

“Rich Litvin is a business thought leader who counts.”

—Chip Conley, founder of Joie de Vivre Hotels
and author of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Emotional Equations*

THE SUCCESS PARADOX



*Provocative Questions
for Top Performers*

RICH LITVIN

Praise for Rich's first book, *The Prosperous Coach*

"My heart is still racing. This is one of the most direct, bold, and provocative books I've ever read."

—Derek Sivers, founder of CD Baby and
author of *Anything You Want*

"Rich Litvin is a business thought leader who counts."

—Chip Conley, founder of Joie de Vivre Hotels
and author of *Peak*

"Once in a while a book comes along which gets you to focus on what really matters—human relationships! ... one of those rare gems which inspires, challenges, and allows for no excuses."

—Shama Kabani, best-selling author of
The Zen of Social Media Marketing

"The Prosperous Coach is an action-oriented wake up call."

—Jeffrey Hayzlett, Global Business Celebrity
and best-selling author of *The Mirror Test*

"Rich Litvin and Steve Chandler offer a revolutionary approach to creating a career and business that you love."

—Marci Shimoff, #1 New York Times best-selling author
of *Love for No Reason* and *Happy for No Reason*

Praise for Rich's Coaching

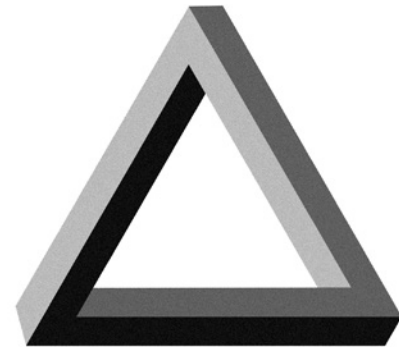
“Rich is a world-class coach and one of the most naturally confident people I know. If you're ready to make a real and tangible difference in your life I highly recommend you work with Rich.”

—Michael Neill, Internationally renowned Success Coach
and author of *The Inside-Out Revolution*

“Rich is a man of deep authenticity, passion & courage. He is also one of the most skilled & intuitive coaches around. I strongly recommend Rich to anyone looking to take their lives to the next level.”

—Jamie Smart, best-selling author of *Clarity* and *Results*

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for Top Performers*

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*The Success Paradox:
Provocative Questions For Top Performers*

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A note from the author

You're holding an exclusive, pre-released first draft of the first few chapters of my book, *The Success Paradox*, which I've created for my clients and my friends at EO, The Entrepreneurs' Organization. (The actual book won't be published until October 2017.)

This book is designed to show you new and exponential possibilities for your life, your business and your legacy.

Please dive in and explore.

And keep asking yourself this powerful question:

How is my success to date holding me back from my next level of success?

Love. Rich

P.S. I welcome your feedback, suggestions, ideas and questions via email at hello@richlitvin.com. *Please don't worry about pointing out typos as you are reading a first draft — we have a crack team of editors who will work on the book prior to publication.*

Rich Litvin
Santa Monica, CA
January 2017



*When it rains, most birds head for shelter.
The eagle is the only bird that, in order to avoid the rain,
starts flying above the clouds.*

• • •

**This book is dedicated to the extraordinary leaders
out there. You know who you are.**

tl;dr

How to read this book

tl;dr is an acronym used online that literally means “Too long; didn’t read”. What it has come to signify is: “here is a summary of the text that follows.”

The Success Paradox

Everything you’ve done to be as successful as you are today is *precisely* what is holding you back from your *next* level of success. And the more successful you become the harder that is for you to see.

The Loneliness of Leadership

The distinction between achievement and fulfilment. The distinction between Conventional Success and Exponential Success. A 3-step process to review your vision, your thinking and your environment. Dive in here for context or come back to it later.

The 8 Guilty Secrets of Extraordinary Top Performers

Pick the ones you recognize in you, or read them all:

1. People admire me but I feel lazy.
2. I have lots of money and recognition but I’m not happy.
3. I’m bored. I could do this with my eyes closed.

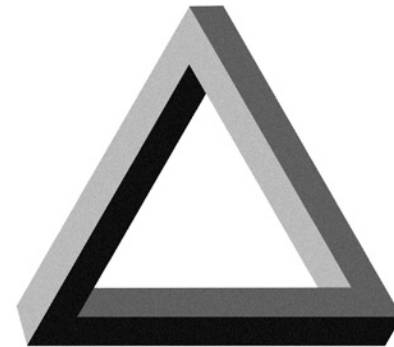
4. I'm so good at solving problems I unconsciously create new ones just to solve them.
5. My big mission, that inspires so many people, doesn't inspire me any more.
6. If I stop working so hard it will all go away.
7. I'm not lonely but I feel very alone.
8. I'm exhausted but I won't accept help.

The 4% Shift

To perform at an elite level, the challenges you face need to be just 4% greater than your skills. The job of a top performer is to seek the tiniest shifts that make the biggest impact.

Provocative Questions:

Don't read this book for "information." Read it for "insight." We are conditioned to see what works more than what doesn't work. So, use the questions at the end of each chapter to look for gaps in how you see the world. Let your intuition make the connections it needs for your answers to arise.



The Loneliness of Leadership

I don't need help.

I miss my dad. He passed away two years ago and I miss him every day. A little part of my heart broke when he left this world.

But I missed him when I was a little kid, too. You see, my dad was an entrepreneur. He worked really, really hard. He worked almost every day of my childhood. He worked to take care of his family. He sweated the numbers at the end of every month. He worried about how to pay for the mortgage and our school fees. He went years without a vacation or a break. He missed parents' days at my school and my first day at university because he was working.

