

A Pocket Guide

The Method

**Mindfulness & Gratitude
Practices For Personal and Collective
Sustainability**



**with special thanks to:
Rhonda Byrne, *The Magic*
Napoleon Hill, *Think and Grow Rich*
Robin Sharma, *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari***

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**Mindfulness & Gratitude
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by

Dr. Bruce T. Milne

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Goals for learning The Method:

- Learn and adopt powerful habits of mind in 28 days.
- Pass The Method to two other people in 30 days.
- Twenty such cycles will reach 2,097,000 people in one year and eight months, thereby producing beneficial outcomes by personal action and interdependent cooperation.

The Method makes the untested assumption that our collective well-being will improve simply from individuals like you having achieved your personal goals through peer-to-peer instruction and support. The Method does not require you to aim for any particular goals, rather whatever goals you feel are critical to your well-being. Reasonable goals include: finishing high school, finishing college, addressing addiction problems, gaining financial security, teaching a child to read, improving personal health and fitness, learning a language, overcoming depression, escaping poverty, conquering a disease, finding a compatible companion, creating a business, changing careers, etc. In keeping with The Method itself, no critique of it is contained herein. Rather, you are invited to engage playfully and imaginatively in joyful acts of discovery and transformation.

Disclaimer:

The information in this guide does not constitute a psychological or medical reference, enable someone to perform diagnostics on self or others, provide advice or treatment, ensure prevention of disease or trauma, or imply any kind of patient-doctor relationship. Readers with questions regarding personal issues may consult with a bona fide health practitioner. Materials, concepts, ideas, and practices described herein reflect opinions of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect policies or official stances of the University of New Mexico. The author(s) disclaim liability for any direct, indirect, incidental, or other types of damages or loss from exposure to, reading of, or practice of activities described in this document. Where such limitations in part or whole are not allowed, liability shall be limited as determined by applicable law.

Contents

Preface	4-5
Why Does the Method Work?.....	6
Agreement to Learn and to Tutor Others.....	7
Part I Building Mental Fitness: Mindfulness	9
Heart of the Rose (Mindfulness Exercise)	10
Embrace and Replace Negative Thoughts	11
Cultivation of Self-Image	12
Secret of the Lake: The Value of Reflection.....	13
Mantras	13
Self-Confidence Formula	14-15
Part II From Thought to Physical Reality	16
Six Steps to Achieve Your Burning Desires.....	16-17
Part III Gratitude and Acceptance	18
Recipe for Expressing Gratitude	19
Daily Practice for 28 Days	19
The Magic Rock	21
Sources	22
Outro.....	23

The Method

Compiled and written by Bruce T. Milne

Designed and edited by Beverly Salas

Preface

Have you ever wondered why reaching the fullest of your human potential feels like a full time job? Why you find yourself distracted from your goals, or falling into conflict with others? Why in moments of calm you know your true heart's desire only to realize minutes, days, or years later that you are still lacking the life you deserve? Or worse, struggling to do justice to the remarkable privilege of your one and only life?

Fortunately we live at a time when brain research is catching up to ancient wisdom. In true yin-yang fashion the mind is the functional expression of brain structure while our neurons continually rearrange connections in response to mental practices. It is never too late to change our brain by using our mind and vice versa. We know that memories are not merely played back like music etched on a CD, but rather the experience of a memory is constructed in real time via the active synthesis of proteins, analogous to growing hair or rebuilding muscle. Patients learn to step back from traumatic memories and redirect thoughts into positive mental experiences.

What if you could develop the power to observe your mental activity and redirect it to create a better life for yourself and those around you?

Our inherent nature is the product of evolution. The mating game led us to advertise our suitability to prospective mates through traits such as agreeableness, openness to new ideas, extraversion, mental stability, and conscientiousness. These are certainly important on a one-on-one basis, but humans evolved to live in groups. In *The Blank Slate* (2002), Steven Pinker explains traits such as selfishness and greed “help” us individually but do little good in groups where empathy, compassion, and altruism are rewarded. Breaking the social code through acts of greed bring attacks from the group in the form of contempt and anger. In contrast, expressions of gratitude and moral awe bring rewards to altruists. Thus, our public and private lives thrash back and forth between conflicting demands to get what we want while trying to coexist with others. This inherent tension requires us to build and continually update our personal and social skills.

