for life is developed and carefully nurtured through thoughtful activities and pursuits.

105. Contrary to popular opinion, stress is not a bad thing. It allows us to perform at peak levels and can assist us through the flood of chemicals it releases within our bodies. What is harmful is too much stress, or more particularly, a lack of relief from stress. The times of stress must be balanced nicely with times of pure relaxation and leisure for us to be healthy and at our best. Many of the great leaders of our time were exposed to crushing workloads and the burdens of high office. But they prospered by developing strategies to balance the challenging times with fun and calming times. President Kennedy would have regular naps in his White House office. Winston Churchill had the same practice and slept for one hour every afternoon to stay alert, focused and calm. Not only is it essential to be physically relaxed to maintain optimal health but one must couple this trait with mental serenity. Too often people think that vigorous exercise, good nutrition and pleasant leisure activities will be the panacea for all ills. These pursuits must be combined with positive thinking and peace of mind for true happiness and longevity.

106. Get into the habit of taking mental vacations throughout the day. Visit Bermuda for five minutes in the morning. Visualize a swim in the Mediterranean in the afternoon and skiing down the slopes of the Alps just before you head for home at the end of your busy and productive day. Try this for two months and schedule these rest periods into your agenda just as you would your essential meetings or tasks. The rewards will be significant.

107. A change is as good as a rest. Whether this change is as major as a change of employment or as minor as a leisure pursuit which occupies your entire attention for an hour three times a week, these changes in routine, and mindset are entirely beneficial. In selecting the activity, try to find something totally engaging which requires deep concentration so that your mind is free from the mundane but seemingly important aspects of your day. Many executives are becoming involved in the martial arts for just this reason. If your mind wanders for even a split second, a harsh lesson is soon learned. Pain is a great motivator and always will be.

108. Study these 10 fundamentals of happiness:
    i. Pursue a productive, exciting and active life
    ii. Engage in meaningful activities every minute of every day
    iii. Develop an organized, planned lifestyle with little chaos
    iv. Set realistic goals yet keep your mark high
    v. Think positively - you cannot afford the luxury of a negative thought

vi. Avoid needless worry over trifling matters
vii. Devote time to fun
viii. Develop a warm, outgoing personality with a sincere love of people
ix. Get in the habit of giving more than receiving
x. Learn to live in the present. The past is water under the bridge of life.

109. Strive to be humble and live a simple life.

110. Read "A History of Knowledge" by Charles Van Doren which chronicles the history of the world's ideas. In this one book is an absolute wealth of knowledge. Get it, read it and enjoy it.

111. Read "The Art of the Leader" by William A. Cohen. It is both inspirational and practical.

112. Develop that elusive quality known as charisma. The following are ten qualities of a charismatic leader:

- Be committed to what you are doing
- Look like a winner and act like one
- Have big dreams, a vision and reach for the sky
- Steadily advance in the direction of your goals
- Prepare and work hard at every task you do
- Build a mystique around yourself
- Be interested in others and show kindness
- Have a strong sense of humour
- Be known for the strength of your character
- Have grace under pressure. (John F. Kennedy said that "the elusive half-step between middle management and true leadership is grace under pressure.")

113. In work, love and life, play hard and play fair.

114. Do not talk when you are listening. Interrupting is one of the most common discourtesies. Listen aggressively with the full scope of your attention. You will be amazed at what you learn and how your counsel will soon be sought by many.

115. "Anybody can become angry - that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy." - Aristotle

116. Knowledge is power. People who have achieved great success are not necessarily more skillful or intelligent than others. What separates them is their burning desire and thirst for knowledge. The more one knows, the more one achieves. Great leaders have techniques to allow them to arrive at the top of the mountain. Read the biographies of the world's leaders and learn from their habits, inspirations and philosophies. Cultivate the important practice of active role modelling.

