

# Think and Grow Rich Summary – Napoleon Hill

12 MINUTE READ

[Think and Grow Rich](#) (1937)

by [Napoleon Hill](#)

Think and Grow Rich is a best-selling book of all time and a cornerstone guide to the Law of Attraction and the role of the subconscious in transforming your life – by a titan of the self-help genre, Napoleon Hill.

([233 pages](#))

[Paperback](#) | [Ebook](#) | [Audiobook](#)

**Note:** This **Think and Grow Rich summary** is part of an ongoing project to summarise the [Best Mindset Books](#) and [Best Self Help Books](#) of all time.

## Contents

1. Think and Grow Rich Review
2. Think and Grow Rich Summary
3. Engaging the Subconscious
4. Directing the Subconscious
5. Setting the Subconscious up for Success
6. The Think and Grow Rich Methodology
7. Think and Grow Rich Summary: Conclusion
8. Best Think and Grow Rich Quotes
9. Think and Grow Rich PDF Summary
10. Read More: 5 Books Like Think and Grow Rich
11. Wish There Was a Faster/Easier Way?

## Think and Grow Rich Review

[Napoleon Hill's \*Think and Grow Rich\* \(1938\) is the best-selling non-fiction book of all time.](#)

**Why?** Let's review its ingredients:

- Attention-catching, multi-layered title? **Check.** ✓
- Massive, life-altering claims? **Check.** ✓
- Compelling anecdotes and quotes to back-up those claims? **Check.** ✓
- A-List testimonials (including US presidents and business titans)? **Check.** ✓
- Skilful control of the reader's logic *and* emotions? **Check.** ✓
- A mountain of useful models and inventories? **Check.** ✓
- Multiple step-by-step action plans and questionnaires? **Check.** ✓
- A bedrock of solid principles, based on a lifetime of research? **Check.** ✓

If you want the perfect recipe for a masterpiece in self-improvement, this is it.

**And at its core lies a simple idea:**

- We reap what we sow.
- We sow what we do.
- We do what we are.
- We are what we think.

**The good news?** We alone are the masters of our thoughts.

But my life is difficult. I don't have an education. I don't have opportunities. I don't have money. I don't know where to start.

**Hogwash says Hill.**

Mastery of the world around us begins with the mastery of self. And

mastery of self is anyone's to claim. All it takes is an ounce of faith, a pinch of positivity and plenty of practice.

**Looking for quick answers?** Jump straight to the methodology section. *Think and Grow Rich* contains 7 step-by-step guides, 2 questionnaires, and at least 20 inventories. From [defining a definite purpose](#) to [building self-confidence](#), [assembling a Master Mind group](#) or [getting the perfect job](#), there's plenty to get busy with here, whatever your objectives

For now, let's dig into the principles at the source of Hill's how-to goodness. Let's look at mastering the [conscious](#) and [subconscious](#) minds.

## Think and Grow Rich Summary

[The subconscious mind is the seat of creativity](#) and a tireless servant of the body. Normally, the subconscious is busy keeping us alive and fulfilling '[basic](#)' needs. But it is possible to consciously tap into the subconscious mind – to direct it and use it to achieve any aim. This principle, its application and its rewards are at the heart of *Think and Grow Rich*.

The main bottleneck between the conscious and subconscious is communication. Conscious-subconscious communication *is* constant. But success lies in developing this dialogue actively in both directions. First, the conscious must use [autosuggestion](#) to *engage* the subconscious and *direct* it in a language it understands. Then, the conscious must learn to *step back, listen* and *support* the subconscious as it works.

## Engaging the Subconscious

To engage our subconscious, we must learn to use *strong emotional states* to soften and make it [suggestible](#). To master those states we must first learn to *create* them or *hijack* them.

## Creating Emotional States

[Emotional states](#) and [emotions](#) are two different things. An emotional state is a light whose intensity varies from very bright to very dull. Emotions are colour filters that alter that light. They twist and tint all that it shines on. Major [positive emotions](#) include [desire](#), [belief](#), [love](#), [sex](#), [enthusiasm](#), [romance](#) and [hope](#). Major negative emotions include [fear](#), [jealousy](#), [hatred](#), [revenge](#), [greed](#), [superstition](#) and [anger](#).