The Method is a compilation of techniques to achieve your most important goals in life. It was inspired by the agendas of our benefactors, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the McCune Charitable Foundation, because of their expressed need to find solutions for poverty and structural racism that hinder the attainment of well-being for millions of people. For example, our home state New Mexico ranks 49 or 50 in the Union on measures of education, well-being, health-outcomes, safety, etc., yet for *decades no policy or program attempted by government, religion, business, or education has changed the status quo*. Indeed, rankings only tell part of the story by ignoring both how far off a population is from the mark and how much the potential for change lags behind. In the face of grand challenges we are left with the assumption that real, lasting change has to come from inside each person, developed within the inter-generational context of families and communities. Each person has the power to accomplish significant personal goals for well-being and prosperity that, collectively, will lift us all up.

Key components of The Method were introduced to the world by Napoleon Hill, Robin Sharma, and Rhonda Byrne, all of whom professed to share their wisdom for the benefit of all. It is with great gratitude to these authors, their teachers, and the source of all consciousness that this compilation is provided with complete humility and compassion for all who take up the practice. We thank Maggie Seeley, Charey Fox, dozens of Albuquerque Transitions workshop participants, the UNM Happiness and Positive Psychology Initiative, Pily Rodriguez, Michael Chang, Diane Marshall, and Clara Milne for inspiration and feedback during development of The Method. Our hope is that The Method serves you in your quest for fulfillment of your personal desires in concert with all the beings in your ever-expanding circle.

Why Does The Method Work?

1. Sharma (1997) says, like the ancients before us, we need to cultivate a harmonious set of *principles* (indeed, to guard them against contamination by negative thoughts). These principles include: **Courage, Compassion, Honesty, Humility, Industry, and Patience.**

**Memorize the six principles (hint: CCHHIP)
Use The Method to improve yourself on each count.**

2. Hill (1937) tells us the subconscious mind is a filter. It changes every day with experience. If accidentally you "program" the mind on a maladaptive basis (e.g., letting fear trump courage), the subconscious will "filter" all input on that basis. Instead, by cultivating the six principles fully, your openness to opportunities and beneficial relationships will flourish. The Method enables you to edit, to **change, your internal model of who you are and make yourself as you wish.** Well-being demands that you direct your changes toward good because the subconscious only lets you behave in ways that fit the internal model. The Method includes several means of diverting the mind from negative thoughts. Thus, by changing the internal model through contemplation and self-audit, the filter will change and you will obtain results you want.

3. The Method includes **a central practice of expressing gratitude for all aspects of life.** Those who acknowledge *with feeling* the receipt of riches receive more. People who have embarked upon Gratitude Projects lasting 30, 50, or 100 days have seen remarkable, positive changes in their lives. Gratitude projects involve keeping a daily journal in which you give thanks for 10 things/events/people you feel gratitude toward that day. The journal experience can be enhanced by adding photos, drawings or other visual representations of the source of your gratitude.



Agreement to Learn and to Tutor Others:

Writing down, or signing your name to vows, agreements, pledges, or promises formalizes your commitment; thus, making it less likely you will forget or renege.

1. After adopting The Method and gaining personal evidence of success, I will teach The Method to two other people (serving as their tutor) 30 days after my introduction and provide a copy of this guide to each person.

Date of my 1st lesson _____.

Witnessed by teacher _____.

2. Upon completing my first 28 days of practice I will register at <https://sust.unm.edu/index.html> to document my completion.

Date of 1st practice _____.

Date 28 days later _____.

3. Upon training two others and providing a copy of this guide to each, I will update my registry to document my success.

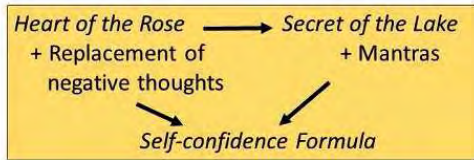
Signature _____.

The Method

Parts of The Method:

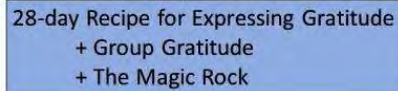
Tools:

I Building Mental
Fitness



II From Thought to
Physical Reality

III Gratitude & Acceptance



Part I Building Mental Fitness is designed to turn you into a mental warrior with the awareness and personal character needed to carry out the actions in Part II. Think of Part I as boot camp for the mind. By exercising your mind, like the muscles in your body, you gain better control over your body and your life's events.

