

# CHANGE YOUR THINKING CHANGE YOUR LIFE

How to Unlock  
Your Full Potential  
for Success and  
Achievement

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Bestselling author of *Create Your Own Future*



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# Foreword

If you are ready to leverage yourself to greatness and achieve giant results, you have the right road map in your hands. You have before you the DNA of your future. All you need to create a wonderful future for yourself is to read this book, decide how you are going to apply it to your own life, write out a plan, and then go forth with enthusiasm and make it happen.

I have a confession to make. I am one of Brian's raving fans. I have studied him, his brilliant work, and the extraordinary results he has achieved. I am also one of his close colleagues and friends. We have worked together on many platforms, and met and talked with each other on numerous occasions.

Brian is one of the finest thinkers and writers on inner development and personal success in the world. I know; I have sold over 82 million books aimed at helping people get the most out of themselves.

*Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life* shows you how to discover your extraordinary inner resources and tap your incredible powers. You will learn how to attract into your life all the people and resources you need to achieve any goal you can set for yourself.

You will absolutely amaze yourself as you start to achieve new and better results by employing these concepts and ideas in everything you do. These are the same concepts used by all big-time winners, self-made millionaires, and leaders in every field.

In this book, you will learn a step-by-step process to great success that you will eventually implement, easily and effortlessly. This strategy for success is so logical, so inviting, and ultimately so fulfilling and omni-beneficial that it is virtually a breakthrough in personal performance.

As long as you are going to think anyway, why not think great thoughts and get great results?

Brian is a shining light in the speaking and writing world. He has done incredible thinking and achieved amazing results, for



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himself and many hundreds of thousands of other people. Brian's thinking in this book will inspire you to do the same or more.

Get ready for one of the great adventures and explorations into the last great frontier, and the first—your mind! You are about to have a wonderful experience.

MARK VICTOR HANSEN

Author, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*



# Introduction

There is nothing on earth that you cannot have once you have mentally accepted the fact that you can have it.

—Robert Collier

## ■ THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU

You are a thoroughly good person. You deserve a wonderful life, full of success, happiness, joy, and excitement. You are entitled to have happy relationships, excellent health, meaningful work, and financial independence. These are your birthright. This is what your life is meant to include.

You are engineered for success and designed to have high levels of self-esteem, self-respect, and personal pride. You are extraordinary; there has never been anyone exactly like you in all the history of mankind on earth. You have absolutely amazing untapped talents and abilities that, when properly unleashed and applied, can bring you everything you could ever want in life.

You are living at the greatest time in all of human history. You are surrounded by abundant opportunities that you can take advantage of to realize your dreams. The only real limits on what you can be, do, or have are the limits you place on yourself by your own thinking. Your future is virtually unlimited.

## ■ GET REAL!

How did you react to the preceding three paragraphs? You probably had two responses. First, you liked what they said, and your fondest wish was for them to be true for you. But your second response was probably one of skepticism and disbelief. Even though you deeply

desire to live a wonderfully healthy, happy, prosperous life, when you read those words, your doubts and fears arose immediately to remind you of reasons why these dreams and goals may not be possible for you. Well, join the crowd!

This is exactly how I felt many years ago. Even though I wanted to be a big success in life, I was unskilled, uneducated, and unemployed. I had no idea what I could do to improve my situation. I felt trapped between big ideas on the one hand and limited resources and opportunities on the other. Then I discovered a series of remarkable principles that have been responsible for all the great successes and achievements of the ages, and my life changed forever.

After proving these laws and principles in my own life, I began speaking, and training others to apply the same ideas. Since then, I have given more than two thousand talks and seminars as long as four days in length, in 24 countries, to a total of more than two million participants. Most of them were also skeptical when they first heard these ideas of optimism and possibility, until they learned what you are going to learn in the pages ahead. It changed their lives, as it will change yours.