I didn't know then that my dad cried because he felt a constant sense of guilt. He felt guilty when he was working—because *he should be with his family*. He felt guilty when he was with his family—because *he should be working*. And I had no idea, as a youngster, that no boss is ever as tough on an employee as an entrepreneur is on himself.

I'm a parent myself now and I have so much compassion for my dad. But he modeled a powerful lesson to me

at a very young age. I learned it was important to work my ass off to be successful. I learned how to go it alone. I learned that I don't need help.

• • •

Come with me, if you will, on a journey about 30 years into the future. It's a warm Los Angeles afternoon, I have two young boys of my own and I've felt this creeping sense of exhaustion throughout the day.

I'd been rudely awoken at 4 o'clock that morning by my little baby. My wife was asleep, as she'd been nursing him most of the night, so I crept quietly out of our bed and I sat with him in the rocking chair, singing softly until he fell back to sleep again. I was woken soon after by my other son. I dressed and fed both boys and took them out for a day at the Science Center because my kids love the Space Shuttle.

Back then, I used to look forward to nap time because it was a moment for *me* to rest. But, on this day, neither of them would nap and by 5pm I was running on empty. I was so tired, my temper was fraying and I had a sense of deep overwhelm—that secret feeling parents sometimes have of wishing it was a work day because that would be so much easier than looking after little children.

I arrived back at the house with a sense of dread at the long night ahead of me and I emailed a small group of close friends I was supposed to meet that evening:

“I’m not coming tonight, as Monique’s out for the night and I can’t get childcare.”

A reply shot back to me over email from one of them:

“Disappointing, Rich. You are a powerful man—getting childcare for a scheduled meeting is within your power. And you could easily be home by 11pm.”

I was angry. I knew better than to reply by email when I was mad. But I needed to get this one out of my system. I hit reply and typed furiously.

“You know what would be nice? It would be you checking in first to see how I’m doing. It would be you saying, It sounds like you might be having a hard time, Rich. It would be you checking in with me first before letting me know how much I’ve disappointed you or that you think I’m lacking power.”

And then I really let rip with a deep held resentment:

“I’ve been there so much for each of you over the time we’ve known each other. The past 6 months have been the toughest 6 months of my life. I’m physically and emotionally worn out in a way I’ve never felt before. And I have no idea how to ask for support. But right now I’m feeling pretty angry.”

I love my friends because they see through my stories. And we have a ruthless commitment to speak our truth to one another.

An hour later, I received this reply, from another friend:

“Rich, this pattern of yours is incredibly deep. You go through the toughest 6 months of your life and none of your closest friends have any idea. Zero. That’s how deeply hidden you are. Why don’t you reveal what’s going on with you—why the need to appear so strong?”

Ouch. He was so right.

I can get really resentful at not receiving support. But the truth is I have no damn clue how to ask for it. Asking for—and receiving – help seems so weak. My whole mission is to be there for others. So I actively work hard to keep help out.

Shane Parrish once wrote: “Friendship is more than just being there for your friends. Being a great friend means that you let your friends be there for you.” But that’s much easier said than done for me.

A few weeks later, I had another challenging day. My wife was out of town for the weekend, I was alone with my little boys again and I was sick. My head was throbbing, my temper was frayed thin, and physically and emotionally I was completely drained.

I pride myself on never needing help but at this moment I could tell that I really needed support. And yet I watched myself as I continued to put off reaching out to my friends. It took me over an hour to write a simple text message to ask for help.

You see, I run this story deep down inside of me. *I can handle it... Seeking help equals weakness... And why would anyone want to help me anyway?*

But I was wrung out. I had nothing left.

So, finally, I did it.

I sent a text to some of my closest friends:

Guys, can you help me? Monique is away. I’m taking care of our boys alone. I’m sick and it feels like hours until their bedtime. I really need some help.

Looking back, I see I am caught in a complete double bind. Not only do I see receiving help as a weakness but I don’t even want to *ask* for help because if I ask and you don’t give it, I’ll feel rejected.

That’s what happened that day when some of my friends texted back that they couldn’t help me—it didn’t matter that they were in Hawaii or had other commitments—I told myself that I didn’t matter to them. And I wished I hadn’t even asked.

However, my friend Steve was in town and when he read my text he jumped in his car to come over to be with me and my boys. I so appreciated his company; he had such fun with the kids and they loved him. And he gave me the space to take a rest for a moment.

But it was strange, I realized that I couldn’t rest. I wanted to take care of Steve. It’s what I do.

When I am with a friend, I put my attention on them, to find out about their life and how I can support them. Even when I’m worn out, my attention goes to how I can take care of others.

No wonder I’m exhausted hanging out with people if that’s the energy that I bring to all my interactions. No wonder I like to be alone. No wonder I don’t ask for help.

What’s interesting is that not needing help has been one of my gifts as a leader and an entrepreneur over the past 30 years. Not needing help has helped me be a trail-

blazer and a maverick. Doing it alone has led to some of my biggest successes. But it's also been a lonely journey...

Leadership is lonely

Being a leader is lonely.

And nobody ever warned you, right?

You're a high performer at the very top of your game. You've been successful in life and business. Yet you still face challenges. They are just not the kind of challenges you can share.

After all, it's not appropriate for you to share everything in your world with your—directors, investors, senior team, employees, clients or customers. You have a range of people in your life to whom you cannot (and often *should not*) tell the complete truth.

And let's be really honest here, there are some things in your world that it's not even appropriate to share with your spouse, your family or your friends.