Part II From Thought to Physical Reality gives you some specific steps to achieve success. Note: Hill (1937) equates *Definite Chief Aim in Life* with *Burning Desire* and uses the terms interchangeably.

Part III Gratitude and Acceptance provides the practice of expressing gratitude while alone and while in groups. Experience a shift toward the flow of abundance in life as a counterpoint to the rampant mentality of scarcity at play in society.

All practices are best used simultaneously throughout the 28 days, and beyond.

Part I Building Mental Fitness

A. Mindfulness

Research shows that many people are not able to tolerate being alone with their own thoughts. They actually prefer to self-administer an electric shock than spend time alone in a quiet room! (<http://news.sciencemag.org/brain-behavior/2014/07>) Yet, how could anyone program their own mind without being comfortable observing their thoughts so as to select the positive and reject the negative? From Sharma (1997) we can learn to calm our mental noise to become better observers of our stream of thoughts.



**“With mindfulness, you can establish yourself in the present in order to touch the wonders of life that are available in that moment.”
(Thich Nhat Hahn)**



Heart of the Rose (Mindfulness Exercise)

Daily: Set aside quiet time alone (preferably morning after rising and before eating) in a comfortable spot; a simple domestic retreat decorated with natural objects, candles, or peaceful photographs may help center yourself. Obtain a rose (or other richly fascinating object such as a mandala), sit comfortably, hold the flower and look into its center. Breathe calmly from the abdomen, fully, but relaxed. Your belly should press out on the inhale. Observe the petals, the play of light on the flower, its beauty and nuance of form and texture. The main point is to simply *be with the rose*. Notice something new. Continue to discover new features, quietly, one after another.

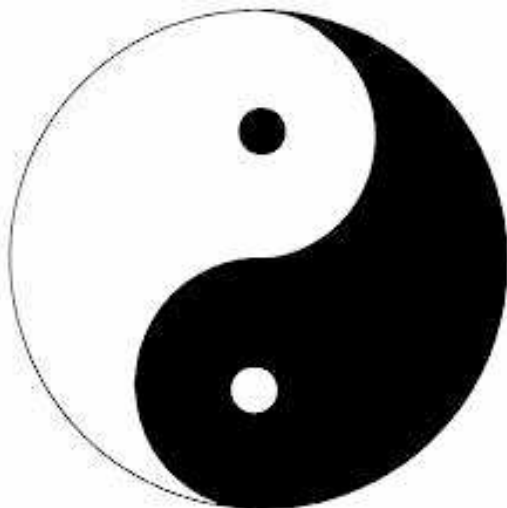
It is normal to find your thoughts drifting away. The point is to notice any stray thought, *passively* let the thought go, and return your attention gently to the rose (or mandala). That is all. With practice you may find that *accepting* the thought or external distraction as *part of your consciousness* rather than resisting it as an intrusion actually makes it easier to let it go. At first, aim for just 2 minutes a day, then increase duration as it suits you. Repeat for 28 days. If you miss a day, simply pick up where you left off. No one will judge your "performance." Sharma says our aim is merely to become nobler in this *relative to our own self*. How we stack up against others is irrelevant because as Brene Brown teaches, *you are enough*.

Embrace and Replace Negative Thoughts

A conscious mind can hold but one thought at a time, like a slide show. With awareness cultivated by *Heart of the Rose*, learn to recognize negative thoughts the moment they arise. Gently lean into this negative thought...soothe it, smooth it, allowing the thought to "be." Recognize it for what it is, then replace the negative with the positive. Have a stock positive image or positive memory at the ready. Make a game of it, or try this "cute" trick: Imagine a big red button with the word "Happy" on top; in your mind press it hard to turn on your happiness. It might even make you laugh. Minimize negative thoughts. Note any negative thoughts in a benevolent, compassionate way; note the thought for what it is, i.e., "fear" "anxiety" then open to the flip side of that emotion (fear/courage; anxiety/calm). Positive thoughts open the flow of riches into your life.

