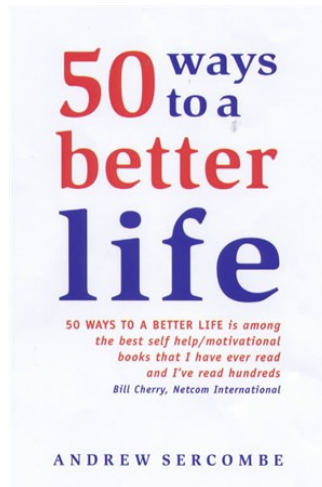


50 Ways to a Better Life

Millennium Edition



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■ The Big Idea

Hidden deep inside the core of your life is a huge vault stacked high with the things you have counted as significant: the way you behave, what you think and say, your beliefs, and personal integrity.

Your actual worth has little to do with your pension funds, cash accounts, natural abilities, or anything of the sort. If you decide to focus on what is *really* important for you, instead of the things that are not too important, it could permanently change your life for the better.

Why You Need This Book

This book provides a much more rewarding way of seeing things instead of focusing on what is only transitory or not even important at all, and as such it will help you work on what is truly important to you. It represents a fresh and practical new way to view yourself and your world.

Fifty Ways to a Better Life!

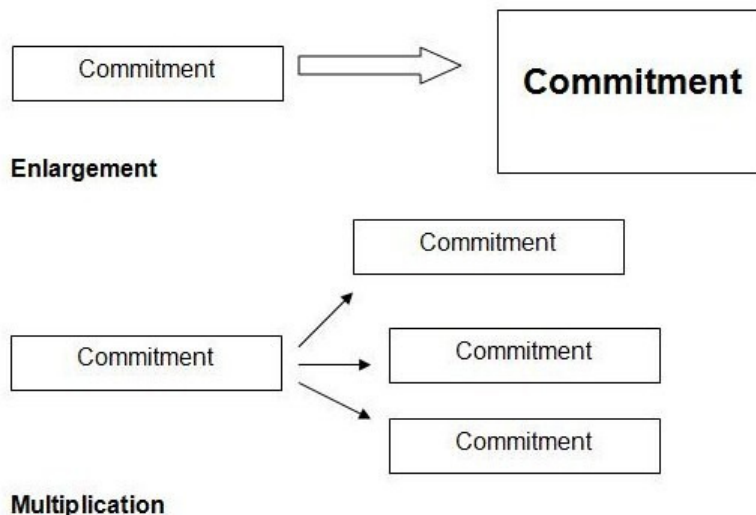
1. A HEALTHY PERSONAL ECOLOGY

A good foundation and a healthy personal 'ecology' are essential ingredients for a balanced lifestyle. Keep a lifetime of healthy balance, not primarily by juggling short-term bright ideas for instant relief but by building into your life immovable principles of truth that have been proven to stand the test of time and of history.

2. WHAT YOU SOW WILL GROW

You can't fool the system... well, not for long. So don't try. You will reap what you sow. Don't think for a moment you can violate this principle. The same applies to other things we grow. If you feed damaging things – revenge, hate, lying, meanness, gossip – they get worse. If you feed good things – compassion, generosity, kindness, courage – these will blossom and bear fruit.

Two sorts of growth: enlargement and multiplication



3. THE NOT-SO-FUNNY FARM

Just as cows, pigs, horses and chicken have unique ways of functioning, so do human beings. The human brain is the most complex and intricate structure in the known universe, and yours is different from everyone else's. Foundational to a happy society is the discovery of each person's strengths and the freedom to go with them.

4. SEE YOURSELF ACCURATELY

The biggest room in the world is the room for improvement – and we're all in it. You cannot always second-guess how others will see you. Your dentist and the window cleaner will see you very differently.

5. DEVELOP AN INCLUSIVE MENTALITY

When you include people and groups in your plans and decisions, you reduce the conflict between yourself and other people making life a whole lot more enjoyable.

6. LET'S GET CREATIVE

You have huge creative potential. Release the massive, hidden, subconscious resources you already have – the un-harnessed and unknown intellectual capital, creative insight, and emotional energies belonging to each and every person.

7. KEEP READING!

Books enable us to gain, as our own, the rich insights and wisdom of men and women from both the past and present. We can see the world differently by looking at it through their eyes.