117. All the answers to any questions are in print. How to improve as a public speaker, how to improve your relations with others, how to become fitter or develop a better memory - all aspects of personal development are dealt with in books. Therefore, in order to achieve your maximum potential, you must read daily. But, in this age of information, you must be ruthless in what you consume. Focus on your goals and read only those materials that will be an asset to you. Do not attempt to read everything for you are busy and have other tasks at hand. Choose what is important and filter out what is of no value. Begin with a solid newspaper every morning for an excellent summary of the key events of the day. Also ensure that your readings are broadly based. For example, perhaps you may wish to read history, business, Eastern philosophy, health books etc. Then go to the library and develop the habit of making regular visits. Read the classics from Hemingway to Bram Stoker. Read history, with all its lessons on life and read biology for a new perspective. Look under the heading of "success" at the library and you will be amazed at the literature you will find: inspirational stories of people who developed greatness in the face of adversity, strategies for improving yourself physically, mentally and spiritually and texts to tap the unlimited power for success that certainly exists within us. Drink deeply from such books. Surround yourself with them and read them constantly whether on the bus each day or before you go to bed. Let them inspire and motivate you.

118. Get into the habit of breakfast meetings. An early meal to touch base with a friend or business associate is a most pleasant way to start the day and allows you to maintain your contacts in the face of a busy schedule.

119. If you live in a flat, always ensure that it is very bright and has a swimming pool. A pool is especially important because it will allow you to exercise no matter how busy your schedule. There is nothing like a refreshing swim after a long, productive day. You will feel excellent and sleep like a baby.

120. "Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but rather we have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit." - Aristotle

121. "Today is yesterday's pupil." - Benjamin Franklin

122. If you have a choice of taking two paths, always take the more daring of the two. Calculated risk taking often produces extraordinary results.

123. Every day, get away from the noise, the crowds and the rush and spend a few hours alone in peaceful introspection, deep reading or simple relaxation.

124. That which any person who has walked this Earth has achieved you can achieve with the right mental attitude, perseverance and industry. Limiting thoughts and weak mental images must be banished. One's focus must be on the attainment of goals that are truly important.

125. Get into the habit of memorizing beautiful poetry. Not only will it be a great source of entertainment but it will quickly lift your intellectual functions to a higher level by improving your memory, concentration and mental agility.

126. Keep your words soft and arguments hard.

127. Break the worry habit by putting things in perspective and laughing over small setbacks. Repeat to yourself that "this will soon pass". Then take a sheet of paper, write out the worry on your mind. Allot a certain period of time to think on it, isolate the precise problem and formulate a powerful line of attack. By this practical technique, your negative, energy sapping habit will soon be a faint memory of the past.

128. Be known as that person who goes the extra mile. The person who works longer than others. The one who takes on the extra assignments and follows them through with great success. Be the person who always has concerns about others and who makes family members feel truly special. Be a standout, the one with a balance in both personal and professional excellence. Be a star that shines brightly for all others to admire.

129. Become a committed and sincere networker. Cultivate new friendships. You will truly be surprised where people end up over the years and how small, kind gestures will help you later on in life. Treat everyone who crosses your path as if they are the most important person in your world. You will certainly meet with great success.

130. When you look for something you will find it. If you constantly expect exceptional success, you will surely have it. Peak performers attract success. You must keep the goals you desire to achieve at the forefront of your mind throughout the day. Repeat your ambitions at least five times a day and visualize yourself achieving them. If your goal is to be rich, picture the house you will be living in, the car you will be driving, what it will feel like to be rich and the pleasure of attaining your goals in life. Repeat your ambition over and over until you have complete certainty that you will attain your desires and eventually you will.

131. Develop a sense of wonder about the world. Be an explorer. Find pleasure in the things that others take for granted. Stop and actually listen to that wonderful street musician playing the trumpet. Read that classic book your father loved so much. Plan to get away from the city next week and visit a secluded, powerfully natural place for a few days. Take a mini-retreat and care for your mind, body and spirit. It will profoundly improve the quality of your life.

132. Send cards on birthdays and little notes from time to time showing that you care and were thinking about your relations. We are all busy but if you spend just five minutes a week to send a card to a friend or family member, by the year end you will have sent out 52 cards. This is a small investment for the dividends that are guaranteed to follow.

133. Remember and use people's names when you talk to them. A person's name is a uniquely sweet sound to them.

134. Go outdoors and look up into the blue sky for half an hour. Note the supremely strong feeling that you get when you are connected to Nature. Get away from your rigid schedule today and spend the afternoon in a beautiful setting. Walk in the woods and sit by a cool stream. Go fishing or rent a canoe. Getting away from your routine will provide a refreshing release and make you feel wonderful when you eventually return.