Negative emotions to replace: **envy, fear, jealousy, hatred, revenge, greed, superstition and anger**. Fear often stems from poverty, criticism, ill health, loss of love of someone, shame, old age and death. Research confirms that **fear is a state of mind created by protein synthesis** (Nader et al. 2000. *Nature* doi: 10.1038/35021052). By recognizing fearful thought, you can consciously replace it with positive thought, thereby turning off the negative process. Even better, practice taking action that goes against your fear (as long as you remain safe!).

**Avoid the influence of others who lead you to have any kind of fear.
Favor those who support thinking and acting for yourself.**



B. Cultivation of Self Image

The Method encourages replacing negative thoughts which contaminate the Six Principles (Courage, Compassion, Honesty, Humility, Industry, and Patience) and sooner than later block our acceptance of relationships and resources that would make us supremely happy. **Simply give yourself permission to cultivate a thoroughly positive image of yourself**, regardless of what anyone has ever led you to think. If you say you are youthful, you will come to feel and act young. If you say you have "plenty of hair," you will be satisfied with your pelage as it is. The *Secret of the Lake* exercise allows you to project positive aspects into your subconscious to regulate the filtering mechanism for you, deeply and flawlessly.

Sharma (1997) imparts, "...when you run inspiring, imaginative pictures through the movie screen of your mind, wonderful things start to happen in your life."



The Secret of the Lake: The Value of Reflection

Sit quietly (on a chair, on the floor, wherever you feel comfortable) with your eyes closed. Breathe calmly and deeply from the abdomen to relax and be centered, as when you practiced *Heart of the Rose*. Simply observe the breath as it travels in and out over the skin between your upper lip and nostril. Your mind and breath are connected; adjust one to improve the other. Now, imagine you are walking along a gentle trail through a beautiful land where you enter a safe, lush, inviting forest. This is a symbol of your beautiful mind as a garden that you cherish and tend lovingly. As you enter the garden, the comfortable air embraces and welcomes you. Arriving at a still, aquamarine lake, gaze into the mirror of the lake surface and visualize *your face and body as you want to be*.

Imagine *being* your ideal shape, skin tone, weight (pick a number), musculature, smile,...whatever you want.

Imagine *doing* your heart's desire: imagine working **where** you've always wanted to work doing **what** you've always wanted to do.

Where = Loft in Soho, Carnegie Hall, Sandia Laboratory
What = Paint, Write, Research, Teach, Fly, Cure

Mantras and Affirmations

Mantras and affirmations help you pull out of doldrums. Inject them into your day whenever you feel low or down in the dumps.

Repeat 10-30 times daily with feeling:

**"I am more than I appear to be,
all the world's strength and power rests inside me."**

(Sharma, 1997)

Invent other mantras to reinforce the image you created in *Secret of the Lake*. Through *auto-suggestion* (the hypnotic or subconscious adoption of an idea that one has originated oneself) while in *Secret of the Lake*, cultivate an ecstatic sense of belief in your self-image. Charge your being with love of self, joy, happiness, peace...use any trick that works.

Work with your tutor (pg. 7) to develop your own mantras and/or affirmations.

I am a joyful and compassionate person.

I like to eat well and keep my body physically toned.

My Mantras...My Personal Affirmations

1. _____

2. _____

***Self-Confidence Formula* from Hill (1937)**

The following formula modified from Napoleon Hill is a somewhat formal way to affirm targets and actions that enable us to realize self-confidence, overcome fear, and build courage. Say aloud the following words with *full commitment*; if you believe it, so will your subconscious.

1. I know I can achieve my Definite Chief Aim in life. Therefore, I *demand* of myself persistent action towards its attainment. I promise to take such action.
2. I realize the dominating thoughts of my mind will eventually reproduce themselves in outward, physical action which will gradually transform into reality.
3. I know through the principle of auto-suggestion that any desire I persistently hold in my mind will eventually seek expression through some practical means of attaining the object. Therefore, I will devote 10 minutes daily to demanding of myself the development of *self-confidence*.
4. I have clearly written down a description of my *Definite Chief Aim* in life. I will keep trying until I have developed sufficient self-confidence for its attainment.

5. I fully realize that no wealth or position can long endure unless built upon truth and justice. Therefore, I will only engage in transactions that benefit all whom they affect. I will succeed by attracting to myself the forces I wish to use, and the cooperation of other people. I will induce others to serve me because of my willingness to serve others. I will eliminate hatred, envy, jealousy, selfishness and cynicism by developing love for all beings because I know that a negative attitude towards others can never bring me success. I will cause others to believe in me, because I will believe in them, and in myself. I will sign my name to this formula, commit it to memory and repeat it aloud once a day with full faith that it will gradually influence my *thoughts* and *actions* so that I will become a self-reliant and successful person.