8. DISCOVER YOUR AUDIENCE

Make a list of people who know the way you live. Listen to them carefully but don't let them control your life. You are responsible for you.

9. EMBRACE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

You are responsible for your life and how it affects others, intentionally or unintentionally. You are responsible both *to* others and *for* others. You are responsible to the community in which you live for the way you behave.

10. POWER THROUGH MENTORING

Discover the power of mentoring. Get yourself a mentor who will develop your thinking. Seek out a coach who will show you how to reach beyond your perceived limits. Apprentice yourself to these people.

11. GET ACCOUNTABLE

One way to be accountable is to find a person, someone who is necessarily wiser and stronger than you and who is trustworthy, and develop a friendship with him or her.

12. EMPTY THE BARN

Empty the barn – expect a harvest! Make that seed, those resources available. Sow them. What we possess is like manure, it is no good unless it is spread around. You may want to trade your resources or give them freely. Either way, ship them out where they'll be of use.

13. LIVE LIFE IN COLOR

Avoid grey twilight like the plague! Break out of the ordinary! Live differently! Dare to go against the tide! Live life in color! Our physical eyes lose their ability to enjoy color as the light fades and shadows come. By living in the light, we live life in color.



14. BE PRO-ACTIVE IN MAKING CHOICES

If we do not take control of our lives, taking responsibility for what goes in and out and how our lives are run, then other circumstances and people will do it for us. Controlled people are rarely as happy, relaxed or physically healthy as those who are pro-active in making decisions about their lives.

15. GET PRO-ACTIVE BY AVOIDING PASSIVITY

Fire burns, water drowns – and the day you make excuses instead of positive choices is the day your life goes downhill. Don't opt out. Opt in.

16. ME & CO.

You need to trade with others in order to live. We trade time, attention, acceptance, friendship, skills, gratitude, wit, material and emotional security, approval, knowledge, care, etc. as well as money. Whatever resources you have you can offer to others and receive something back.

17. WALK THE PATH TO FREEDOM

A ship in a harbor is safe, but staying safe in harbors is not what ships were made to do. All the improvements we make to our lives start with our will. That will is all important when it comes to dealing with passivity. Like any muscle, your will, or resolve, is strengthened by use.

18. CHANGE IS HERE TO STAY!

Nothing stays the same. The whole universe is altering and developing, and cannot backtrack. Those who are best able to adapt to change are the emotionally healthy. Psychologists recognise that an ability to adjust to life is a very important sign of emotional health.

19. DREAM ON... PLEASE!

Some people need to see before they believe. Others have the ability to believe before they see. Dreaming is the raw material of physical reality. Without dreams there will be no evidence. Are you going to leave the dreaming to others or are you going to have some fun yourself? Dream on... please! The world needs you to do that.

20. DEVELOP HEALTHY DEFENSES

Temporary walls are OK for a bit. They enable you to heal and gather yourself. Never make them permanent though. Take them down at the earliest opportunity. Give people space to change their minds.

21. UNDERSTAND FEAR

Fear and stress are both closely linked to being out of control, or being in the control of another dominating person or situation. We can react in different ways instead of being scared and stressing out.

22. KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

Most of us do need something to go for. Aim at nothing and you'll hit it every time! And the most important things to go for in life are invisible, intangible. Maybe you haven't got a 'prize' to go for at the moment. Now is the time to decide on one.