How can you tell your team that you are worried about making payroll next month? How can you tell your wife that your new initiative didn't pan out? How can you tell your investors that your biggest competitor is ahead of you this quarter? How can you tell your old friends that you now pay more tax than they earn in a year?

Plus you're often surrounded by people who think their job is to tell you what you *want* to hear rather than what you *need* to hear. When was the last time someone told you, “*That stupid decision you just made. That was really stupid.*”?

There's a cost to this. It weighs heavy to carry all of this inside of you. It's actually a burden to have so many people who look up to you. And it doesn't serve you to have so many yes-people in your life.

It's not just challenges. It's successes, too. Once the initial celebration is over, who can you really celebrate with after you've sold your 8-figure business, made a 7-figure deal or achieved something no one in your field has ever done before?

And if we're going to be really honest here, you have guilty secrets too, that you carry inside of you.

In the quiet of your mind—when no one is listening—do you ever have any of the following thoughts?

- *People admire me but I feel lazy. I'm not really working that hard.*
- *I have lots of money and recognition but I'm not happy.*
- *I'm bored. I could do this with my eyes closed.*
- *I'm so good at solving problems I unconsciously create new ones just to solve them.*
- *My big mission, that inspires so many people, doesn't inspire me any more.*
- *If I stop working so hard it will all go away.*
- *I'm not lonely but I feel very alone.*
- *I'm exhausted but I won't accept help.*

If any of these thoughts sound familiar, you are in good company.

In 2011, the *New York Times* featured an article about the life and work of Reid Hoffman. Hoffman is an internet entrepreneur and venture capitalist with a net worth of \$4.7 billion dollars. He is the co-founder and executive chairman of LinkedIn.

The piece finished by mentioning that he was about to head off on his first real vacation in 9 years. “Before he left, even the hyperkinetic Mr. Hoffman conceded that he could use a break—at least a small one. ‘I’m functioning at 60 percent capacity,’ he said.”

One of the most common secrets of extraordinary top performers is the feeling that they are lazy.

They’re not.

Reid Hoffman might have needed a break but he wasn’t functioning at 60 percent capacity. Feeling lazy is one of the most common guilty secrets of being a top performer.

And it’s just one of the hidden challenges that high performers face because no one ever taught you what it means to perform at this level.

As Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines once said, “The easiest way to lose success is to become convinced that you are successful.”

And Stephen Hanselman wrote: “When the Gods wish to punish us, they give us exactly what we’ve always wanted. Ask yourself what you’re after: Fame? Wealth? The perfect man or woman? Now imagine yourself when you get it. What comes next?”

What got you here, won’t get you there

Whether you are a CEO, the managing director of a financial firm or an entrepreneur disrupting the status quo there are four elements that got you to your current level of success but won’t get you to your *next* level of success:

Your Vision: You know how to dream big but you are surrounded by people who have neither the skill nor the confidence to guide you to a higher level.

Your Thinking: You’re at the top of your field but you don’t have anyone who can challenge the way you think or help you to ask better questions.

Your Environment: Does your network look the same as it did 20 years ago? Do you rarely meet new people? Have you have outgrown your old community but you’re afraid to let them go? Or are you the most interesting person in most rooms that you are in?

The Truth: You’ve succeeded at a high-level because of your willingness to speak your truth to others but success can feel lonely when there is no one willing or able to speak the truth to you.

The impact of these four factors is that you can be at the top of the achievement ladder but you don’t feel fulfilled. Being successful can seem overrated when your worries are about higher tax rates, exorbitant school fees for the kids or feeling trapped by a mission you used

to love. You don't have the lifestyle or the legacy you once dreamed of. Or maybe you have the lifestyle but it doesn't bring the feelings it used to.

Exponential Impact

What gets a high achiever to where they are today won't get them to their next level of success. But it doesn't have to be this way. What I have observed about high performers after working with them for years, being friends with them for decades, and being one for most of my life, is that high achievers rarely have anyone in their life who can challenge their thinking. They usually lack an experienced, independent trusted adviser to whom they can reveal their complete truth. And they are often surrounded by people who have neither the skill nor the confidence to guide them to a higher level.

High performers don't need someone to answer their questions. If they were already asking the right questions, they would have their solutions by now. Having the right questions (rather than the answers they were seeking) can catapult their life.

Success can be lonely, so it is a game changer for a top performer to have someone who understands them, someone they can trust deeply to reveal their complete truth, someone willing to challenge their thinking. Someone who hides nothing, holds nothing back, asks what needs to be asked and reveals what needs to be seen—and asks that they are willing to do the same.

When I work with top performers, I take them through

a three step process to review their vision, their thinking and their environment. All of this is overlaid with a deep honest look at their world—from the professional to the personal.

Exponential Vision

Even visionaries need to be challenged to dream bigger. When a visionary is surrounded by people who create exponential growth in their own business and life the limitations are removed on what is possible, in order to craft a powerful vision of the future, in two ways:

1. They **Craft a Mission** so powerful that nothing will stop them—a mission that moves them to tears. Because if you want to move others, you need to feel deeply moved yourself.
2. They **Develop a Strategy** so that day by day, month by month, they know precisely what actions to take—and, most importantly, what actions *not* to take.

Exponential Thinking

As Albert Einstein said, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.” When a top performer has someone who is willing to challenge their thinking and help them to ask better questions, they do two things:

1. They **Develop the Mindsets** that helps them overcome the fears, doubts, limiting beliefs or insecurities that are holding them back. As well as a new set of empowering beliefs to support them in creating

the next stage of their life.