Signature _____

Note that in Step 1 *relentless persistence* is key. We all have stories about giving up too soon and missing out on achieving our goal. **What could be more important than becoming the confident, capable, completely human person you are?**



Throughout the *Self-Confidence Formula*, apply concrete ways (e.g., *Secret of the Lake* for # 2) to accomplish each part of the formula, such as writing down your "Definite Chief Aim in Life" (# 4) or use *Replacement of Negative Thoughts* to eliminate hatred and selfishness (# 5).

“Whatever we *plant* in our *subconscious mind* and nourish with *repetition* and *emotion* will one day *become a reality.*”
- Earl Nightingale -



Part II From Thought to Physical Reality

With days of practice behind you, your mind is trained and strong, and you are ready to *transmute* thought into reality. Transmutation: the action of changing or the state of being changed into another form. What new *form* will you take?

Six Steps to Program the Subconscious and Achieve Your Burning Desire (modified from Hill 1937)

1. State exactly what you **desire**. Be precise regarding amount, size, quality, etc. You are committing to something *in particular* to attain laser-like focus and avoid distractions. Setting a modest goal at first and finding success will help convince you of the power you actually have.

I desire _____

_____.

2. State what you are **willing to give in return** (amount of time, effort, etc.; Being *relentless* = persistence = success).

I back my desire with a commitment _____

_____.

3. Establish a **precise time limit** by when you expect to receive the outcome.

My desire will be fulfilled by _____.

4. Create a *definite plan* for carrying out your desire, and begin at once, whether you are ready or not. Again, relentless persistence is essential, albeit balanced with the principle of patience.

5. Put items 1-4 in writing. I desire _____

_____.

and will back my desire with a commitment to exchange

_____.

for obtaining my desire which will be fulfilled by (date)

_____.

My plan of action (resources, activities, partners, background, research, milestones, etc.) involves _____

_____.

6. Twice a day read the written statement from 5 aloud, once before retiring and again upon rising. When you become expert at this, you will only need to say it once because in reality that is enough to avoid self-doubt, fear, and other negativity, As you read: see, *feel*, and **believe** yourself already in the possession of the desired [riches].

Hill advises **charging yourself with positive emotions**, both psychological (such as love) and physical (sexual). Any of the seven major positive emotions **desire, faith, love, sex, enthusiasm, romance, and hope** can be used to charge the subconscious to focus on your goal. Adopt a distinct sense that **what you desire has already come to be**, "as if it is so." **Behave, talk, and act with gratitude knowing that what you seek is on its way.** Imagine the first thing you will do and the first person you will tell when it arrives.

Use imagination to amplify the feelings. For example, while standing and reciting the written statement, "scoop" gobs of universal love out of the surrounding atmosphere and wash it over and throughout your body, bringing yourself to ecstasy while imagining the outcome you desire *as if it is here now*.

Having mastered Mindfulness and the Six Steps, practice will soon bring you to such a powerful experience that you will feel a genuine physical sensation as you make the connection with your subconscious. Expect thereafter to experience novel sensations and coincidences in the real world that take you closer to your goal, finally achieving what you asked for. The more specific your request, the more specific the outcome. *Trust that pleasant surprises testify to an actual realignment* in the flow of resources and materials entering your sphere. Through this process of discovery you are advised to keep experiences private to avoid attracting negative reactions from doubters.

If a day of this practice is missed, simply pick up where you left off. **There is no judgment or blame, only the value of becoming nobler relative to your earlier self.**

Part III Gratitude & Acceptance

Expressing gratitude maintains the flow of riches. Just as there is potential for water to flow downhill, there is always potential for riches to flow from the source to you. Whomever or whatever sends the goods, services, and emotions that make our life rich certainly wants in their heart to be recognized and accepted for the contribution they made. Thus, every arrival of riches deserves acknowledgment and expression of gratitude so that the provider feels accepted. Once acknowledged, their need is fulfilled and the potential for other riches to flow is released.