23. CHOOSE TO ENTHUSE

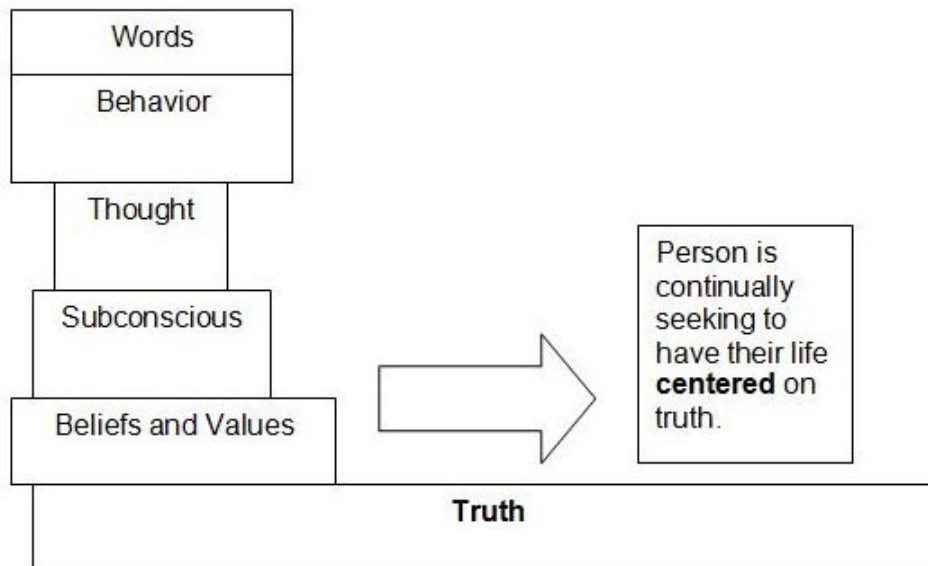
Attitude is everything for someone who wants to move forward. Negativity, however understandable and justifiable, doesn't work and is known to damage people. We have to deal with it. You want a better life? Live with passion.

24. BE PART OF THE ANSWER, NOT PART OF THE PROBLEM

Most situations are repairable – and you can help repair them! Boost people's self-esteem. Value them as human beings, even though you may not naturally like them very much. Curb your criticism. Stand up for them – even when you don't agree with what they say or do.

25. LIVE YOUR BELIEFS AND VALUES

The person with thought-out beliefs and values and whose behavior demonstrates the validity of what is both said and thought, is a person who has a lot more credibility and integrity than others. You must continually seek to have your life centred on truth.



26. AUDIT THE BANK ACCOUNT

The selection of beliefs, values and principles that govern the decisions we make and the priorities we have are often quite subconscious, being instilled into us by our upbringing and by traumatic or significant events or relationships we have experienced. Most of us would agree that beliefs, values and principles that are harmful to us are best eliminated... when we eventually identify them, of course!

27. CLEAN UP

Remember, you only want good things in the bank of your life. Bad things have a habit of affecting everything near them. Be careful not to compromise.

28. PERSONAL FREEDOM

Many people, of all ages, live crippled lives because they have chosen to hold tightly onto something from the past: a past hurt, grievance, or offence – or find they are locked in to a relationship or job they've ceased to get anything good from. Gripping on too tightly, even to good things, can destroy our freedom.

29. CONCILIATION ECOLOGY

Conciliation Ecology is about creating an environment around us and our organization that is proactively focused on reducing conflict and promoting acceptance. It is not an easy option, but profoundly affects the prosperity of all those concerned. Wise people and wise organizations foster a conciliation ecology.

30. A FINANCIAL BONUS!

Financial rewards come in when we get things right. Especially in business, when there is no personal and departmental 'bruising', no productivity loss, and when there is a happier atmosphere in the workplace and at home.

31. OWNING THE RUBBISH

I have seen hundreds of people with their lives tarnished from the demeaning of others, abused by people who knew better. None of us can escape the knocks of life. Most of us get our share. The answer is to forgive those who hurt us, and keep on forgiving. Whoever is at fault, forgive them. Bitterness is very destructive, and will destroy your happiness long before it destroys anyone else.

32. APOLOGIZE PROPERLY

The key point about apologizing is to do it wholeheartedly. This is much harder to do for some people than others, but it's well worth it in the long run. Apologizing properly sets both you and the other person free.

33. GROW TRUST... AGAIN?

Can trust re-grow? Just like a tree, trust is an organic, changing thing. It depends on how badly it was damaged. New trust can grow where the old trust's died. It will definitely be different. Because it is a better-informed trust, it can often turn out to be much more reliable.

34. EXPRESS GRATITUDE

Say thank you and mean it. It is always possible to be grateful for something. Sometimes a proper thank-you is worth far more than the tip that may go with it. After all, life doesn't consist of the abundance of possessions; it consists of connections between people. Relationships are fed with words.

35. THE PARADOX OF TOUGH TIMES

Failing is success trying to be born. You're only a failure if you actually quit. If you want a better life, to outrun the rat race, to enrich your life, don't be seduced by the easier choices, go for the tougher ones, the ones that will truly develop you, challenge you, strengthen you, and empower you. Don't try to buy your way out. Allow them to have their effect – co-operate with them. You will emerge a better person.