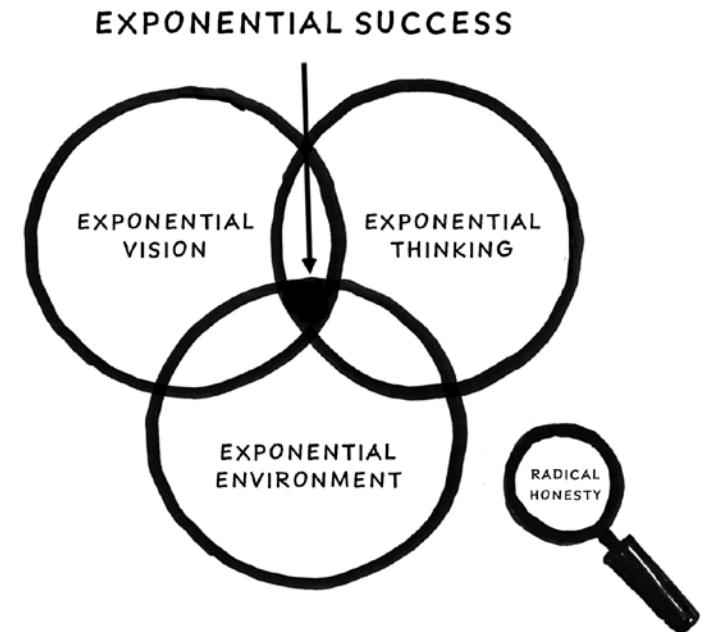
2. They identify and **Build the Skillsets** needed to take them to their next level—and work on them regularly.

Exponential Environment

Being the most interesting person in the room is overrated. When their network looks the same as it did 20 years ago and they rarely meet new people, it's likely that they have outgrown their old community, or maybe they are afraid to let them go. To create an Exponential Environment they:

1. **Focus on their People:** It's their team and their community who help them to leverage their impact. Hire and spend time with people who enliven and energize them and let go of the people who drain them of energy.
2. **Select their Places** with care. Spend time in places that enliven and energize them. Cut out places that drain them of energy.

Reviewing their vision, their thinking and their environment with radical honesty is the first step to creating a life and a business that combines a high level of achievement with a high level of fulfilment. From this place top performers can begin to make a real contribution before their time on this planet is over. They can build their ability to turn their desires into reality combined with the power to appreciate and enjoy life at the deepest level.



The Power of Provocative Questions

We're already in agreement that you are one of — if not *the* — best and brightest in your field, right?

You're an extraordinary top performer. And, you most definitely don't need help.

By definition, you are surrounded by people who don't understand what it means to be a high-achiever. You are surrounded by people who don't get that success comes at a price. You are surrounded by people who say things like, "*I wish I had your problems...*"

You're in the right place. Because this is *not* a self-help book. It's most definitely *not* another book about how to

become successful. And it's not even a book of "answers."

You see, if anyone could solve the problems or challenges you are facing it would be *you*. As I said, you are the top in your field.

Rather, this is a book for people who are *already* very successful—visionaries, entrepreneurs, business owners and elite performers. It's designed to steer you towards better questions, rather than better answers.

As Tony Robbins once said, "*The quality of your questions determines the quality of your life.*"

This book is intended as a mirror for high achievers like yourself who thought they were unique in their guilty secrets and alone in their internal dissatisfaction. It's designed to provoke deeper thought about who you are as a performer and as a person.

Elon Musk considers Douglas Adams one of the great modern philosophers. Adams taught him that: "The question is harder than the answer. When we ask questions they come along with our biases. You should really ask, 'Is this the right question?' And that's hard to figure out."



The concepts, distinctions and "guilty secrets" of top performers that I am going to share with you come from

over a decade of studying, researching, consulting and coaching world leaders and visionaries, from Los Angeles to London to Liberia.

I help successful people become more successful and I've become an expert at taking high-achievers to the greatest levels of success.

Ultra-successful people—the kind of people you would assume don't need support—are the ones who call me. My clients are usually by invitation and referral only.

A talent hotbed is a tiny place that produces world-class performers in sports, art, music, business and other disciplines. And I've been creating talent hotbeds for extraordinary clients since 2008.

My clients have included Olympic athletes, Presidential candidates, Hollywood film directors, Special Forces operatives and multi-million dollar business owners.

The work we have done together has extended beyond their professional life to penetrate deep into the life they wanted to create with their spouse, their friends and their children. Because no one on their deathbed ever wished they'd spent more time in the office or asked to look at their bank balance. In the end, all that counts is your relationships and your contribution.

Why would top performers like this need or even want help or coaching?

Most don't. A few rare ones do. You are not alone.

But first, let me tell you a story...

The Rebirth of the Eagle

The eagle is one of the largest and most powerful birds of prey.

And there's a mythical tale that claims eagles can live up to 70 years.

According to the story, most eagles don't live longer than 40 years of age.

In its 40th year, the eagle struggles to eat and even to fly. Its long and flexible talons can no longer grab prey. Its long and sharp beak becomes bent. Its old, aged and heavy wings, due to their thick feathers, stick to its chest and make it difficult to fly.

But at 40 an eagle actually faces two options — *die* or go through a painful process of *change*.

To be “reborn,” the eagle retreats to its nest on a mountain top.

It knocks off and then regrows its beak.

It plucks out and then regrows its talons.

Finally, it pulls out and regrows its feathers.

After undergoing a prolonged and painful process of rebirth the eagle emerges, completely renewed.

It can go on to live another thirty years.