One way to *create* strong emotional states (i.e., passion) is to consciously trigger strong emotions (e.g., happiness, faith, fear). It doesn't matter if the trigger is external (e.g., events, images, objects, music) or internal (e.g., memories, [affirmation](#), prayer, [visualisation](#)). You just need to know what they are and how to find them. For example, to foster happiness, you might talk with a person you like. To foster faith, you might repeat affirmations ("I can do it, I can do it, I can do it") until conviction ("I *can* do it") becomes emotion (i.e., belief).

We can also create emotional states *without* emotional triggers. We do this by altering our *physical* state and letting the *emotional* state follow. Common physical triggers include meditation, fasting, fatigue, stress, alcohol and drugs. The catch? Such triggers can be harmful and their states rarely stay neutral for long. Without mastery, loss of control is common and can come at a catastrophic cost that is not always ours alone to pay.

## Hijacking Emotional States

How can we [master strong emotional states](#) once they've arisen? The answer is in learning to *hijack* them through *substitution* and *sublimation*.

The first way to *hijack* existing emotional states is *substitution*. In *substitution*, we maintain an emotional state's brightness while we alter its colour at will. How? By focussing intently on triggers that elicit a different,

desired response. For example, we can parry passionate anger with a focus on objects of love. *Substitution* is most effective when a new emotion subverts the source of an old one (e.g., by smothering a cycle of hatred). It can otherwise verge on [suppression](#), which is a draining and unsustainable coping strategy.

The second way to *hijack* existing emotional states is *sublimation*. In *sublimation* we maintain brightness *and* colour but alter the focus of action. With practice, we can learn to channel any emotion – from sex and desire to anger – into any action – from work and athletics to art. Like *substitution*, *sublimation* requires mastery of focus. First, we must override an emotion's tendency to preserve and to focus on itself. Next, we must direct that energy externally. Finally, we must learn to refresh that energy by shifting repeatedly between trigger and target.

## Emotional Mastery

*Substitution* and *sublimation* are especially effective together. An emotion's nature subtly yet fundamentally alters the nature of perception and action. That's why negative emotions, though powerful, tend to have negative effects on ourselves and the world around us. The most effective short-term approach to negative emotions is to *substitute then sublimate*. Doing so lets us consistently channel positive emotions into constructive outcomes.

Mastering *creation*, *substitution* and *sublimation* is the essence of *emotional mastery*. And emotional mastery is critical because it allows us to soften the subconscious and make it [suggestible](#) at will.

Why is that important? Because with the subconscious softened and suggestible, it's time to deliver a message.

## Directing the Subconscious

We use [visualisation](#) to talk to the subconscious in a language it understands – sensation. *Visualisation* means *imagining* events and outcomes so *realistically* that we can *feel* them. Think [hallucinations](#), [mirages](#) and [lucid dreaming](#). That's the realism we're aiming for.

Though visualisation is a common technique in meditation and performance psychology, most of us are surprisingly bad at it. The good news is we can all improve, quickly, with practice, practice, practice.

## **An Exercise in Visualisation**

Go somewhere quiet, close your eyes, set a timer for one minute. Imagine a place you know well that is filled with fond memories. Don't push yourself too hard, let the space materialise and expand in your mind. As it does, explore it, walk around it, notice the objects in their places, look at the area from different places and angles.

Was the exercise easy or difficult? Did you force the visualisation or let it unfold on its own? What did you see? What did you feel?

Perhaps that was tough. Perhaps all you got was a rough sensation. Perhaps one minute felt like a long time to stay focused. But practise this every day I promise you your visualisation will become clearer, richer and deeper. You'll begin filling in details, seeing colours and patterns, remembering textures and sensations. As your focus improves you'll be able to maintain that visualisation for longer and longer.

## **Visualising Abstract Concepts**

The keys to visualisation are clarity, detail, and repetition. But that's harder for abstract or imagined concepts like goals and objectives. One way to overcome this is to [fix a clear description of those outcomes in writing](#). This process is not about the words. It's about the images and sensations those words create. It's about making those sensations repeatable.