36. CHOOSE TO LEAD

Secondary leadership is about becoming aware of the influence we do have and quite deliberately choosing how we are going to do make use of it. You can use your skills and abilities to influence other people for good and make this world a better place to live in.

37. INFLUENCE BEFORE PROMINENCE

Prominence may come, but as any public figure will tell you, it is a mixed blessing. Some of the most influential people in our culture are unknown, hidden from public view. Recognition is not high on their list of motivating factors. They just want their life here on this planet to have made a difference. Whoever you are, remember influence comes before prominence in the list of priorities.

38. INFLUENCE BY EXAMPLE

Example is not the best way to influence people; it's the only way. Irrespective of what you say, people will follow what you do. Those closest to you, or those who spend most time around you, will pick up the most – especially if you are important to them as a perceived role model.

39. AIM FOR INTER-DEPENDENCE

In just about every context, we can do more together than we can if we work in isolation; the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Inter-dependent relationships can be long-term or short-term ones, or even anything in between. The delight of such relationships is their flexibility and usefulness.

40. STOP TOUCHING WOOD

In psychology, 'touching wood' is known as a sort of anchor, something we do to bring a particular feeling to ourselves. The fear of the unknown revealed by 'touching wood' is a fear we can do without. Such fears can be powerful and do not serve us well. Your life will not be undermined when you talk positively about the things you hope for in the future or talk gratefully about the past.

41. PREPARE YOURSELVES

Live beyond merely taking on other people's beliefs and values and bolting them together like scaffolding around weak architecture. Prepare yourself, your mind, for action. Establish properly inter-linked, alive and functioning principles for the core of your life that provide form and strength for the outer life you live. And don't misuse them.

42. CAVE WALKING

When you are afraid or insecure, do you tend to run and hide yourself at the back of the cave, or come out into the light? Hiding never works. You are safer in the light. It is so releasing to be walking in the light instead of skulking in the murky grey shadows like a cave dweller. Face the truth.

43. TRY 'NO REASON' GENEROSITY

Being generous means giving more than is due. An attitude of generosity affects a person's outlook on life in general and is well worth the apparent loss. See giving as an investment for the future. One benefit for us is that it deals with meanness.

44. KNOWING OR INQUIRY?

None of us has all the answers. Like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle life unfolds with each of us contributing our part. However, we badly need each other's particular piece to see the complete picture. What would it take for you to move from a position of knowing to a position of inquiry?

45. HAVE THE COURAGE OF YOUR CONVICTIONS

There are some things and people worth dying for – especially if it's for what you deeply believe in.

46. HERO WORSHIP

You do not need to walk the road alone. Wisdom and guidance are available to all those – you just have to seek it out.

47. PRACTICE SAYING A POSITIVE 'NO'

Being in control of your life, being able to refrain, to say 'No,' brings a wonderful sense of personal power although for the first few times it may be a bit of a culture shock. The more we exercise the muscles of self-control, the stronger they get. It costs little more than a dose of determination to stay in control. Say 'no' sometimes. No one seriously wants a world of greedy hedonistic people.

48. BAKER'S DOZEN ON STRESS

13 dead simple de-stressers:

1. Simplify.
2. Smile and laugh a lot.
3. Eat and drink healthily.
4. Fill your mind with good, beautiful, positive things.
5. Work hard and play hard with an organized framework.
6. Rest properly.
7. Count your blessings every day and be thankful.
8. Find a life target and set realistic personal goals to hit it.
9. Forgive and keep your conscience clear.
10. Exercise vigorously three times a week until you're smiling again.
11. Be kind to people.
12. Say nice things about yourself.
13. Dream positively about your future.

49. DECIDE WHERE YOU ARE GOING

Used properly and with integrity, a mission statement can be brilliantly helpful. Used badly or to manipulate, it is worse than useless, a thorough distraction. It will provide you with a clear sense of direction.

50. FINISH WELL

Whether it is leaving school, a resignation, retirement, a death, divorce – do your best to finish well.

AND, FINALLY... ESSENTIAL INNER POWER

Inner power within yourself is your secret weapon to help you deal with the challenges you have to overcome – even, perhaps, trying to follow these 50 ways themselves.

Go enjoy!

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