## ■ THE GREAT PRINCIPLE

Perhaps the most important mental and spiritual principle ever discovered is that *you become what you think about most of the time*. Your outer world is very much a mirror image of your inner world. What is going on *outside* of you is a reflection of what is going in *inside* of you. You can tell the inner condition of a person by looking at the outer conditions of his or her life. And it cannot be otherwise.

## ■ THOUGHTS ARE THINGS

Your mind is extraordinarily powerful. Your thoughts control and determine almost everything that happens to you. They can raise or lower your heart rate, improve or interfere with your digestion, change the chemical composition of your blood, and help you to sleep or keep you awake at night.

Your thoughts can make you happy or sad, sometimes in an instant. They can make you alert and aware, or distracted and de-

pressed. They can make you popular or unpopular, confident or insecure, positive or negative. Your thoughts can make you feel powerful or powerless, a victim or a victor, a hero or a coward.

In your material life, your thoughts can make you a success or a failure, prosperous or poverty-stricken, respected or ignored. Your thoughts, and the actions that they trigger, determine your whole life. And the best news of all is that they are completely under your own control.

## ■ THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND DESIRES

You are a complex bundle of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, desires, images, fears, hopes, doubts, opinions, and ambitions, each of them constantly changing, sometimes from second to second. Each of these elements of your personality affects the others, sometimes in unpredictable ways. Your entire life is the result of the intertwining and interconnecting of these factors.

Your thoughts trigger images and pictures, and the emotions that go with them. These images and emotions trigger attitudes and actions. Your actions then have consequences and results that determine what happens to you.

If you think about success and confidence, you will feel strong and competent, and you will perform better at whatever you attempt. If you think about making mistakes or being embarrassed, you will perform poorly, no matter how good you really are.

Pictures and images, from your imagination or from the external influences, produce ideas, emotions, and attitudes that correspond to them. They then trigger actions that bring about certain results and outcomes. The *thought* of a person or situation can cause you to instantly feel happy or sad, elated or angry, loving or lonely.

## ■ ATTITUDES, ACTIONS, AND EMOTIONS

Your attitudes, positive or negative, constructive or destructive, lead to corresponding images, emotions, and actions that affect your life and relationships. Your attitudes, in turn, are based on



your previous experiences and your basic premises about how things are supposed to be.

Your actions trigger the emotions and attitudes that go with them. By the Law of Reversibility, you can actually act your way into feeling in a manner consistent with the action. By acting as if you were already happy, positive, and confident, you soon begin to feel that way on the inside. And your actions are under your direct control, whereas your emotions are not.

In and of themselves, the outer aspects of your life are *neutral*. It is only the *meaning* that you give to them that determines your attitudes, opinions, emotions, and reactions to them. If you change your thinking about any part of your life, you will change how you feel and behave in that area. And since only you can decide what to think, you have the ability to take complete control over your life.

## ■ QUESTION YOUR BELIEFS

The Law of Belief says: *Whatever you believe, with conviction, becomes your reality.* You always act in a manner consistent with your deepest and most intensely held beliefs, whether they are true or not. And all your beliefs are learned. At one time, you did not have them.

Your beliefs largely determine your reality. You do not believe what you *see*; you rather *see* what you already believe. You can have life-enhancing beliefs that make you happy and optimistic, or you can have negative beliefs about yourself and your potential that act as roadblocks to the realization of everything that is truly possible for you.

The most harmful beliefs you can have are your *self-limiting beliefs*. These are beliefs about yourself and your potential that hold you back. Most of them are not true. Most of them are the result of information you have accepted without question, often from early childhood. Even if it is completely untrue, if you *believe* yourself to be limited in areas such as achieving wonderful health and happiness and earning a lot of money, that will become your truth. As the author Richard Bach in his book *Illusions* wrote, “Argue for your limitations and sure enough, they’re yours.”

