



[Buy book or audiobook](#)

Awaken the Giant Within

How to Take Immediate Control of Your Mental, Emotional, Physical, and Financial

Anthony Robbins • Copyright © 1991 by Anthony Robbins
Reprinted by permission of Free Press, a division
of Simony & Schuster, Inc., N.Y. • 544 pages

Personal Development / Change Your Attitude

Take-Aways

- You have the power within to change anything about yourself.
- Everything that happens in your life begins with making a decision.
- Pain and pleasure are the twin guiding influences on your behavior and the choices you make.
- A belief is a "feeling of certainty" that is shaped by your conditioning, experiences and imagination.
- "Neuro-Associative Conditioning," or NAC, is the process of rewiring your neurology to create an everlasting change.
- You can change an emotional state by modifying your physiology or your focus.
- The questions you ask, and the words and metaphors you choose, influence your thinking and decision-making.
- The "master system of evaluation" can direct your feelings and behavior.
- Values are the principles, morals and ideals a person holds in high esteem.
- All of your experiences become a reference guide to how you will conduct yourself in the future.

Recommendation

Author and "life coach" Anthony Robbins takes on the gargantuan task of analyzing how the mind and body work, and how you can take control of every part of the process. He explains that all human actions and decisions originate in the pain-versus-pleasure principle. He then teaches you how to rewire your neurology so you associate pain with negative emotions and events, and replace it with the pleasure of the positive. Reading an Anthony Robbins book is like viewing a transcript of one of his self-empowerment seminars. The personal revelations, stories, anecdotes and analogies are fun to read, but the essential messages are buried beneath page after page of verbiage. Only the most patient and devoted Robbins follower will extract all the gems of wisdom from this lengthy treatise, but *getAbstract.com* thinks it is a worthwhile pursuit for the seeker who is willing to make this book a long-term companion.

Summary

The Power to Change

You have the power to create long-lasting change in your life, but you have to be willing to make the effort. Begin by demanding more of yourself than ever before. Decide what you want in your life and what you will not allow to intrude. Then raise the bar on your standards. Change your belief system so that it expands rather than limits your chance of success. Once you make the commitment to live by a higher standard, you will automatically modify your strategies and develop new ways to meet this commitment.

The Power to Decide

Everything that happens in your life begins with a decision. Therefore, you must take control of your decision-making processes. This means fine-tuning your focus, clearly understanding your values and developing a plan of action to achieve the results you desire. To make powerful decisions, employ these six tactics:

1. "Remember the true power of making decisions."
2. "Realize that the hardest step in achieving anything is making a true commitment - a true decision."
3. "Make decisions often."
4. "Learn from your decisions."
5. "Stay committed to your decisions, but stay flexible in your approach."
6. "Enjoy making decisions."

Pain and Pleasure

The two guiding forces in human nature are pain and pleasure. Everything you do is born of the desire to avoid pain or to experience pleasure. So why do people behave in ways that continually cause them pain? Sometimes, human beings' fear of the pain of change overpowers their desire for pleasure. People who are frozen by fear haven't yet reached their "emotional threshold," the point at which their pain drives them to act and make changes. This is the point at which pain becomes a helper and motivator. To change your behavior, create an emotional link between pleasure and a constructive behavior, and associate pain with a

negative or destructive behavior. Practice this repetitively and passionately to recondition your responses and create long-term results. Sometimes this means you must endure pain in the short-term to gain pleasure in the future.

Beliefs

A belief is a closely held "feeling of certainty" about something. People's beliefs are formed by their experiences, their references, information they gather from outside sources or their imaginations. Beliefs can vary in intensity. An opinion is a belief that is subject to change. A conviction, on the other hand, is such a powerful belief that it cannot be changed without tremendous pain. A deep-seated belief, or absolute sense of certainty, can help you accomplish almost anything.

"CANI"

CANI is a mnemonic that stands for "constant never-ending improvement." The idea of CANI is to commit to making small achievable improvements each day, over time. Apply this principle to every aspect of your life, including your business dealings, relationships, health, finances and spiritual endeavors. One way to stay energized and motivated is to envision a "compelling future." To expand your capabilities and challenge your limits, find a goal that constantly inspires you. Apply the practice of CANI, making little incremental refinements each day, to achieve your goals. Be persistent and committed. You are generating momentum by taking action.

"Neuroscience" as a Vehicle for Change

Neuroscience is the combination of the studies of brain activity and computer science. When people experience pain or pleasure, the nervous system and the brain record the cause or source of their feelings. This neurological memory lets you function and make decisions. For example, the first time a child touches a hot stovetop, the child learns that this action will cause pain. That makes the "neuro-association," so the child will avoid that behavior in the future.

"The only true security in life comes from knowing that every single day you are improving yourself in some way."

The best way to initiate an enduring change in your behavior is to associate pain with unconstructive behavior and pleasure with rewarding behavior. Accomplish this change by using "neuro-associative conditioning" or NAC. The six steps for using the pain versus pleasure principle are:

1. Establish clear goals and identify any obstacles that block you from reaching them.
2. Get "leverage" by developing a sense of urgency, reaching your "emotional threshold," and associating an unacceptable level of pain with failure.
3. Interrupt destructive patterns of behavior to change your neuro-associations.
4. Replace negative behavior with an alternative positive behavior.
5. Practice the new behavior repeatedly until it becomes a conditioned response.
6. Test this new behavior to confirm that you replaced your old neuro-associations.

