

THE BIG IDEAS



The 7 Timeless Virtues
of enlightened living.

Invest In Yourself
It's a good investment. :)

Blueprinting
It starts in your mind.

Secret of Happiness
Do what you love!

Rise with the Sun
Tomorrow AM good?

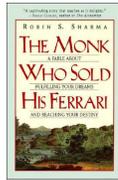
Strengthen Your Mind
Hit the mind gym!

Mantras
Free your mind.

You're a Genius
So are you, you & you.

Greatness
It's your birthright.

Your Blip on the Canvas
Make it beautiful!



The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari

A Fable About Fulfilling Your Dreams and Reaching Your Destiny

BY ROBIN SHARMA · HARPERONE © 1999 · 224 PAGES

“From tonight onwards, take complete control of your life. Decide, once and for all, to be the master of your fate. Run your own race. Discover your calling and you will start to experience the ecstasy of an inspired life.”

~ Robin Sharma from *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*

Robin Sharma is one of the world's top leadership experts—right up there with Jack Welch and Tom Peters. In fact, he was recently recognized as the #2 leadership guru in the world. He also happens to be a great author and a super cool guy.

When I was running Zaadz, our companies did some work together and I got a copy of his book, *The Greatness Guide*. AMAZING. I loved it so much I had autographed copies sent to everyone on our team immediately. Several months later Robin and I connected in Los Angeles. Our breakfast turned into me driving him to the airport to continue our chat and, after 4 or 5 loops around LAX buying some time before his flight, I finally had to send him off with an “OMG! I just met a soul-brother!” hug. (Love it when that happens! :)

In this Note we're gonna take a quick look at another one of his great books: *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*. It's a fun, quick-reading fable that lives up to its subtitle of being about “*Fulfilling Your Dreams and Reaching Your Destiny*.” (Think: *The Alchemist* with yogi-attorneys rather than a shepherd. In fact, Paulo Coelho, another one of my absolute favorite authors, said this about the book: “*A captivating story that teaches as it delights.*”)

The book is PACKED with Big Ideas and I'll only be able to profile a handful of my favorites, so, if it's resonating with you, I highly recommend you pick it up and enjoy it as an inspiring, life-changing, weekend read. (And while you're at it, get *The Greatness Guide*. Trust me. :)

QUICK CONTEXT

The book features Julian Mantle, a former rock star attorney who has a heart attack in the court room one day and decides to sell his ferrari and get his spirituality on. He comes back from the Himalayas a new man and shares his wisdom with his protégé, John, who tells us the story.

THE 7 TIMELESS VIRTUES OF ENLIGHTENED LIVING

The fable shines light on these “7 Timeless Virtues of Enlightened Living”:

1. **Master Your Mind**
2. **Follow Your Purpose**
3. **Practice Kaizen** (constant and never-ending improvement)
4. **Live with Discipline**
5. **Respect Your Time**
6. **Selflessly Serve Others**

“The purpose of life is a
life of purpose.”

~ Robin Sharma

" Good people strengthen themselves endlessly."

~ Confucius

" No man is free who is not a master of himself."

~ Epictetus

" When you run inspiring, imaginative pictures through the movie screen of your mind, wonderful things start to happen in your life. Einstein said that 'imagination is more important than knowledge.' You must spend some time every day, even if it is just a few minutes, in the practice of creative envisioning. See yourself as you want to be, whether this means serving as a great judge, a great father or a great citizen of your community."

~ Robin Sharma

7. Embrace the Present"

INVEST IN YOURSELF

"Six hundred and seventy-two hours of inner work to profoundly improve every waking moment of the rest of your life is quite a bargain, don't you think? Investing in yourself is the best investment you will ever make. It will not only improve your life, it will improve the lives of all those around you."

Brilliant.

Invest one month to truly LIVE the ideals you're studying. Six hundred and seventy-two hours to affect the REST of your life and EVERYONE in it. Seems like a great investment to me. You?

So... That begs the question: To what do YOU need to commit a month? Is it getting up early? Making time for your kids? Making time for your self in the morning? A meditation practice? Working out? (All of the above? :)

(I hope you don't say "shucks" or what follows but... :) You might say: "Ah, shucks. I'm just way too busy to invest time in this stuff."