## ■ YOU ARE A LIVING MAGNET

The Law of Attraction says that you are a “living magnet” and that *you invariably attract into your life the people, ideas, opportunities, and circumstances in harmony with your dominant thoughts.*

When you think positive, optimistic, loving, and successful thoughts, you create a *force field* of magnetism that attracts, like iron filings to a magnet, the very things you are thinking about. This law explains why it is that you don’t have to be concerned where your good is going to come from. If you can keep your mind clearly focused on what you want, and refrain from thinking about what you *don’t* want, you will *attract* everything you need to achieve your goals, exactly when you are ready. Change your thinking and you change your life.

## ■ THE ONLY REAL MEASURE

Bertrand Russell, the English philosopher, once said, “The very best proof that something can be done is that others have already done it.” In the New Testament, Jesus taught the way to measure the truth of any principle: “By their fruits, ye shall know them.”

In other words, the only question you need to ask about any idea is, “Does it work?” Does it bring about the results that you desire? Milton Friedman, the Nobel prizewinning economist, said, “The only true measure of a theory or idea is your ability to make accurate predictions of the future based on it.”

The good news is that the ideas and principles you are about to learn have been tested and proven in the lives and experiences of millions of people. In themselves, like any principles of nature, they are *neutral*. Nature plays no favorites. Nature treats everyone alike. Whatever seed you plant in the ground, nature will grow. Whatever *thought seeds* you plant in your mind, nature will grow as well. It is entirely up to you.

## ■ CHOOSE YOUR THOUGHTS

Successful people are those who *think* more effectively than unsuccessful people. They approach their lives, relationships, goals,

problems, and experiences differently from others. They sow better seeds, and as a result they reap better lives. If you learn to think and act like other successful, happy, healthy, and prosperous people, you will soon enjoy the kind of lives they do. When you change your thinking, you change your life.

**Nature understands no jesting. She is always true, always serious, always severe. She is always right, and the errors and faults are always those of man. The man incapable of appreciating her she despises, and only to the apt, the pure, and the true does she resign herself and reveal her secrets.**

—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



# Chapter

## Change Your Thinking

There is a law in psychology that if you form a picture in your mind of what you would like to be, and you keep and hold that picture there long enough, you will soon become exactly as you have been thinking.

—William James

Once upon a time there was a woman, about 30 years old, married with two children. Like many people, she had grown up in a home where she was constantly criticized and often treated unfairly by her parents. As a result, she developed deep feelings of inferiority and low self-esteem. She was negative and fearful, and had no confidence at all. She was shy and self-effacing, and did not consider herself to be particularly valuable or worthwhile. She felt that she was not really talented at anything.

One day, as she was driving to the store, another car went through a red light and smashed into her. When she awoke, she was in the hospital with a mild concussion and complete memory loss. She could still speak, but she had no recollection of any part of her past life. She was a total amnesiac.

At first, the doctors thought it would be temporary. But weeks passed and no trace of her memory returned. Her husband and children visited her daily, but she did not know them. This was such an unusual case that other doctors and specialists came to visit her as well, to test her and ask her questions about her condition.



## ■ STARTING OVER

Eventually, she went home, her memory a complete blank. Determined to understand what had happened to her, she began reading medical textbooks and studying in the specialized area of amnesia and memory loss. She met and spoke with specialists in this field. Eventually she wrote a paper on her condition. Not long afterward, she was invited to address a medical convention to deliver her paper, answer questions about her amnesia, and share her experiences and ideas on neurological functioning.

During this period, something amazing happened. *She became a new person completely.* All the attention in the hospital and afterward made her feel valuable, important, and truly loved by her family. The attention and acclaim she received from members of the medical profession built her self-esteem and self-respect even higher. She became a genuinely positive, confident, outgoing woman, highly articulate, well informed, and very much in demand as a speaker and authority in the medical profession.

All memory of her negative childhood had been wiped out. Her feelings of inferiority were wiped out as well. She became a new person. She changed her thinking and changed her life.