135. Once every few weeks, leave your watch at home. In this society we often become bound to the clock and soon it governs our every action like a rigid taskmaster. Go through the day doing precisely what you wish to do and for however long you wish to do it. Spend time with that special person without having to run off to your next appointment. Savour the moments and focus on what is truly important rather than those mundane things that somehow take on a greater importance than they really deserve. Lose the clock and gain some quality time.

136. Laugh at work and be known as a positive achiever.

137. An idea gives rise to a mental image. A mental image will then generate a mental habit out of which a mental trait ultimately blossoms. Master your thoughts and you master your mind; master your mind and you master your life; master your life and you master your destiny.

138. Recognize the tremendous power of opposition thinking. This simple technique simply involves the substitution of a positive thought each and every time a negative or limiting thought enters your mind and begins to detract from your focus. For example, on a Sunday evening, you may think "I wish I did not have to return to work tomorrow after such a pleasant and relaxing weekend." Immediately replace this defeating thought pattern before it begins to take hold by thinking the opposite. For example you might think "I cannot wait to return to the office given the exciting projects on the go and the wonderful sense of accomplishment I receive after a productive, challenging week." Then think how fortunate you are to have a job and one that you can advance in through your own efforts and productivity. Make a list of all of the positive attributes of your position and repeat them over and over. Soon the negative pattern will be broken and you will look toward the exciting week ahead with that most fabulous of qualities: enthusiasm.

139. Get deep into the habit of personal introspection. Ben Franklin called this one of the most important strategies for personal effectiveness. Spend ten minutes every night before you go to bed in self-examination. Think about the good things you did during the day and the bad actions you may have taken which you must change in order to excel and grow. Successful people are simply more thoughtful than others. Daily reflection will soon allow for the eradication of your negative qualities (ranging from procrastination to gossiping to insulting others) and will sharpen the mind. After steady practice, a time will eventually arrive when the mistakes you make are few indeed and your personal power will move to the highest level.

140. The most efficient and effective alarm clock ever developed lies within our own minds. If you do not believe this, try the following: 1. Sit in an easy chair approximately ten minutes before you go to bed. 2. Shut your eyes and gently rest your hands on your knees. 3. Breathe deeply for a few minutes (inhale to the count of five, hold to the count of ten and exhale fully). 4. Repeat the following command to yourself at least twenty times: "I will awake at (the desired time) feeling fresh, alert and enthusiastic." This command must be said with feeling and emotion. Then take a few seconds to visualize yourself waking up at the desired time (the more detailed the mental picture the better) and imagine how great you will feel. You will soon wake up at the desired moment after little or no practice.

141. Some men see things as they are and say "why?" I dream of things that never were and say "why not?" George Bernard Shaw

142. Use these strategies to improve the quality of your mind-calming meditation: 1. Practice meditation at the same time each day and in the same place so that your mind becomes accustomed to entering the desired serene state as soon as you enter the peaceful place. 2. The early morning is undoubtedly the most powerful time to meditate. Indian yogis believe that the pre-dawn time has almost magical qualities which aid in achieving the super-peaceful state so many meditators attempt to attain. 3. Before you start, command your mind to be quiet by using affirmations such as "I will be focused and very calm now." 4. If thoughts do enter, do not force them out but simply let them pass like clouds making way for the beautiful blue sky. Picture that your mind is like a still lake without even a ripple. 5. Sit for ten minutes at first and then increase the time every few sittings. After a month or two, you will not be interrupted by any pressing thoughts and will surely feel a sense of peace that you have never felt before.

143. Forge and foster great friendships as such relationships are essential for maintaining a healthy and successful life. Find a few minutes every day to jot down some warm wishes to an old friend or to place a telephone call to someone you have not had a chance to speak to for a while. Show compassion and sincere consideration for all your friends and watch the results which follow. Develop long lasting friendships by being a good friend. Also, make it a priority to seek out new friends no matter how many you may be fortunate enough to have. This is one of life's greatest joys which many of us miss.

144. Purchase a cassette or CD of Miles Davis's Kind Of Blue. It is a uniquely soothing compilation that will refresh and soothe you after a challenging and productive day. Music such as this is good for the soul.

145. Drown your appetite by drinking more water - ten glasses a day is ideal. It revitalizes the system and purifies the body. Also, get into the habit of eating soups and more complex carbohydrates such as rice, potatoes and pasta which feed your hunger with far less calories than other less healthy foods. You truly are what you eat and must ensure that your diet is designed to maximize your energy and mental clarity.