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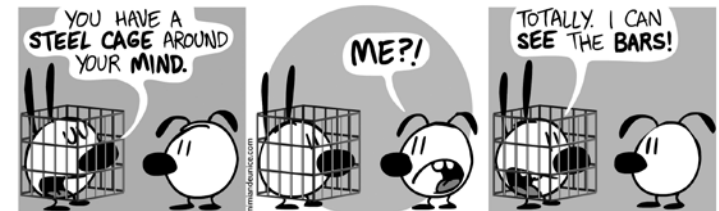
To be a top performer is to be like that eagle. Trapped by your very nature. Because those mindsets that have helped you to become an extraordinary top performer — have a hidden trap that are wrapped up within each of them.

You see, the paradox of success is that what got you

where you are won't keep you where you are. And it's a hard lesson to learn.

Now, whilst the process of change doesn't need to be as painful as the rebirth of that eagle, the truth is that being super successful as a visionary leader, a high-achieving entrepreneur or an elite performer actually makes it much harder for you to see and acknowledge what is holding you back.

Because the surprising truth of the matter is that the very things that have made you so successful—all the personal and professional qualities that fueled your ascent—are precisely what will keep you from reaching the stars and fulfilling your true potential.



Charles Handy has been rated in the top five of the Thinkers 50 — a private list of the most influential living management thinkers. In his 1994 book, *The Age of Paradox*, he shared a little parable:

The Wicklow Mountains lie outside Dublin, Ireland. It is an area of wild beauty, a place to which as an Irishman born near there, I return as often as I can. It is still a bare and lonely spot, with unmarked roads, and I still get lost. Once I stopped and asked the way. “Sure, it’s easy,” a local replied, “just keep going the way you are, straight

ahead, and after a while you'll cross a small bridge with Davy's Bar on the far side. You can't miss it!" "Yes, I've got that," I said. "Straight on to Davy's Bar." "That's right. Well, half a mile before you get there, turn to your right up the hill."

His directions seemed so logical that I thanked him and drove off. By the time I realized that the logic made no sense he had disappeared. As I made my way down to Davy's Bar, wondering which of the roads to the right to take, I reflected that he had given me a vivid example of paradox, perhaps even the paradox of our times: By the time you know where you ought to go, it's too late to go there, or more dramatically, if you keep on going the way you are, you will miss the road to the future... ...It is one of the paradoxes of success that the things and the ways which got you where you are, are seldom the things to keep you there.

This is not a book of answers. If you're the best in the world at what you do, you don't need answers. Instead, this is a book of provocative questions, to help you soar to even higher heights. This is a book designed to challenge your thinking.

As Albert Einstein said, "If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask... for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes."

We will explore the eight most common mindsets of top performers and take them apart, piece by piece. We'll

examine why people like you think the way they do, and we'll look at success stories from my network of clients and colleagues—stories of people who were able to make the shift in mindset and expand the very definition of "success."

Exponential Success

In Josh Bersin's *Forbes* article, "The Myth Of The Bell Curve," he states:

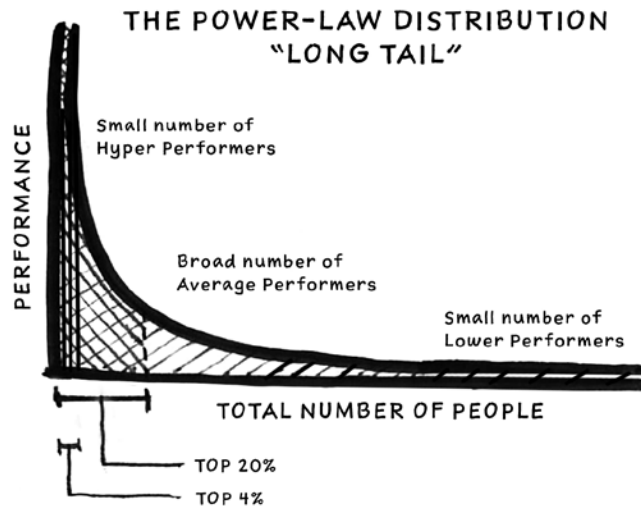
"Hyper performers" are ... the people who start companies, develop new products, create amazing advertising copy, write award-winning books and articles, or set an example for your sales force.

They are often gifted in a certain way (often a combination of skill, passion, drive, and energy) and they actually do drive orders of magnitude more value than many of their peers.

Or, as Bill Gates once noted, there were a handful of people at Microsoft who "made" the company and if they left there would be no Microsoft.

I've been fascinated by this concept of hyper performers for the past decade. And in my role as a high-performance coach, I've been privileged to work with top performers at NASA, Olympic athletes, Presidential candidates, Hollywood film directors, Special Forces operatives, bomb-disposal experts, world-champion martial

artists and multi-million dollar business owners and entrepreneurs.



Research conducted in 2011 and 2012 examined the performance of 633,263 people involved in four broad areas of human performance. In each of these fields, the researchers found that a small minority of superstar performers contributed a disproportionate amount of the output.

Performance in these groups followed a "Power Law" distribution or "long tail," where there are a small number of "hyper performers," a broad group "average performers" and a smaller number of "low performers."

This curve is known as a Pareto distribution, after the Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto. It relates directly to The 80-20 Rule, which states that, for many events,

roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes.

What interests me most is the top 20% of the top 20%. That is the top 4% of high performers. At this level, it is the very mindsets of these high achievers that have led to their success that are actually holding them back from what's truly possible for them.

Exponential Success is about living as a hyper performer.

True Success

In his book *How Will You Measure Your Life?* Clayton M. Christensen sets out the premise that some over-achievers are never happy or content with their lives. Top performers are wired with a high need for achievement, and get a big charge of energy every time they achieve something. This feels good and because they can see and feel their success in a tangible way, they keep doing the same things.