## ■ THE BLANK SLATE

The Scottish philosopher David Hume was the first to propose the idea of the *tabula rasa* or blank slate. This theory says that each person comes into the world with no thoughts or ideas at all, and everything that a person thinks and feels is learned from infancy onward. It is as though the child's mind is a blank slate that every passing person and experience leaves a mark on. The adult becomes the sum total of everything he or she learns, feels, and experiences growing up. What the adult does and becomes later is the result of this early conditioning. As Aristotle wrote, "Whatever is impressed is expressed."

Perhaps the greatest breakthrough in the field of human potential in the twentieth century was the discovery of the *self-concept*. This is the idea that each person develops a bundle of beliefs regarding oneself, starting at birth. Your self-concept then becomes

the master program of your subconscious computer, determining everything you think, say, feel, and do. For this reason, all change in your outer life begins with a change in your self-concept, with a change in the way you think and feel about yourself and your world.

The child is born with no self-concept at all. Every idea, opinion, feeling, attitude, or value you have as an adult you learned from childhood. Everything you are today is the result of an idea or impression you took in and accepted as true. When you believe something to be true, it becomes true for you, whatever the fact may be. “You are not what you think you are, but what you think, you are.”

## ■ FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE LASTING

If you were raised by parents who continually told you what a good person you were, who loved you, encouraged you, supported you, and believed in you, no matter what you did or didn't do, you would grow up with the belief that you were a good and valuable person. By the age of three, this belief would *lock in* and become a fundamental part of the way you view yourself in relation to your world. Thereafter, no matter what happens to you, you would hold to this belief. It would become your reality.

If you were raised by parents who did not know how powerful their words and behaviors could be in shaping your personality, they could very easily have used destructive criticism, disapproval, and physical or emotional punishment to discipline or control you. When a child is continually criticized at an early age, he soon concludes that there is something wrong with him. He doesn't understand why it is that he is being criticized or punished, but he assumes that his parents know the truth about him, and that he deserves it. He begins to feel that he is not valuable or lovable. He is not worth very much. He must therefore be worthless.

Almost all personality problems in adolescence and adulthood are rooted in what psychologists refer to as *love withheld*. The child needs love like roses need rain. When children feel unloved, they feel unsafe and insecure. They think, “I'm not good enough.” They begin to engage in compensatory behaviors to make up for this inner anxiety. This sense of love deprivation is manifested in misbehavior, personality problems, bursts of anger,



depression, hopelessness, lack of ambition, and problems with people and relationships.

## ■ YOU ARE BORN UNAFRAID

The child is born with no fears, except those of falling and loud noises. All other fears have to be taught to the child as he or she grows up.

The two major fears we all develop are the fear of *failure* or *loss* and the fear of *criticism* or *rejection*. We begin to learn the fear of failure if we are continually criticized and punished when we try something new or different. We are shouted at and told, “No! Get away from there! Stop that! Put that down!” Physical punishment and the withholding of love, possibilities that scare us and make us feel insecure, often accompany these shouts and criticisms.

We soon begin to believe that we are too small, too weak, incompetent, inadequate, and incapable of doing anything new or different. We express this feeling with the words, “I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.” Whenever we think about doing something new or challenging, we automatically respond with feelings of fear, trembling, and a churning stomach. We react exactly as if we are afraid of getting a spanking. We say, “I can’t” over and over.

The fear of failure is the primary reason for failure in adult life. As the result of destructive criticism in childhood, we hold ourselves back as adults. We sell ourselves short. We quit before we even try the first time. Instead of using our amazing minds to figure out how to get what we want, we use our reasoning ability to create reasons why we can’t, and why the things we want are not possible for us.

## ■ THE NEED TO BE LOVED

The second major fear that holds us back, undermines our confidence, and destroys our desire for a happy life is the fear of *rejection*, and its expression, *criticism*. This emotion is learned in early childhood as the result of our parents expressing disapproval of us whenever we do something they don’t like, or don’t do something that they expect. As a result of our displeasing them, they

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