146. Develop the essential habit of punctuality for it is most important for high success. Punctuality reflects discipline and a proper regard for others. Without it, even the most sophisticated person appears slightly offensive. Do not be early and certainly never be late. Budget your time and, should you arrive early, take a walk or simply relax for a few moments to ensure that you arrive on time as requested. You will be appreciated and welcomed always if you cultivate this important quality that appears so rarely these days.

147. The telephone is there for your convenience, not for the convenience of others who are attempting to contact you. If you are busy with a task, do not answer the phone or have someone answer the call so that you may return it at a more suitable time. Do not let such interruptions waste your time. Most phone calls are not important and last far too long anyway. Over the course of the average American's lifetime, she will spend two years unsuccessfully returning phone calls. There are so many important and fun things to do in life. The challenge is to respect precious time so that we can achieve a fuller, more satisfying life.

148. Start your day off well. Before you get out of bed each morning, say a prayer or repeat your personal affirmation giving thanks for the day and all the positive things you will see and achieve. Make a conscious decision to make this the best day of your life and meet with pleasure, success and fun. If you believe it, it will most certainly happen. A timeless secret for lifelong success is to live each day as if it were your last.

149. Confide in your partner. This will strengthen the relationship and allow you both to grow at the same pace. It is also a wonderful tonic to share important or otherwise troubling things with the person you are closest to.

150. Push yourself just a little harder and a little farther each day. Winners on the playing field of life push the envelope of their potential daily. Do the thing you fear and the death of fear is certain. Winners do the things that less developed people don't like doing even though they also might not enjoy doing them. This is what strength of character and courage is all about. Tackle your weaknesses. Do the thing that you have consistently put off. Write that thank you note or letter that you have neglected for so long. Exercise your discipline muscles and they will rise to the occasion by filling your day with more satisfaction, more effectiveness and far more energy.

151. All individuals who have attained the highest of levels generally have cultivated the essential mental habit of optimism. Without optimism, life loses its lustre and hardships appear at every step of the way. This is an essential life habit.

152. Today, write down the seven best qualities of individuals who you admire and post this list by your bed. Then, each morning as you rise, focus on a new quality which you will strive to implement during the day. After one week, you will notice small differences in yourself. In one month, these traits will become firmly embedded. After two months, all those important qualities will be yours.

153. You have as many reputations as you do acquaintances as each person you know thinks differently of you. What should truly concern you is your character. You have full control of this and this is what you must develop, refine and cultivate. Once your character is strong and vigorous, then all else that is positive will follow.

154. Consider yourself as an orange. Only what is really inside can come out. If you fill your mind with thoughts of serenity, positivity, strength, courage and compassion, when someone squeezes you, this is the only juice that can flow.

155. Our lives have been described as a parenthesis in eternity. We are but a small blip on the stage of the Universe. As we can take nothing with us when we leave, then the real meaning of our existence must be to give and serve others. Keep this in mind. When you wake up early in the morning, repeat the mantra: "I will serve others today, I will care for others today and I will be kind today." This kind of living will bring you huge returns if you stay on the purpose of aiding others rather than on the outcome of personal gain.

156. Be known as an innovator at your place of work. Sit down over the next week and write out ten suggestions for your supervisor as to how to improve the work being done and the quality of the workplace itself. Be known as an idea person willing to discover challenges and tackle them with zest and enthusiasm.

157. Learn to laugh at yourself.

158. Keep open the windows of your mind.

159. Try to go through one full day without saying "I". Focus on others. Listen to others and you will learn wonderful new things as well as gain friendships.

160. Spend one hour a day in full silence except in answer to direct questions. Even then, answer directly and without extending the conversation unduly. We, so very often, talk around subjects and repeat ourselves. This ancient Eastern exercise will not only build your will-power but develop clarity and precision of language which is essential for effective communication.

161. Each day, do two things that you do not like doing. This may be the preparation of a report you have been putting off or shining your shoes. It does not matter how small the task, just do it! Soon these chores will not seem so bad, your personal power will increase and your productivity will soar. Try it because this is an age-old technique for building strength of character.

