

# THE GREATNESS GUIDE 2

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**101 WAYS**  
*TO REACH THE*  
**NEXT LEVEL**

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# CONTENTS

1	Be the Best You .....	2
2	Invisible Fences .....	4
3	The Power of Simple .....	6
4	Be So Good They Can't Ignore You.....	8
5	The Success Expansion Principle .....	10
6	Wear Shiny Shoes.....	12
7	Listen Carefully.....	14
8	Dream like David .....	16
9	Do It Now .....	18
10	JBN (Just Be Nice).....	20
11	There Are No Mistakes .....	22
12	The Blank Slate of Tomorrow.....	24
13	Get Great at Gratitude .....	26
14	Take Charge Fast.....	28
15	Ideas Are Worthless .....	30
16	Open Your Eyes.....	32
17	Symbols of Glory.....	34
18	Be Unreasonable .....	36
19	Not All Leaders Are the Same.....	38
20	I Learn from My Mistakes (Sometimes) .....	40
21	Ask Powerful Questions.....	42
22	Be Breathtakingly Humble .....	44
23	Be a Cool Brand .....	46

24	Cherish Conflict .....	48
25	The Responsibility Meter .....	50
26	A Lust for Growth .....	52
27	Credit Doesn't Matter .....	54
28	The Brilliance of Acceptance .....	56
29	Be a Beautiful Thinker .....	58
30	Opinions Don't Matter .....	61
31	Are You Jokeable? .....	62
32	How to Get Power .....	64
33	Habits Are Hip .....	66
34	Find Perfect Moments .....	68
35	The Paradox of Praise .....	70
36	Luck Versus Law .....	72
37	Camel's Back Syndrom .....	74
38	Burn the Extra 1 Percent .....	76
39	Remember Reciprocity .....	78
40	Say What You Mean .....	80
41	Richard Branson and Outrageous Optimism .....	82
42	Beware of Victimspeak .....	84
43	I'm Stretching Too .....	86
44	Stop Trying So Hard .....	88
45	The Mirror Test .....	90
46	Find Uncomfortable Friends .....	92
47	Innovate Where You Are .....	94

48	Pride in Parenting.....	96
49	The Hidden Machinery.....	98
50	Don't Wait for Change.....	100
51	First Principles for Great Relationships .....	102
52	Worry Versus Reflection.....	104
53	Believe in Others .....	106
54	The Best Practice Is Practice.....	108
55	Pain Serves You Well.....	110
56	Your Team's Only as Good as You .....	112
57	Music Makes Life Better.....	114
58	Don't Fight for Your Excuses .....	116
59	ABC (Always Be Connecting) .....	118
60	What Separates You?.....	120
61	Time Passes Too Fast.....	122
62	What Happened to Quiet? .....	124
63	A Stainless Character .....	126
64	Set People Free.....	128
65	A Day of Listening.....	130
66	Smart Companies Compete for Emotion.....	132
67	You'll Know When You Know .....	134
68	Be a Hero .....	136
69	Why Plan? .....	138
70	Ask to Get .....	140
71	Do New Things.....	142

72	On Personal Mastery.....	144
73	Be Unpopular .....	146
74	Own Your Greatness .....	148
75	Be like Coldplay .....	150
76	Stop Sleeping So Much .....	152
77	Go Perpendicular .....	154
78	Do Your Life.....	156
79	Give to Get.....	158
80	Be like J.K. ....	160
81	Whatever Happened to Commitment? .....	162
82	Get Excited or Get Upset.....	164
83	Build Bridges, Not Fences .....	166
84	Fail Faster .....	168
85	Angels in Your Evolution .....	170
86	Lead by Example.....	172
87	Be an Idea Factory.....	174
88	Speak Your Truth .....	176
89	Leadership Begins at Home.....	178
90	Respect Rules .....	180
91	Learn from Michael J. Fox.....	182
92	The Journey's as Good as the End .....	184
93	What Is Success?.....	186
94	Your Highest Freedom .....	188
95	Go Hollywood .....	190

96	On the Burden of Greatness .....	192
97	Live an Intense Life .....	194
98	Make Your Mark.....	196
99	Create Your Body of Work .....	198
100	Big like Mandela.....	200
101	Will You Be Great Today? .....	202





*“Our lives begin to end the day  
we become silent about things that matter.”*  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

# 1

## BE THE BEST YOU

Warren Buffet once observed, “There will never be a better you than you.” Brilliant insight. From a brilliant guy. There will never be a better me than me. And there will never be a better you than you. Some might try to copy the way you think, speak and act. But no matter how hard they try, they will only be a second-best you. Because you are unique. Only one of you alive today. Among the billions of us. Makes you stop and think, doesn’t it? Makes you realize you are pretty special. No, very special. And that there really isn’t any competition.

And so today, what will you do with you as you march out into a world that needs people playing at extraordinary with their lives more than ever before? Will you exert more of your hidden potential? Will you liberate more of your natural creativity? Will you uncover more of your authenticity? And will you be more of the you that you are meant to be? Just wondering. Because there will never be a better time to be the best you than today. And if not now, then when? Makes me think of what the philosopher Herodotus once said: “It is better by noble boldness to run the risk of being subject to half of the

evils we anticipate than to remain in cowardly listlessness for fear of what may happen.” So beautifully said.