When a talented author writes, the words disappear. You see places and characters, you hear them, you sense them, you *feel* them. That's the outcome you want when you write down and visualise a goal, you want specificity, clarity and consistency. When you read the words aloud, you want to see their outcome, to touch it, to *feel* it. Feel your desire for that goal heighten your emotional state. Repeat the process again and again until you brand the image in your subconscious.

When you read [Hill's central six-step processes](#) yourself, you'll see he hits all of these points. He asks us to write a *clear* vision of *exactly* what wealth we want to acquire. He asks us to see and feel ourselves in possession of the money, to run the bills over our fingers, to smell the notes in our hands. He asks us to create a strong emotional state by building an intense and burning desire. THAT is visualisation, that is the route to our subconscious.

### **Engagement + Direction = Autosuggestion**

Combining visualisation with emotional states primes us. It puts the subconscious to work. It directs a subconscious that sees and acts with a subtlety our conscious mind can't emulate. A subconscious that thinks in a way that's non-linear and creative. A subconscious that works on our problems 24/7, [even as we sleep](#). This combination of *emotional mastery* and *visualisation* is the essence of *autosuggestion*.

But substitute *our* subconscious mind with the subconscious minds of *other people* and it's also the essence of [persuasion](#). Substitute our subconscious mind with *an organisation* and our conscious mind with its *leader* and it's also the essence of [leadership](#).

Think about it. Why are some advertisers, organisations and leaders so effective? Because they know how to manipulate, substitute and sublimate emotions. Because they know how to plant ideas in our minds that get us working on tasks of their choosing.

This half-humbling, half-liberating insight is at the heart of *Think and Grow Rich's* power.

## Setting the Subconscious up for Success

So with the subconscious engaged and directed, what's next? The answer, explains Hill is to *get out of its way and support it*.

There are seven ways the conscious mind can set the subconscious up for success:

1. **STEPPING BACK** – Stepping back from the pointless chatter of the mind lets us work *on* our problems rather than *in* them. It gives the subconscious time and space to work. It lets us intervene judiciously, without being sucked into the chaos. It's also essential for...
2. **LISTENING** – The subconscious tells the conscious what it needs and thinks with [emotion](#) and [inspiration](#). To understand what it's saying we must listen.
  - To listen to emotion, listen to your body. What is that tension, heaviness or lightness telling you? Now *address it, don't* suppress it. If your thoughts and emotions are in conflict, your emotions are usually right.
  - To listen to inspiration, be *quiet* and be *patient*. Respect and record "Aha!" moments. Recreate the conditions that create them. They are gifts from your subconscious and an important ingredient in...
3. **PROBLEM-SOLVING** – The conscious mind is excellent at organising and re-organising information in sequences and stories. It's especially well suited to working with timing and relationships in activities like planning. One of the most important problems we use the conscious mind to solve is...
4. **LEARNING** – The conscious and subconscious both use and are bounded by knowledge. The subconscious learns effectively from

sensation and emotion. The conscious gathers information coded in language and stored in stories and facts. This second type of knowledge is essential. It lets us learn vicariously, transcending the boundaries of personal experience.

5. **TRAINING** – “We are what we repeatedly do” and the subconscious repeatedly does what is habit. The conscious breaks habits by repeatedly intervening in the gap between stimulus and response until a new pattern is trained. This intervention takes self-awareness, imagination and will-power. For more, try these crunches on [The Power of Habit](#) or [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#).
6. **REASSURING** – Of all the negative emotions, none rules our subconscious like fear. According to Hill, we mainly fear poverty, criticism, ill-health, loss of love, old age and death. The conscious mind reassures the subconscious, conquering fear through *acceptance, belief* and *action*: “Do the thing you fear and the death of fear is certain.”
7. **PROTECTING** – Our conscious constantly competes for emotional and subconscious control. Some external influencers are positive, others negative. To protect the subconscious, the conscious mind must understand when and how the subconscious becomes vulnerable. To protect its control, it must then counter negative influences and eliminate their sources from the environment.

By far the most important point in this list is the first. Supporting our subconscious starts with listening. Listening to our subconscious starts with stepping back. You may find that difficult. You may not even know what that feels like. Don't worry. Learning when and how to step back is a lifetime of work in itself. For more, I'd strongly recommend starting with [Headspace](#) or [The Power of Now](#).