162. True happiness comes from only one thing: achievement of goals, whether they are personal, professional or otherwise. You are happiest when you feel you are growing. When you feel that you are contributing and advancing in the direction of your dreams, you will notice that you have boundless energy and vitality. Time spent on activities which offer little reward aside from a fleeting feeling of relaxation (television watching is the best example), is time lost forever. Relaxation is essential but chose the most effective

means of renewal and spend your time in productive pursuits that will slowly move you along the path of accomplishment. Happiness comes from doing - not sleeping.

163. Napoleon III of France had a special ability to remember the names of all those he met. His secret was to say "so sorry, I missed your name" after being introduced to a new person. This would cause the name to be repeated and reinforced within his memory. If the name was difficult, he would ask for the proper spelling.

164. The sages of China have held a basic life philosophy for thousands of years: develop an indomitable spirit along with courtesy and integrity. The repetition of these three traits will make you an exceptionally powerful individual respected by all. Exert your effort and personal influence to attain these qualities.

165. A valuable technique for defeating negative and self-limiting thoughts that can hamper you from attaining peak performance is the mental interrupt device. When a negative thought enters your consciousness, first you must become aware of it and have a strong desire to remove it for good. To do this, interrupt the negative train of thought by doing something to break and banish the self-limiting pattern. When the bad thought enters, you may pinch yourself and say, "I am strong and weak thoughts are gone", or you may shout out loud or do anything that will divert your attention and remove the negative focus. By practising this technique, you will see a marked decrease in the negative thoughts that most people have, paving the way to the mindset of a true winner.

166. Taking time from your busy work and family schedule to focus on personal growth activities is essential and is never to be considered a waste. Taking one hour from your hectic morning to watch kids playing in a nearby park or to take a brisk walk might seem like a poor use of time to some. But by making more time for life's simple pleasures and bringing more balance into your day, you will make the remaining hours far more productive and effective. You cannot do good unless you feel good. When you are serene, relaxed and enthusiastic you are also more productive, creative and dynamic. This is something that has been proved time and time again and yet we consistently get caught up in the apparent immediacy of our routine and fail to see the forest for the trees.

167. Read more, learn more, laugh more and love more.

168. Pick five relationships that you desire to improve over the next six months. Write out the names of these people and under each name detail why you want to improve the relationship, how you plan to do so and in what time frame. This is simply another facet of goal setting - the practice which will always yield excellent results in any of life's fields. Be committed to being a better parent, friend and citizen. Be creative in the steps you take to show your appreciation and respect for your loved ones. Sending notes is fine but consider unique and thoughtful measures ranging from a romantic picnic in the country with your partner to an early morning fishing trip with an old friend.

169. Remember the power of prayer.

170. An excellent investment in your personal growth is the six tape series of Reverend Norman Vincent Peale entitled "The Power of Positive Thinking". Get it and listen to it over and over. It is packed full of strategies and techniques that, without fail, will ensure that you live a long, happy, productive and prosperous life.

171. Consider purchasing a pocket organizer which may prove to be an excellent tool for scheduling, recording your commitments and keeping the responsibilities of your life in fine order. One can be purchased at a reasonable price.

172. Browse second-hand bookstores every few months searching for lost treasures of character-building books. You will find gems on public speaking, improving your habits, time management, personal health and other important subjects for low prices. Some of these older texts are the very best and come from an age where every young person was under an obligation to develop discipline and good life habits regularly.

173. Read The Magic of Believing by Claude M. Bristol. It will allow you to release the powerful forces which most certainly exist in your mind but may presently be untapped.

174. Be known as someone with a cool head, warm heart and great character. Your presence on this earth will long be remembered.

175. It has been said that doing something for others is the highest form of religion. Every week, out of the 168 hours available, spend a few in service to others. Many say that such selfless service soon becomes a key focus within their lives. Give your time at a seniors home or to needy children. Teach someone how to read or offer to give a public lecture on the subject of your expertise. Simply take action and do something to leave a legacy.

176. Fill your home with bright, fresh flowers. This is one of the best investments you can make. Let the sounds of great music, loud laughter and good fun fill the oasis of your home.

177. Get to know and enjoy your neighbors. They make life more pleasant and can provide helpful resources when you least expect it.

178. Recognize the power of mantras and the repetition of positive, powerful words. Indian yogis have employed this technique for over 4000 years to live tranquil, productive and focused lives. Create your own personal mantra which you can repeat daily to enhance your character and strengthen your spirit.