The problem occurs because this "success" isn't what makes us happy in the long run. What we truly treasure for our long-term happiness is our relationships and our contribution:

"But these relationships rarely deliver the same short-term 'hit'; this is especially so in comparison with the sense of achievement high-achievers get from their careers. For example, it may take decades for you to be able to stand back, put your hands on your hips, and say: 'boy, we really raised some great kids.'"

Conversely, if you keep investing your time at work, on a day-to-day basis, it doesn't feel like anything has changed on the home front. Your children will always be finding new ways of misbehaving, and your spouse will still be there when you come home at night.

So starving those relationships of investments like your time doesn't feel like it's costing you anything — all the way up until it's too late. You lose touch with your friends, find yourself staring down the barrel of a divorce, or become estranged from your own children.”

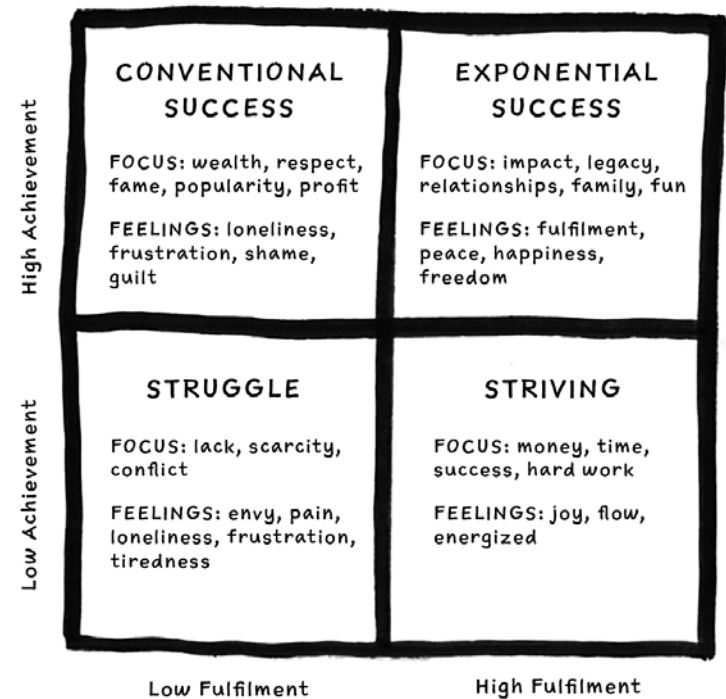
In business you may recognize this concept — it's called the resource allocation problem. The root cause of many business failures is a focus on short-term achievements, instead of the critical ones that require a much longer investment.

The first step is to recognize an important distinction that many top performers miss—between achievement and fulfilment. Tony Robbins has coached or advised some of the most powerful and famous people in the world, including Nelson Mandela, Bill Clinton, Margaret Thatcher, Andre Agassi and Leonardo DiCaprio. He defines success in life as a combination of two factors:

1. **The Science of Achievement**—the ability to turn any dream into reality, to produce any result.
2. **The Art of Fulfilment**—the ability to find joy in whatever life brings, the power to understand, appreciate, and enjoy our lives at the deepest level.

Mapping out these two factors, true success can be found at the intersection of achievement and fulfilment.

Each of these 4 quadrants has an external focus and an internal set of feelings. Each quadrant has associated with it, particular joys and challenges.



Struggle and Striving

Struggle

When achievement and fulfillment are both low, that's called **Struggle**. We've all been there.

In Struggle, people live life as if it is something that happens *to* them. They believe that power is something beyond their control. And they tend to blame circumstances and people for how they feel and for their level of happiness.

They're worn out from working so hard. They're constantly afraid and "trapped" by their problems. So, they feel disempowered, helpless, needy and unfulfilled.

They say things like, "I don't deserve this. Why is this happening to me? If only I had the money, the time and the opportunities that others do, then I'd be successful, too..."

The focus in Struggle is on envy, lack and scarcity.

And the feelings are a sense of pain, loneliness and frustration.

Striving

Remember that feeling of working on a new project or business, when you don't go to bed until 2am because you are so engrossed in what you are doing? Or remember waking up at 4am full of energy, despite just a couple of hours of sleep?

Striving is a time when you actually enjoy feeling worn out from working so hard. Your fulfillment level is high but your achievement is low at this stage of the game.

You're focused on creating money and recognition. You challenge the status quo. And you do everything as fast as possible.

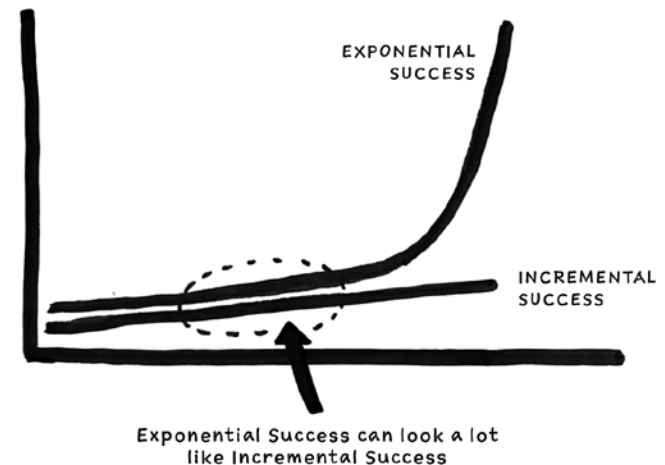
You're a problem solver. You set goals and achieve many of them. And you're energized—by the risks you take. You have probably outgrown your old community yet you're afraid to let them go.