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*There will never be a better time  
to be the best you than today.*

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# 2

## INVISIBLE FENCES

I'm sitting here at the airport in Los Angeles. Was here to speak to a group of General Electric's high-potential employees. About Leading Without Title. About standing for world-class. About their outright Greatness in all they do.

After the presentation I reflected on why so many of us play small in the core areas of our lives. Why we avoid change. Why we don't innovate and express the creative genius that resides within each one of us. Why we refuse to accept the call on our lives. And why so many of us refrain from being remarkable. The answer I came up with? Invisible Fences.

Here's what I'm talking about: I took a drive out into the countryside last week. To breathe. To renew. To think. I saw a sign from a dog training company on someone's lawn. It spoke of an Invisible Fence. It's a system that sets an invisible boundary that the dog can't get past. The dog eventually becomes conditioned so that even when that fence is gone, it will not run beyond it. The dog sets up imaginary limits that determine its reality. We're like that too. As we grow up, we adopt negative beliefs and false assumptions and sabotaging fears from the world around us. These become our Invisible

Fences. We believe they are real. When we bump up against them at work (and in life), we retreat. We believe the boundary is true. So we shrink from all we are meant to be/do/have. The illusion seems so real. But it's not. Please remember that.

So I invite you to question your Invisible Fences. Be aware of them. Observe them. Challenge them. So that when one confronts you, rather than running away from it, you exercise the force of will and talent of heart to run through it. Toward the poetic possibilities your life is meant to be. Because what you resist will persist. But what you befriend, you will transcend.

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*As we grow up, we adopt negative beliefs  
and false assumptions and sabotaging  
fears from the world around us. These  
become our Invisible Fences.*

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# 3

## THE POWER OF SIMPLE

I learn so much from my children. Not only are they my heroes—they are two of my best teachers. They have shown me how to live in the moment, helped me to see life as an adventure and taught me how to open my heart. And they’ve taught me so many lessons on *The Power of Simple*. These days, I’m all about simple. A simple message about everyone being a leader—no matter what they do or who they are. Simple ideas and tools (that actually work) to help people and organizations get to world class. And living a far simpler life (because, at heart, I’m a very simple man). Simple, to me, is so powerful (Google co-founder Sergey Brin made the point superbly when he said that at his company “Success will come from simplicity.”) Which brings me to Colby, my son.

We went to New York City a few weeks ago. A shared experience that we’d planned for a long time; it was all about celebrating his thirteenth birthday (a kid only becomes a teenager once). We hung out in SoHo. Went toy shopping at FAO Schwarz. Had a beautiful lunch at Bread (one of my favorite lunch places on earth). And saw the great play *Wicked*. A weekend full of precious pleasures and unforgettable memories. Between a father and his son.

Sunday night, on the flight home, I asked my young buddy, “What did you like best about our weekend?” He sat silently. Thought deeply. Then he smiled. “Dad, you know that hot dog you bought me on the street yesterday? I loved that the most.”  
The Power of Simple.

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*Success will come from simplicity.*

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# 4

## BE SO GOOD THEY CAN'T IGNORE YOU

Here's comedian Steve Martin's advice to young comics: "Be so good they can't ignore you." Love it. Life favors the devoted. The more you give to life, the more life sends back. It's just not possible for you to be great at what you do, always reaching for your brilliance and standing for excellence, and not win in the end. (Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead once said, "You do not merely want to be the best of the best. You want to be considered the only ones who do what you do.")

Sometimes discouragement sets in. Happens to all of us. We try hard, stay true to our dreams and pursue our ideals. Yet nothing happens. Or so it seems. But every choice matters. And every step counts. Life runs according to its own agenda, not ours. Be patient. Trust. Be like the stonecutter, steadily chipping away, day after day. Eventually, a single blow will crack the stone and reveal the diamond. An enthusiastic, dedicated person who is ridiculously good at what they do just cannot be denied. Seriously.

Steve Martin's insight speaks to me deeply. "Be so good they can't ignore you." (Management guru Peter Drucker made the point slightly differently when he observed: "Get good or get



out.”) Apply that philosophy at work. Apply it at home. Apply it in your community. Apply it to your world. Having the courage to present your gifts and your highest capacities will yield magnificent rewards. Life is always fair in the end. Trust it.

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*Life is always fair in the end. Trust it.*

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# 5

## THE SUCCESS EXPANSION PRINCIPLE

Here's a powerful idea that just might revolutionize the way you work and live if you embrace it at a DNA level: Your life will expand or contract in direct relationship to your willingness to walk directly toward the things that you fear. Do your fears and you'll shine. Run away from them and you shrink from greatness. Reminds me of what Frank Herbert wrote in *Dune*: "I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain."

So amazing what happens when you encounter a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable/insecure/scared and yet, instead of heading for the metaphorical exit door, you stay strong and do the thing you know you should do. First, you realize that the fear was mostly a hallucination. And second, you get some kind of unexpected reward for your bravery, because on the other side of every fear door lie gorgeous gifts, including personal growth, confidence and wisdom. I've seen it time and time again.

It's a law of life, I guess. So run toward fear. Start small. Slow and steady always wins the race. And watch the success you so dearly deserve begin to show up. When you most need it.

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*On the other side of every fear door  
lie gorgeous gifts.*

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