Where will I find the 15-30 minutes for meditation? The 30-60 minutes for exercise? The time for journaling? For scheduling my priorities into my days?

Robin likes to say that suggesting you're too busy to slow down and invest in yourself is like saying you're too busy driving to stop for gas. MAKES NO (!!) SENSE!!!

Your car needs to be re-filled with gas. YOU need to re-fill your soul with mojo.

So: Commit to living your ideals. One month. Rock it.

BLUEPRINTING

"All I'm saying is that to liberate the potential of your mind, body and soul, you must first expand your imagination. You see, things are always created twice: first in the workshop of the mind and then, and only then, in reality. I call this process 'blueprinting' because anything you create in your outer world began as a simple blueprint in your inner world."

Blueprinting.

Love that. Reminds me of Stephen Covey's *Habit #2: Begin with the End in Mind*. As Sharma says, EVERYTHING is created twice: FIRST in your mind, then in your reality.

Think about it: that place you live in? Check.

The computer you downloaded this on? The glass you drink your water from and the chair you're sitting in? Check. Check. Check. :)

The challenge is that too often we spend all of our energy thinking about things we DON'T want and then we spend all the spare time thinking about and blueprinting our vacation so we can escape the stress!

Imagine gaining control of your mind, developing your imagination and ability to envision your ideal life, and blueprinting THAT into your consciousness then into your journal and then into your life.

And then DO IT! (For at least a month, please. ;)

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

"Alright, the secret of happiness is simple: find out what you truly love to do and then direct all of your energy towards doing it."

"Never do anything because you have to. The only reason to do something is because you want to and because you know it is the right thing for you to do."

~ Robin Sharma

We'll get right to the point here: WHAT DO YOU TRULY LOVE?!?

And what % of your energy are you putting towards it?!?

I truly love _____

I dedicate _____ % of my energy to doing what I truly love.

How's it lookin'?

Do you know what you love?

If you *do know* what you love, how much of your energy are you investing in it? Do you need to take more risks and give yourself more fully to the world?!? What can you start doing NOW to invest more energy where it needs to go?!?

Remember Goethe who advised us: *"Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things that matter least."* (See my Notes on *The 80/20 Principle* for full chat.)

And Maslow (see Notes) who said: *"What you CAN be, you MUST be."* AND: *"If you deliberately plan on being less than you are capable of being, then I warn you that you'll be unhappy for the rest of your life."*

"Never forget the importance of living with unbridled exhilaration."

~Robin Sharma

If you *don't know* what you love, DISCOVERING it is your primary job. Figure it out. Passionately and joyfully seek to discover your Highest Calling. Read, journal, meditate, contemplate, discuss ideas, take a sabbatical. Whatever you need to do.

KNOW THYSELF. Know who you are, what you love, what you're here to do.

And... DO IT!

(btw: If you like 'em, read these Notes and actually DO all the exercises in them. I *guarantee* you that when you do you'll be more on purpose and excited about life—by a factor of 10—then ever before. And, if you're diggin' Robin, get his book(s), check out his site (robinsharma.com), read all his blogs, etc. As Joseph Campbell says quoting Ramakrishna: *"Do not seek illumination unless you seek it as a man whose hair is on fire seeks a pond."*)

So, what will happen when you put all your energy into that which you love?

Per Robin: **"You will wake up every morning with a limitless reservoir of energy and enthusiasm. All your thoughts will be focused on your definite objective. You won't have time to waste time. Valuable mental power will, therefore, not be wasted on trifling thoughts. You will automatically erase the worry habit and become far more effective and productive. Interestingly, you will also have a deep sense of inner harmony, as if you are somehow being guided to realize your mission. It is a wonderful feeling."**

"Most people live—whether physically, intellectually or morally—in a very restricted circle of their potential being. We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon which we do not dream."

~William James

So, get on that.

(Pretty, please. :)

RISE WITH THE SUN

"Do you know why most people sleep so much?"

Why?'

'Because they really don't have anything else to do. Those who rise with the sun all have one

"Never forget that there is power in silence and stillness. Stillness is the stepping stone to connecting with the universal source of intelligence that throbs through every living thing."