Reflection: Take a few moments to recall life as a child. Review all of the gifts of shelter, clothing, food, water, transportation, love, teaching, support, friendship, experience, health, money, adventure, entertainment and so much more. Have you ever expressed sincere gratitude for these things? You still can using the Recipe for Expressing Gratitude.

As adults we generally take it all for granted, yet what if we learned to express gratitude each time we receive something we enjoy, or that keeps us alive, or bonds us with those we care about, or teaches us something to move us along our path? Without gratitude we are vulnerable to all kinds of negative thoughts such as being judgmental, envious, feeling poor, cheated, or unloved even by those we love!

The Method takes the positive view that the flow of riches will increase in proportion to the gratitude we express for everything, from the smallest pleasure of a chocolate candy to the love we receive from the soul mate of our life.

Recipe for Expressing Gratitude

I am grateful for _____
because _____

(Heartfelt) *Thank you, thank you, thank you.*

****I am grateful to be wearing clean socks because my feet smell great.***

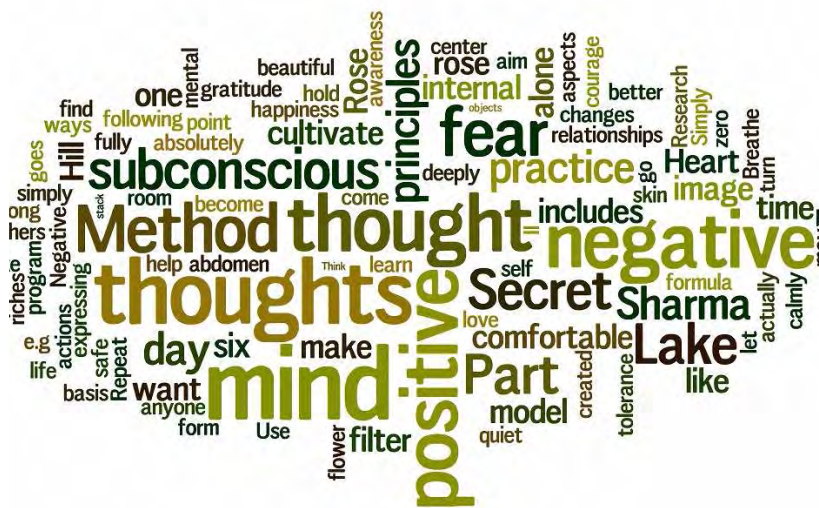
****I am grateful to receive positive energy from the Creator for my well-being every day, wherever I am, no matter what I'm doing; protecting me, inspiring me, loving me accepting me.***

****I am grateful for our beautiful planet because I like hiking, bicycling, camping, and taking photographs.***

Gratitude Daily Practice for 28 Days (Byrne 2012):

- a) Each morning, write out a list of 10 or more things for which you feel grateful.
- b) Read the list out loud, ending each item with a sincere, heart-felt *Thank you, thank you, thank you.*
- c) Post the day's list where you will see it easily.
- d) Visit it several times a day to review each item, feel gratitude, and say *Thank you.*

This practice will allow your understanding to shift from a world of "things" to one of "flows." Shift away from thinking of objects, money, and services having been "obtained" or "owned" by you. Shift toward the notion that in your higher awareness, having cultivated the *Six Principles* and mastered the *replacement of negative thoughts*, you are an open portal through which the cosmic intention of abundance brings gifts of life and happiness. Abundance is infinite, so your role is to become an open channel to receive with gratitude what comes to you.



Expressing gratitude out loud in front of others opens the door for them to shift their perspective toward gratitude. Public gratitude is one direct way The Method can spread its effects through families, communities, organizations, and businesses.

Group gratitude:

As a mindful member in your family, organization, school, neighborhood, team or elsewhere, **lead a group gratitude exercise**. Have each person express one thing they are grateful for, using the recipe, and write the expressions down for all to see. Give thanks for each item. You will be amazed at the riches that flow from this practice.

Byrne's book *The Magic* (2012) gives a complete set of training activities to address health, wealth, relationships and other riches. The mental shift away from "objects" toward the flow of goods and services is central to changing your life on many dimensions. Try this imaginative practice:

The Magic Rock (Byrne 2012):

Find yourself a smooth stone that fits comfortably in your hand. All the better if it “comes to you” on a walk outside along a beach or in a park. Give thanks. As your personal magic rock, hold it before retiring and recall the most wonderful thing that happened that day. Give gratitude, with feeling, and say *Thank you*. Place the stone next to your bed. Anytime you want, hold it and recall the feelings of gratitude locked away inside the stone.