179. When the breath is still and strong, so is the mind.

180. Use the following visualization from time to time. Sit in a quiet place and picture that you will be on the earth for only another day. Who would you call, what would you say and what would you do? These questions will give you some important insights into what outstanding actions you must endeavor to complete.

181. Study the following evidence of high character:
   - Precision & clarity of thought and speech
   - Refined and gentle manners
   - The power and habit of introspection
   - The power of personal growth
   - The power to achieve your goals & dreams

182. "Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind. People grow old only by deserting their ideals and by outgrowing the consciousness of youth. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul... You are as old as your doubt, your fear, your despair. The way to keep young is to keep your faith young. Keep your self-confidence young. Keep your hope young." - Dr. L.F. Phelan

183. Explore the healing powers of Chinese herbal medicine and similar Eastern strategies for maintaining a state of perfect health (consult an expert at all times and take a formal course on the subject to gain powerful insights into this most useful area of healing).

184. Be certain to organize your time around the true priorities of your life. As Stephen Covey has noted: "it is easy to say no when there is a deeper yes burning within."

185. Slow down your pace of life. In this complex age, we are running our lives at a frantic pace. Focus on what is truly important and start undertaking activities that will slow you down and rekindle the natural, calm within us. Sit in the grass and watch the blue sky for half an hour - at first, it is not as easy as one would think and the urge is to get up after only a few minutes of such useful relaxation. Once you are used to a healthier pace of living, with regular periods dedicated to the simple pleasures of life, every other activity will become more efficient and enjoyable.

186. Try eating only fruit and milk for a full day. Fasting is a powerful success strategy of the East that millions use regularly to maintain peak health and mental clarity. By trying this simple practice every few weeks you will notice a surge in your energy level and a lightness in your walk. Big meals require a significant amount of energy that could be better directed toward more productive pursuits.

187. Value your spouse's laugh and keep your partner's picture close by your work desk for inspiration and pleasant thoughts throughout the day.

188. If you are married, have your partner's initials and your own engraved on the inside of your wedding bands along with the date of your marriage. This is useful not only in case the rings are lost but to provide you both with personalized keepsakes that may be passed down to successive generations.

189. The mind is like a garden - as you sow, so shall you reap. When you cultivate it and nurture it, it will blossom beyond your wildest expectation. But if you let the weeds take over, you will never reach your potential. What you put in is what you get out. So avoid violent movies, trashy novels and all other negative influences. Peak performers are

meticulous about the thoughts they allow into the gardens of their minds. You truly cannot afford the luxury of a single negative thought.

190. Do a hundred sit ups a day and do not break this habit. Strong abdominal muscles are very helpful to ensuring that you enjoy peak health and injury free days. They also maintain your appearance and confidence level.

191. Be the most honest person that you know. Be trustworthy - worthy of the trust of others.

192. Curb your worldly desires and you will strengthen your will. He who is deeply bound to material things runs into difficulty and unhappiness when they are taken away. Happy people enjoy worldly objects but do not become bound or wedded to them. Live a simple, uncluttered and productive existence. To simplify your life today, consider selling your television, stopping the junk mail, spending less, learning yoga, selling your car, practising meditation every morning and unplugging your ringing phone once in a while.

193. If you have not laughed today, you have not lived today. Laugh hard and loud. As William James said: "we don't laugh because we are happy, we are happy because we laugh."

194. Read The Charisma Factor - How to Develop Your Natural Leadership Ability by Robert J. Richardson and S. Katharine Thayer. It is a superb book for any aspiring leader, or a current one, who seeks to advance to the next level.

195. Travel often. The perspective offered by visiting new lands is important and allows one to appreciate the existence that we generally take for granted.

196. Each month set a physical fitness goal for yourself. Start to swim in July or learn to ski in January. The key is to arrive at a goal for the month, write it down, consider how to execute it and then, as the NIKE ad says: "Just Do It!".

197. Things are always created twice. There is always the mental creation which precedes the physical creation. Just as plans for a house must first be set down on paper before the house is started, so too should your day be planned within your mind early in the morning before the day begins. Visualize the wonders you desire this life to bring and they will materialize as your subconscious mind starts to focus on the attainment of goals. This is a true law of Nature.

198. Walk to work and notice the wonderful beauty in Nature.

199. Sleep less, spend less, do more, live longer and be greater.

200. Read this book over and over and share it with others!

--- The End ---