~ Robin Sharma

"When you consistently direct your mind to live in the present you will always have boundless energy, no matter what time the clock reflects."

~ Robin Sharma

"Fatigue dominates the lives of those who are living without direction and dreams."

~ Robin Sharma

"Remember, either you control your mind or your mind controls you."

~ Robin Sharma

thing in common.'

'Insanity?'

'Very funny. No, they all have a purpose that fans the flames of their inner potential.'

Love that. Coupla things here:

First: Getting up with the sun ROCKS. I used to be the kind of guy who'd like to GO TO BED with the sun rising and think people who got up at the (butt)crack of dawn were INSANE. Not any more.

I didn't make rising with the sun an ABSOLUTE commitment till I went on sabbatical in the jungles (and rice paddies) of Bali. Then I committed to aligning myself with perhaps THE most powerful force/rhythm on our planet (that would be that little rhythm of our planet spinning resulting in the sun rising and setting at a pretty regular schedule :).

I'll save the space here and simply tell you that my decision to beat the sun up every morning (and then meditate for an hour) has been, hands down, the best decision I've ever made. WAY more clarity, consistency and all that goodness than ever before.

Which leads us to the second point: Are you living on purpose? When do you get up? Do you notice a correlation in your life such that those times when you're *most* on purpose you almost spring out of bed in the morning with incredible energy that sustains itself throughout the day as you rock it? (I've *definitely* seen that.)

Know this: If you're on purpose, you tend to naturally get up early. If you aren't that on purpose but you get up early, you tend to GET ON purpose. There's something about the stillness of the morning hours that cleanses your soul and puts you in direct contact with your highest self.

So, my STRONG recommendation: RISE WITH THE SUN and start your days with a burst of inspiration that's impossible to describe until you've felt it!

(If you're a former night owl like me, you're prolly gonna need to give yourself a couple/several weeks of adjusting before you *really* feel the mojo but PLEASE trust me. It's amazing.)

* steps off soapbox *

* ahem *

* steps back up * :)

STRENGTHEN YOUR MIND

"Weak minds lead to weak actions. A strong, disciplined mind, which anyone can cultivate through daily practice, can achieve miracles. If you want to live life to the fullest, care for your thoughts as you would your most prized possessions. Work hard to remove all inner turbulence. The rewards will be abundant."

Reminds me of James Allen's *brilliant* essay *As a Man Thinketh* (see Note) where he says: "As the physically weak man can make himself strong by careful and patient training, so the man of weak thoughts can make them strong by exercising himself in right thinking."

How's YOUR mind? Is it strong? Or is it weak?

Quick test: Do you find yourself having the same negative thoughts again and again?

If so, your mind is weak.

Few things will give you a greater return than STRENGTHENING it. And, few things will mire you in mediocrity and unhappiness than allowing your mind to stay weak.

As the Buddha says: "More than those who hate you, more than all your enemies, an

"You have now learned that the mind is like a fertile garden and for it to flourish, you must nurture it daily. Never let the weeds of impure thought and action take the garden of your mind. Stand guard at the gateway of your mind. Keep it healthy and strong-it will work miracles in your life if you will only let it."

~ Robin Sharma

"Understand once and for all that your mind has magnetic power to attract all that you desire into your life. If there is lack in your life it is because there is lack in your thoughts."

~ Robin Sharma

"You are what you think about all day long."

~ Robin Sharma

"We all have something that we are meant to do. Your genius will shine through, and happiness will fill your life, the instant you discover your higher purpose and then direct all your energies towards it."

~ Robin Sharma

undisciplined mind does greater harm."

Wayne Dyer tells us we should never let a negative sentence complete itself in our heads. (Love that.)

So, take your mind to the gym today and start removing the inner turbulence.

KNOW that with disciplined practice you CAN change your mind.

May I suggest you start by removing ALL criticism (of yourself and others), complaining, blaming, and gossip?

Commit to noticing the thoughts you have and, as Robin so brilliantly says: "... care for your thoughts as you would your most prized possessions. Work hard to remove all inner turbulence. The rewards will be abundant."