For everything else, there is more than enough to get started with in Hill's multitude of step-by-step guides, checklists and inventories...

# The Think and Grow Rich Methodology

*Think and Grow Rich* is the best selling non-fiction book of all time because, "people buy titles, and not the contents of books". In Hill's own words: "The major reason why I wrote this book on how to get money is the fact that the world has but lately passed through [an experience](#) that left millions of men and women paralysed with the fear of poverty."

Fortunately, *Think and Grow Rich* delivers on both title and contents. Its methods are clear, simple and directed at financial gain. And yet, with a grasp of the principles underneath they can be easily applied to any outcome we choose.

## 10 Steps to Financial Success

Hill's full approach to financial success can be summarised in 10 steps:

1. **Decide on a definite purpose.** Write down exactly how much money you want, by when. Make it clear, specific and tangible.
2. **Embed it in your subconscious.** Visualise this goal twice daily as if it were already a reality. Fan the flames of a burning desire to acquire it.
3. **Have faith.** Develop self-confidence, eliminate fear and trust in your ability to get what you want by applying the principles above.
4. **Make a plan.** Write a plan of action, get started right away (whether you feel ready or not) and develop your plan over time.
5. **Learn what you need.** Identify the specific knowledge you need to make your plan a success. Learn it yourself or surround yourself with people who have it.
6. **Gather support.** Put together a Master Mind group of like-minded people to sympathise, cooperate and share knowledge with.
7. **Get help from others.** Meet with your Master Mind group often and maintain perfect harmony within it.
8. **Set your subconscious up for success.** Step back, listen, support and guard your subconscious as it works.

9. **Work on your character.** Develop self-control, focus and a character and habits that align naturally with your desired outcome.
10. **Never give up.** There is no such thing as failure. Look for the opportunity in every setback and remember: "Winners never quit and quitters never win."

The book is detailed and directive on each of these points. I wouldn't have much to add or remove beyond copying and pasting Hill's own writing here.

Instead of that, I'd suggest checking out Hill's original text over at [PsiTek](#) as linked to in the relevant sections below. The how-to and introspection resources and the [8 Causes of Persistence](#) are particularly worthwhile reviewing.

### Links to How-To Resources:

- [6 Step Formula to Riches](#)
- [5 Step Formula to Faith / Self-Reliance](#)
- [3 Step Summary of Instructions](#)
- [3 Steps to Acquiring Knowledge](#)
- [4 Steps to Creating a Master Mind Group](#)
- [7 Steps to Get the Exact Job You Desire](#)
- [4 Simple Steps to Persistence](#)

### Links to Introspection Resources

- [28 Questions to Take a Personal Inventory](#)
- [65 Questions for Self Analysis](#)

### Lists of Attributes and Causes

- [11 Major Attributes of Leadership](#)
- [10 Major Causes of Failure in Leadership](#)
- [5 Places to Market Your Services](#)

- [8 Things to Include on Your Job Application](#)
- [3 Ingredients of QQS \(Quality, Quantity and Spirit\)](#)
- [31 Common Causes of Failure](#)
- [8 Causes of Persistence](#)
- [16 Symptoms of a Lack of Persistence](#)
- [10 Mind Stimuli](#)
- [5 Ingredients of Personal Magnetism](#)
- [7 Major Positive and Negative Emotions](#)
- [6 Basic Fears](#)
  - [7 Symptoms of Fear of Poverty](#)
  - [7 Symptoms of Fear of Criticism](#)
  - [6 Symptoms of Fear of Ill Health](#)
  - [3 Symptoms of Fear of Loss of Love](#)
  - [4 Symptoms of Fear of Old Age](#)
  - [2 Symptoms of Fear of Death](#)
- [57 Famous Alibis](#)

## Links to Other Lists

*Also by Napoleon Hill and referenced but not given in Think And Grow Rich.*

- [15 Laws of Success](#)
- [29 Factors in a Pleasing Personality](#)

## Think and Grow Rich Summary: Conclusion

*Think and Grow Rich's* message is simple:

- You reap what you think; and
- You alone are the master of your thoughts.