The focus in Striving is on success and hard work. And the feelings are a sense of joy, flow and feeling energized.

Conventional vs Exponential Success

Conventional Success

Part of the challenge in distinguishing Exponential from Conventional Success is that they can *feel* and *look* like each other for a very long time:



Leaning Against The Wrong Wall

The standard dictionary definition of conventional success defines it as “getting or achieving wealth, respect, fame, popularity or profit.”

So the first distinction between Conventional and Exponential Success is that the latter includes a focus on impact, fulfillment, peace, happiness, family, freedom and fun.

This distinction is the reason why so many of us have had a feeling that, for years, we’ve been climbing the ladder of success—only to get to the top to discover that the ladder was leaning against the wrong wall all along.

“The danger for high-achieving people is that they’ll unconsciously allocate their resources to activities that yield the most immediate, tangible accomplishments.

This is often in their careers, as this domain of their lives provides the most concrete evidence that they are moving forward.

They prioritize tasks that give them immediate returns—such as a promotion, a raise, or a bonus—rather than those that require long-term work.

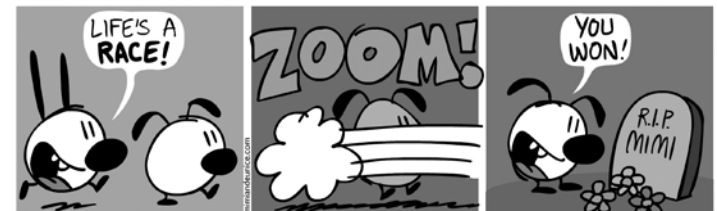
Although they may believe their family is deeply important to them, they actually allocate fewer and fewer resources to the things they would say matter most.”

— Clayton M. Christensen

Most people live in a world of conventional success. Your achievement level is high but your fulfillment is low.

You’ll recognize conventional success when people admire you for your achievements, your wealth or your recognition but it doesn’t give you the satisfaction you thought it would. As Lily Tomlin said, “The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you’re still a rat.”

Or as the Roman philosopher Seneca wrote, two thousand years ago: “This space that has been granted to us rushes by so speedily, and so swiftly that all save a very few find life at an end just when they are getting ready to live.”



You can be at the top of your field but you feel like a square peg in a round hole because conventional success doesn’t take account of what you love, your true values or what moves your soul. The focus in Conventional Success is on wealth, respect, fame, popularity and profit. And the feelings are loneliness, frustration, shame and guilt.

Exponential Success

When achievement and fulfillment are both high, that's called Exponential Success. It's a different way of living and creating, rather than a destination. Exponential Success is about impact, the legacy you want to leave and the contribution you want to make. It's about having a mission so big that nothing will stop you—or a mission that moves you to tears. Exponential Success includes a willingness to do the opposite of everything you've always done. Something particularly hard for super successful people.

If you're the most interesting person in the room you're in the wrong room. And Exponential Success is about spending time with people who stretch your mind and your thinking. People inspire you, whilst you also inspire them.

You wake up each morning with your blood singing at the thought of being alive. And you work in your Zone of Genius—on only those things that have an exponential impact on your life, relationships and business.

The focus in Exponential Success is on impact, relationships, family and fun. And the feelings are a sense of fulfilment, peace, happiness and freedom.

The Exponential Success Scorecard

Before you read any further, I invite you to visit **www.RichLitvin.com/scorecard** and evaluate yourself using the scorecard. Work your way down the list of

mindsets on the scorecard and rate yourself from 1 to 12. You'll get a pretty good idea from this exercise which of the eight mindsets most apply to you.

Once you've identified the mindsets that speak to you particularly strongly, feel free to skip straight to those sections. This is a book designed to fast forward your journey to exponential success. Within these pages are pieces of the map. It's up to you to put it together and envision a path forward.

This scorecard is designed to help you measure your capacity to achieve *and* feel fulfilled.

It's a way to codify the qualities that distinguish exponential success from conventional success.

And it will help you see how the very mindsets that have lead to the success you have now are holding you back from *your* next level of success.

Go online now at
www.RichLitvin.com/scorecard
 to get an immediate assessment of your
 Exponential Success Quotient.

You'll discover that success has its own traps and find out what they are for you.

• • •

J. K. Rowling is a British novelist best known as the author of the Harry Potter fantasy series. Her books have

sold more than 400 million copies. She went from living on state benefits to being a multi-millionaire within five years. She is the United Kingdom's best-selling living author, with a personal wealth of over \$740 million.

“Success never feels the way you think it will be. Some people would assume that you’re sitting around feeling simply marvellous and shining your baubles. But I remember, a week after I got my American deal, which got me a lot of press, one of my very best girlfriends rang me and said, “I thought you’d sound so elated.” From the outside, I’m sure everything looked amazing. But in my flat, where I was still a single mum and I didn’t know who to call to do my hair, everything felt phenomenally overwhelming. For the first time in my life I could buy a house, which meant security for my daughter and me, but I now felt: “The next book can’t possibly live up to this.” So I managed to turn this amazing triumph into tragedy, in the space of about five days.”



“People admire me, but I feel lazy.”

You know that feeling when you’ve just accomplished a huge goal, signed a big deal or solved a major problem? You’re elated. And you celebrate.

But truthfully, how long do you give yourself before you start looking at how you could have done it bigger or better? How soon do you start setting your next big goal or searching for the next problem to solve?

That’s the nature of being a high performer.