MANTRAS: FREE YOUR MIND

"In Sanskrit, 'man' means 'mind' and 'tra' means 'freeing.' So a mantra is a phrase which is designed to free the mind... they [mantras] are my faithful companions wherever I go. Whether I am on the bus, walking to the library or watching the world go by in a park, I am constantly affirming all that is good in my world through mantras."

Used as a tool for re-wiring our consciousness for thousands of years, mantras (whether spoken silently in our heads or out loud, or written as affirmations on our mirrors or in our journals) are super powerful.

What are your favorite mantras? Are you using them often?

Some of mine?

From Louise Hay (see Notes on *You Can Heal Your Life*): "I love and accept myself completely." "I release all restrictions. I am free to be me."

From Deepak (see Notes on *The Spontaneous Fulfilment of Desire*): "I am totally independent of the good or bad opinion of others." "I am beneath no one." "I fearlessly handle any and all challenges in my life."

And the classically simple: "Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you."

Say those thousands of times and lemme know how you're feeling. :)

"Written affirmations are also very effective. But I have found that repeating a mantra aloud has a wonderful effect on my spirit. When I need to feel motivated, I might repeat, 'I am inspired, disciplined and energized' out loud two or three hundred times. To maintain the supreme sense of self-confidence I have cultivated, I repeat, 'I am strong, able and calm.' I even use mantras to keep me youthful and vital."

YOU'RE A GENIUS

"Every single person on the planet is a genius."

That gives me a big smile.

And it reminds me of Paulo Coelho's comment (see Notes): "I learned the most important lesson of my life: that the extraordinary is not the birthright of a chosen and privileged few, but of all people, even the humblest. That is my one certainty: we are all the manifestation of the divinity of God."

So, my friend, what is your higher purpose?

What strengths are you blessed with and destined to give to the world?!?

"Meditate on what your true calling is, and how you can give yourself to others."

~ Robin Sharma

"Today is the day to seize the moment and live a life that soars. Today is the day to live from your imagination and harvest your dreams."

~ Robin Sharma

GREATNESS: IT'S YOUR BIRTHRIGHT

"Push yourself to do more and to experience more. Harness your energy to start expanding your dreams. Yes, expand your dreams. Don't accept a life of mediocrity when you hold such infinite potential within the fortress of your mind. Dare to tap into your greatness. It's your birthright."

Robin continues: "Act as if failure is impossible, and your success will be assured. Wipe out every thought of not achieving your objectives, whether they are material or spiritual. Be brave, set no limits on the workings of your imagination. Never be a prisoner of your past. Become the architect of your future. You will never be the same."

Um, what he said. :)

YOUR BLIP ON THE CANVAS

"You will see your life for what it really is: a small blip on the canvas of eternity. And you will come to see clearly who you are and the ultimate purpose of your life."

"Which is?"

"To serve, of course."

That's genius. Ultimately, the meaning of life is to joyfully shine our light and give our greatest strengths in the greatest service to the world, eh?!?

So, here's to creating a gorgeous little blip on the canvas of eternity glowing with the radiance of honoring our ultimate purpose in life,

B

Brian Johnson,
Chief Philosopher

If you liked this Note,
you'll probably like...

Paulo Coelho

**The Magic of Thinking Big
Meditations**

As a Man Thinketh

The 80/20 Principle

About the Author of "The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari"

ROBIN S. SHARMA



Robin Sharma is one of the world's most widely read authors. His books on leadership and personal development have been published in over 60 languages and have helped millions of people succeed. The founder of Sharma Leadership International Inc., a globally respected training firm used by organizations such as Microsoft, GE, IBM, FedEx, The Harvard Business School, Nike and Yale University to help employees perform at their best, Robin holds two law degrees including a Masters of Law. That's from **RobinSharma.com** where you can learn more, sign up for Robin's newsletter, read his blogs, watch his Vlogs, and check out a LOT of amazing stuff to learn how to "Lead without Title."

About the Author of This Note

BRIAN JOHNSON



Brian Johnson is a lover of wisdom (aka a "Philosopher") and a passionate student of life who's committed to inspiring and empowering millions of people to live their greatest lives as he studies, embodies and shares the universal truths of optimal living. He hates his job.