For those of us curious for more, *Think and Grow Rich* is an Atlantis of insight based on a lifetime of research and study.

Napoleon Hill's take? Whether you want to make millions, change the world or find peace – the best place to start is inside you.

You can't change the rules of the game. You can't change the hands that you're dealt.

But you *can* be the best player out there. All it starts with is a thought. And the decision to think starts with you.

## Best Think and Grow Rich Quotes

These Think and Grow Rich quotes come from [TANQ](#) - **The Art of Living**'s growing central library of thoughts, anecdotes, notes, and [inspirational quotes](#).

***"The starting point of all achievement is DESIRE. Keep this constantly in mind. Weak desire brings weak results, just as a small fire makes a small amount of heat."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"You are the master of your destiny. You can influence, direct and control your own environment. You can make your life what you want it to be."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"When defeat comes, accept it as a signal that your plans are not sound, rebuild those plans, and set sail once more toward your coveted goal."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"Before success comes in any man's life, he is sure to meet with much temporary defeat, and, perhaps, some failure. When defeat***

***overtakes a man, the easiest and most logical thing to do is to quit. That is exactly what the majority of men do. More than five hundred of the most successful men this country has ever known told the author their greatest success came just one step beyond the point at which defeat had overtaken them."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"Set your mind on a definite goal and observe how quickly the world stands aside to let you pass."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"The way of success is the way of continuous pursuit of knowledge."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"Happiness is found in doing, not merely possessing."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"A quitter never wins and a winner never quits."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"An educated man is not, necessarily, one who has an abundance of general or specialized knowledge. An educated man is one who has so developed the faculties of his mind that he may acquire anything he wants, or its equivalent, without violating the rights of others."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

***"Every adversity, every failure, every heartbreak, carries with it the seed of an equal or greater benefit."***

- [Napoleon Hill](#), Think and Grow Rich

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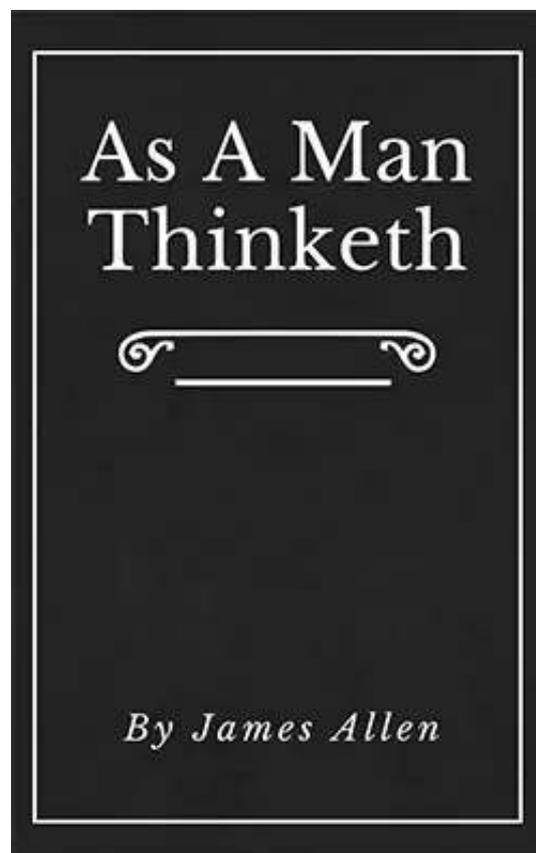
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## Read More: 5 Books Like Think and Grow Rich

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And in the meantime...