Become an expert at noticing the thousands of things you receive. Relish the chance to express gratitude with feeling, emotion, and belief. The practice of giving gratitude is indeed the most powerful way to open yourself to the abundance of life and "inter-being."

When others are expressing negativity, find a silver lining in the situation and express gratitude instead, out loud, as a true compassionate warrior.

Sources:

Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill, first published in 1937 and continually updated: believe of course, riches come in many forms. Hill worked directly with college dropouts such as Henry Ford and Thomas Edison - also with Andrew Carnegie, to discover how they were able to achieve so much. Hill gives detailed instructions for turning your burning desire into positive, physical outcomes that benefit all involved.

The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari: A Fable about Fulfilling Your Dreams & Reaching Your Destiny by Robin Sharma (1997). Translates most of Hill's methods into a beautiful and compelling narrative involving sages in India, mindfulness training techniques, etc.

The Magic by Rhonda Byrne (2012) clarifies the importance of giving gratitude. The book contains a day-by-day plan and instructions for developing a strong practice of giving gratitude with the attendant benefit of reducing negativity.

Daring Greatly by Brene Brown (2012) explains insights from 12 years of her research. We learn to accept ourselves as "enough" and to embrace our "strength and struggle" as a gateway to authentic living.

Photo/Art Credits:

Leap of faith courtesy of www.brotherword.org

Subconscious courtesy of <http://www.carlyleclinic.com.au>

All other photos by Bruce T. Milne and Beverly Salas

Outro:

Your one and only precious life is yours to cultivate as you wish. Your thoughts create your reality, so treasure them in the belief that your desires and needs are valid and worthy of fulfillment. We are masters of our mind to the extent that we develop the skill to step into the steady stream of irrational fears and actively shift to positive thought. Our accomplishments follow from the intentional plans that we carry out with rabid persistence, like a benevolent warrior of pure heart. We develop a deep sense of abundance through daily gratitude practice and revel in the comfort that what we ask for finds its way to us.

You are a necessary part of this world which can only be *as it is* with you *in it*. Believe, as Brene Brown teaches, that you are worthy of love and belonging. Believe you are *enough* (and can still enjoy some improvement). Believe, with feeling, today is the best day of your life (this is an especially potent practice when facing challenging circumstances, uncertain travel adventures, and life-transitions). Believe you can live in a universe that obeys its own laws and that you are made of that universe. Believe that by teaching two other willing people the skills of mindfulness, intention, and gratitude that you are creating the world as it should be in an endless cycle of learning, thought, right action, and universal love. Thank you for exploring the possibilities presented in this guidebook. May you and all beings prosper in every way.

**"The future belongs to those who believe
in the beauty of their dreams."**

Eleanor Roosevelt

About the Author:

Bruce T. Milne holds the W.K. Kellogg Endowed Chair in Sustainable Environmental and Food Systems and is Professor of Biology at the University of New Mexico. In the mid-1980s, his post-doctoral teaching experience at Harvard's Graduate School of Design cemented the central notion that the psychological, cultural, aesthetic, and economic aspects of humanity are dominant forces in local ecosystems that constitute the biosphere. The International Association for Landscape Ecology recognized him in 2006 as Distinguished Landscape Ecologist for work with spatial analysis of landscapes and species habitats at multiple scales. In 2004 Dr. Milne responded to challenges facing the biosphere by founding the Sustainability Studies Program at the University of New Mexico to serve hundreds of passionate undergraduate students from across the entire campus.

About the University of New Mexico Sustainability Studies Program:

Since 2007, the UNM Sustainability Studies Program has spread "green knowledge" widely by offering an undergraduate minor degree that complements the major degree in any department. The program provides interdisciplinary, hands-on, community-engaged learning that informs students' academic work, careers, and personal lives. Projects include an on-campus growers' market and sustainability expo, campus food gardens, recycling, a heritage farming curriculum, photo-voltaic demonstrations, development of campus sustainability policies, planning to reduce campus carbon emissions, and coordination with local community supported agriculture projects. Introductory courses help students reduce their ecological footprints by 20 percent, thereby eliminating the impact of one US citizen by the actions of every five students.