Physiology and Focus

Human beings have a myriad of emotional and physical states. To increase your ability to achieve what you desire, tune into your most empowering, resourceful states. To do so - that is, to transform your emotional states - you must change either your physiology or your focus. Emotions are linked to physiology, or the way you use your body. People's posture, breathing, gestures and movements are the physical manifestations of their emotions. But, you can learn to change your physiology, and thus change your emotions. For example, if you adopt the physiology associated with happiness - smiling, laughing and being energetic - a happy emotional state will follow.

"My life's quest has been to restore the dream and to make it real, to get each of us to remember and use the unlimited power that lies sleeping within us all."

You can also change your emotional state by changing your focus. One way to do this is by manipulating your "submodalities," the building blocks of awareness. Submodalities are visual, auditory or kinesthetic. For example, you can modify a visual representation by imagining or envisaging an image and then making it bigger, brighter or more colorful in your mind. This will intensify your feelings about this image.

"Our personal rules are the ultimate judge and jury."

The questions you routinely ask others and ask yourself guide your thinking processes. Questions are the vehicle you use to evaluate your experiences. When you question your limits, or ask new questions, you open the door to progress in your life, relationships and career. Asking new or different questions also changes your focus and increases your resources. Learn to ask questions that empower you and lead you toward solutions.

Wielding Words

Humans use words to describe their emotions and beliefs. Influence how you think and feel by changing the descriptive words or metaphors you customarily use. This is the concept of "transformational vocabulary," or the idea that the language you employ to describe an experience ultimately defines that experience. Thus, by changing your vocabulary, you can change your emotional state. For example, the next time you are angry, try substituting the word "miffed" for "angry." Does that help make your angry feelings less intense?

"Action Signals"

Negative emotions are often a "call to action," or a warning that you need to make a change. This means that even negative feelings can offer positive messages and signals. The ten primary indicators that you need to take corrective action are: "discomfort, fear, hurt, anger, frustration, disappointment, guilt, inadequacy, overload or overwhelm, and loneliness." Listen to the message behind a negative emotion and use it as a catalyst for a positive change.

"The Master System"

Your perceptions, viewpoint and conditioning all influence how you evaluate or interpret your life and experiences. Five basic elements make up your "master system of evaluation:"

1. Your mental and emotional state.
2. The questions you ask.
3. Your values.
4. Your belief system.
5. The experiences that shape your perceptions.

"You don't need any special reason to feel good - you can just decide to feel good right now, simply because you're alive, simply because you want to."

A change in any one of these areas generates a "global change" in all five of them.

Your "Value Hierarchy"

Your life values are the principles, morals and ideals that are the most important to you. "Moving-toward" values are the feelings you most want to experience because they enable you to attain pleasurable states, such as love, success, comfort and freedom. "Moving-away-from values" are the emotions associated with pain, such as anger, loneliness, failure and depression. Every person has a unique "hierarchy of values." To some, love is more important than health. To others, security is more important than adventure. Knowing your value hierarchy allows you to make decisions that can help you reach a profound level of fulfillment. By simply reprioritizing your value hierarchy, you can transform the way you conduct yourself in every area of your life. First, you need to know what you want to move toward.

Setting Your Own Rules

Rules are the personal criteria you use to establish when you will feel good about an experience. Unfortunately, most people's rules provide many avenues that lead to pain and offer few pathways to pleasure. For example, if you place a high value on success and yet define success as making several million dollars a year, you are most likely doomed to fail. But if your rule for success is that it means being able to pay your bills and have a little left over, that level of achievement is much easier to accomplish. You will never be happy or feel fulfilled if you create rules that prevent you from attaining your values.

Establishing References

Everything you experience, imagine, see, feel or read about is stored in your brain. All of your meaningful experiences become resources that you use as guidance in the future. These "reference experiences" exert a primary influence on your decision-making processes. By expanding your references, you can expand your potential and your ability to achieve. Enlarge your reference base by reading, gathering knowledge, using your imagination, and pursuing new concepts and ideas.

Identity

"Identity," a powerful core concept, is the belief that dominates all your choices. Your identity is the idea you carry in your mind of what type of person you are. It is your belief in what makes you good or bad, and unique. Most people believe that it is nearly impossible to change their identity. They think of themselves as adventurous, or funny, or quiet, or nonconforming. Usually, identity labels are limiting. You have the power to bestow new labels on yourself and to decide consciously what kind of person you want to be.

Seven Days and Seven New Ways

Challenge yourself by completing the following one-week exercise. Each day for a week, take on a new assignment that can make a significant change in a key area of your life. You have the power to alter your destiny in crucial disciplines by concentrating on one realm per day. Concentrate on your emotions the first day, physical concerns the second day, relationships on the third day and financial matters on the fourth day. On the fifth day, define your code of conduct; on the sixth day, focus on time management. On the seventh day, take a well-deserved rest and have fun! See what a difference you have the power to make in your own life.

About the Author

Anthony Robbins is a self-empowerment pioneer and an expert in motivation. He offers seminars, chairs several companies and has written a number of other books, including *Unlimited Power*.



Did you like this summary?

[Buy book or audiobook](#)

<http://getab.li/4810>