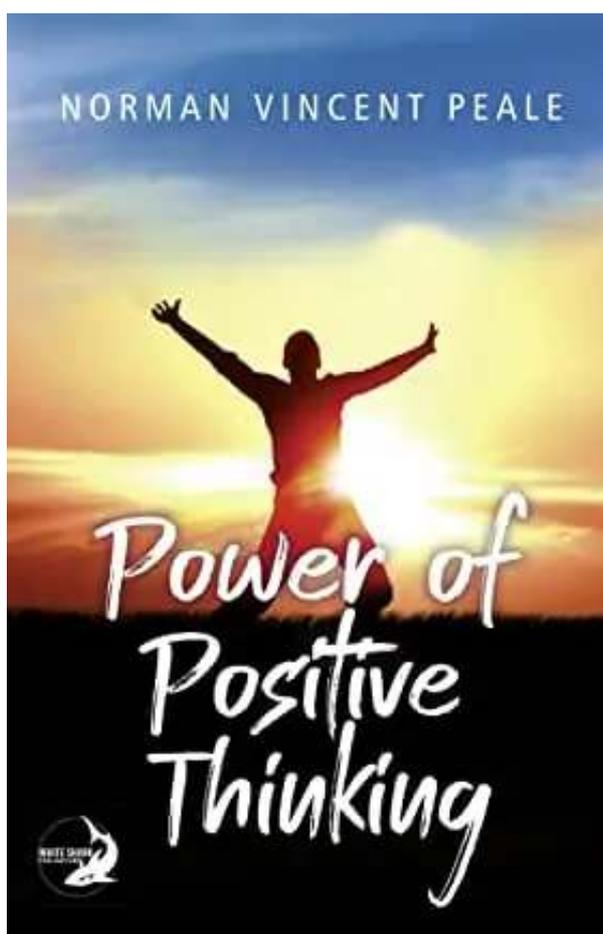
**Here are 5 top books like Think and Grow Rich...**



## 6. [As a Man Thinketh](#) - [James Allen](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

As a Man Thinketh is THE #1 ranking, uplifting, pocket-sized pep-talk on the power and importance of changing your thoughts as the cornerstone to changing your life - by philosopher and prolific self-help author, James Allen.

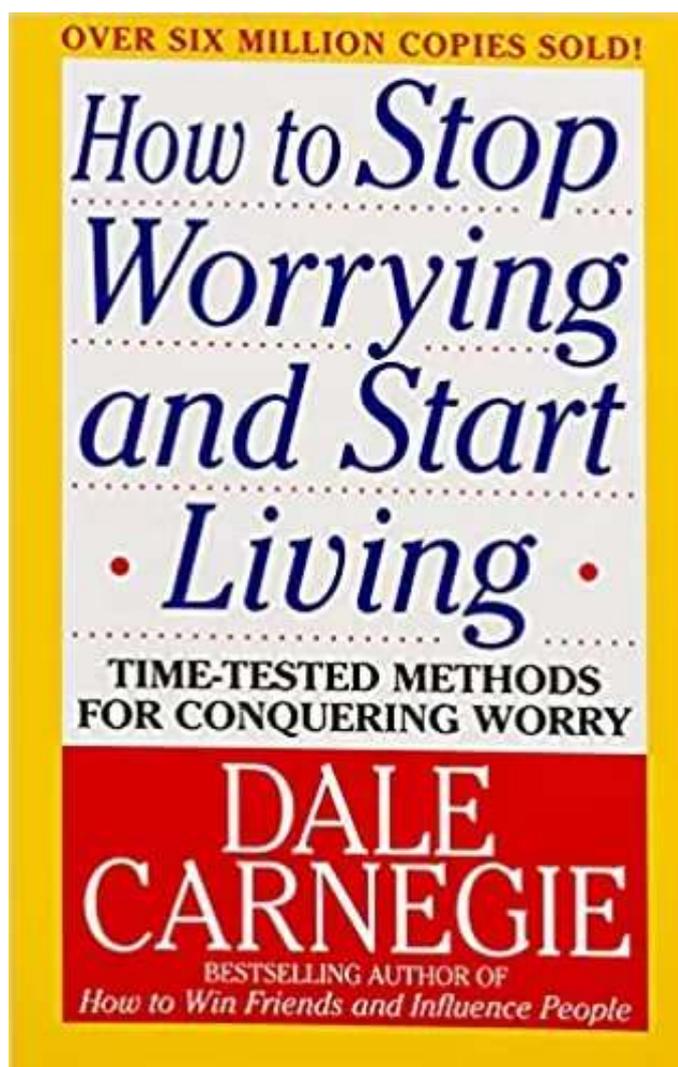
Published 1902 // 34 pages // Rated 4.3 over 68,100 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



## 2. [The Power of Positive Thinking](#) - [Norman Vincent Peale](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

The Power of Positive Thinking reminds us that we don't need a PhD in Human Relations to live our best lives if we can learn a few tricks to change how we think - by minister and best-selling author Norman Vincent Peale.

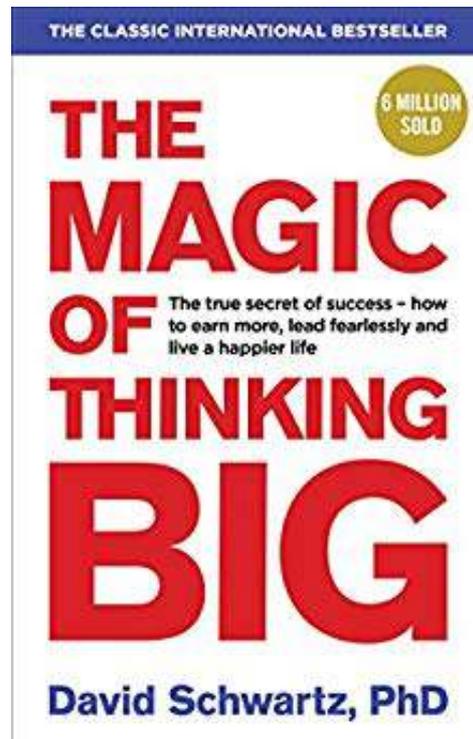
Published 1952 // 128 pages // Rated 4.1 over 96,300 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



### 3. [How to Stop Worrying and Start Living](#) - [Dale Carnegie](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

How to Stop Worrying and Start Living is a practical, common-sense bible filled with stories, case studies and simple step-by-step guides to conquering worry, anxiety and depression - by self development guru, Dale Carnegie.

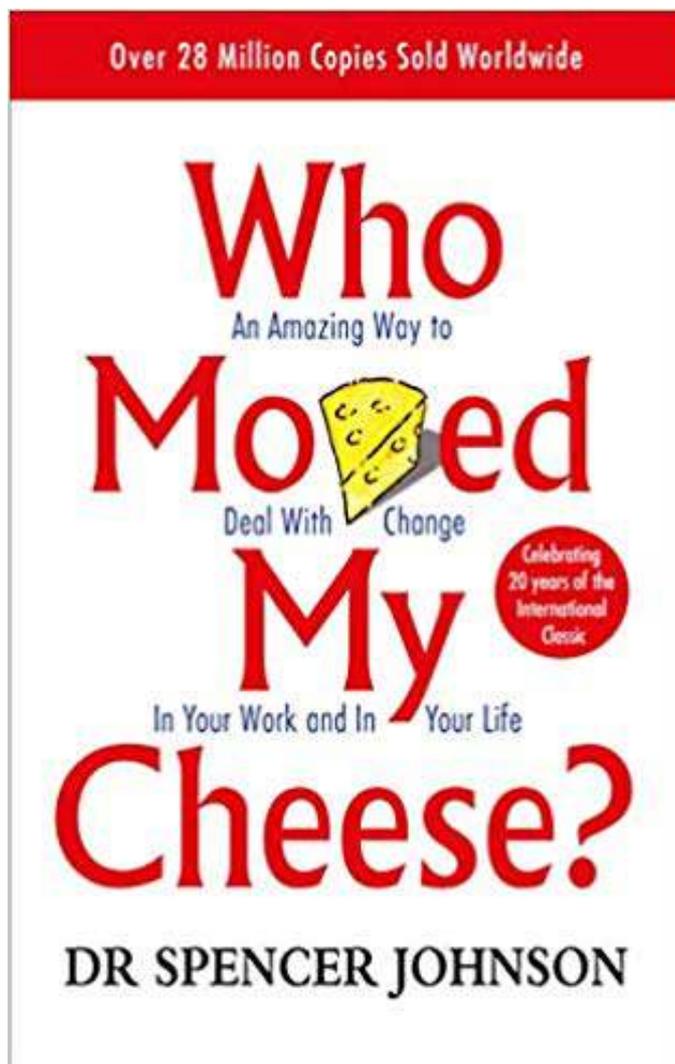
Published 1944 // 358 pages // Rated 4.1 over 87,800 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



#### 4. [The Magic of Thinking Big](#) - [David J. Schwartz](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

The Magic of Thinking Big is a powerful, practical and uplifting book to help get you out of a rut, invigorate your goals and empower you towards success - by life-long motivational writer and coach, David J. Schwartz.

Published 1959 // 320 pages // Rated 4.2 over 77,300 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



## 5. [Who Moved My Cheese?](#) - [Spencer Johnson](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

Who Moved My Cheese is a short, light-hearted parable about the different ways we respond to life's changes and how doing so skillfully can help us find more success and happiness in our lives - by best-selling author, Dr. Spencer Johnson.

Published 1998 // 96 pages // Rated 3.8 over 405,300 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

## **Wish There Was a Faster/Easier Way?**

Whenever you're ready, here are four ways I can help you be more productive, find more balance and live life more on purpose...

1. **Curious? Discover how productive you really are...** Take this free, 2-minute assessment to unlock your PQ and discover the top 25 habits you need to get big things done. [Take the 2-minute quiz →](#)
2. **Overwhelmed? Get a free chapter of my book...** Let me show you how to beat procrastination, permanently, with this free sneak peek inside **TAoL**'s ultimate productivity primer. [Download your free chapter →](#)
3. **Stuck? Grab a 90-Day TRACKTION Planner...** Get the tool thousands trust to help them take control of their time, master their habits and hit goals in every part of their lives. [Order your 90-day planner →](#)
4. **Burned out? Join the TRACKTION Community...** Take the 6-week masterclass, get weekly group coaching, find accountability partners and connect with like-minded self-starters. [Get started FREE →](#)

## Think and Grow Rich

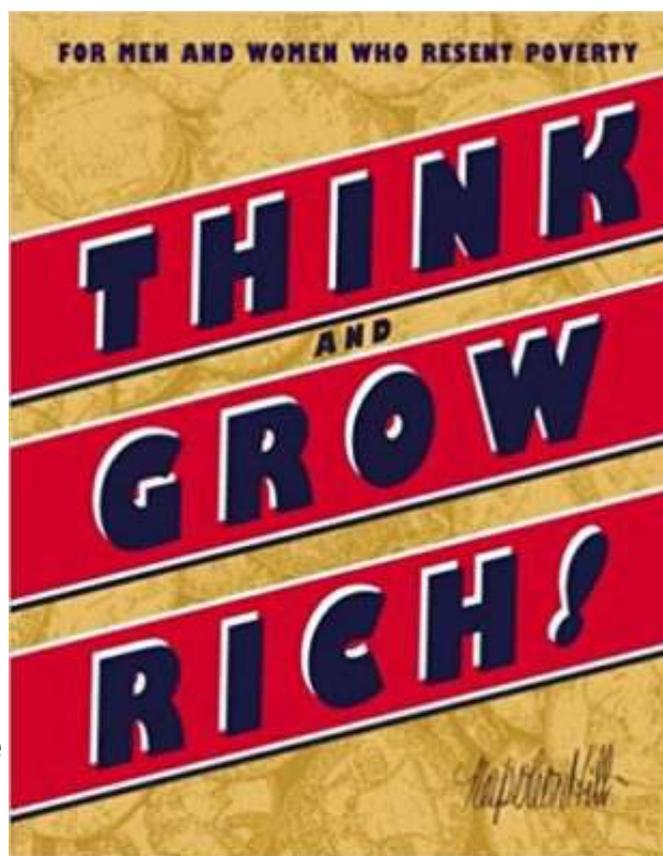
12 MINUTE READ | Think and Grow Rich is a best-selling book of all time and a cornerstone guide to the Law of Attraction and the role of the subconscious in transforming your life – by a titan of the self-help genre, Napoleon Hill.

**URL:** <https://amzn.to/3rXjmsc>

**Author:** Napoleon Hill

### [Arthur Worsley](#)

I founded **TAoL** to discover and share the best wisdom on how to live long and prosper. Before that I studied Psychology, Philosophy & Physiology at Oxford and consulted at



McKinsey. **Still curious?** [Learn more](#) or [take my FREE productivity quiz](#).