A sense of discontent. A sense of never enough. A sense of so much possibility... if only I could accomplish that little bit more.

The *New York Times* article about the billionaire Reid Hoffman that I mentioned in the introduction quotes him as saying “I’m functioning at 60 percent capacity.”

Bear in mind that this is a man who back in college formed a conviction that he wanted to influence the state of the world on a large scale. A man who was one

of the board of directors during the founding of PayPal, later become the company's COO and then its executive vice at the time of its acquisition by eBay for \$1.5 billion. This is the man who co-founded LinkedIn, that fourteen years later Microsoft proposed to acquire for \$26.2 billion in cash.

Hoffman is also one of Silicon Valley's most prolific and successful angel investors. He arranged the first meeting between Mark Zuckerberg and Peter Thiel, which led to Thiel's initial angel investment in Facebook. Hoffman invested alongside Thiel in Facebook's very first financing round. He is a frequent lecturer at Stanford University, Oxford University, Harvard University, MIT's Media Lab, and others. He is a prolific writer, an author of two books and in 2014 President Barack Obama named him as a Presidential Ambassador for Global Entrepreneurship.

One of the most common characteristics I've found among the high performers I've spent time with and coached over the past decade is a sense of laziness and unfulfilled potential.

The output of these people is, across the board, incredibly high. They're usually one of the most successful people in their professional network, or their group of friends.

They work hard, long and constantly, at their craft. Yet they feel they could be working much harder, and feel guilty that they're not. It's part of our gift as top performers to be future-based thinkers.

People like Hoffman aren't lazy. They're top perform-

ers who were never taught what it means to perform at such a high level. People around them are astonished at what they can accomplish, but it doesn't mean very much to them, because they feel deep down that they're not really doing all that much, compared to the people around them—despite being so much more successful.

Often, the reason for this cognitive dissonance is simple. We've all had it drilled into us that to succeed at the highest levels, we have to work hard. Not just work a lot, or work well; it has to be hard, with all the struggle, discipline, and challenge that word implies. Your parents, your teachers, and every movie you ever saw, every book you ever read, set you up to expect a lifelong climb up a mountain to get to the top levels of achievement.

Extraordinary top performers have reached the peak of that mountain, and yet they never felt like they were doing something hard. They expected to beat their heads against a wall, to constantly feel the sting of sweat in their eye as they toiled away, teeth gritted with sheer willpower—and none of that happened. So, they reason, it must be true that they're not working hard enough—that they're lazy.

Zone of Genius

The gift of being a high achiever is that you operate much of the time in your Zone of Genius—it's a magic combination of challenge, ease, and excitement that produces peak performance moments.

When you spend much of your time and energy in that

sweet spot of talent plus passion you exist in a flow state which is what leads to exponential success.

Jason Fried, co-founder of 37signals, Basecamp and co-author of *Rework*, was writing about what he calls The Outwork Myth. What he wrote taps into why high performers have a deep inner sense of being lazy—and why the average person constantly feels that they need to work “harder:”

You can't outwork people...

Hours are never the differentiator—it's never about working more hours than someone else. It's about the decisions you make. How you spend your time, what you do and don't do. Especially what you don't do.

Like Peter Drucker said decades ago, “There is nothing quite so useless as doing with great efficiency something that should not be done at all.”

The people who've made it didn't make it because they worked harder than everyone else. There wasn't someone 100 hours behind who would have made it had they put in 101.

People make it because they're talented, they're lucky, they're in the right place at the right time, they know how to work with other people, they know how to sell, they know what moves people, they can tell a story, they can see the big and small picture in every situation, and they know how to do something with an opportunity. And so many other reasons. Working hard-

er than other people is not the reason.

Flow is a mindspace of pure creation where it feels like anything is possible. You're in flow when you look up at the clock, and you see that you've been working for eight hours straight. Time speeds up. And sometimes it feels like time slows down.

Karen is an emergency room physician. Imagine for a moment what it must be like to be in an emergency room after disaster strikes. This is Karen's world. Maybe there's been a train crash or a violent incident with lots of casualties. The doors crash open and wheeled stretchers burst in, one after another, pushed by paramedics. Screams and groans fill the air and there's a buzz of energy as the full force of a catastrophe bursts through the doors. The cries, the frustration and the underlying sense of panic from civilians as the doctors, nurses, techs and paramedics all lend a hand to work as a machine to save lives.

In those instances, Karen tells me that she is so hyper-focused that she feels like she can literally slow time down, see paths of direction and action clearly, and execute. Someone on the outside watching her is thinking, wow, she's incredible. She's a machine. She's on fire. Inside her flow state, though, things are calm, and time expands like a bubble. She's not creating time out of thin air, but she might as well be, simply due to sharp intersection of her talent, skill, and laser-focus on the life-or-death matters at hand.

Being in flow, working into your Zone of Genius, is the very definition of presence. You're so present in this

moment that you don't notice when it flicks to the next. You're working on tasks that are so crucial, so exciting, so fascinating, that you feel you could spend your entire life in that state.

As a result, time flies, huge results are accomplished and everyone marvels at your achievements.

How do you do it? People wonder. When confronted with another person succeeding at a capacity that far outpaces their own, most people default to the belief that that person is innately special, that they're lucky to have their god-given talent and skills, and that everyone else simply drew the short straw.

Frankly, there's really nothing all that special about the capacity of extraordinary high performers like yourself. One of the things that's different about you, compared to those not yet at your level, is that you figured out a while back—either intuitively, or explicitly, through trial and error—that your work product skyrockets when you are in your Zone of Genius. You understood The Pareto Principle—that about 80% of your output comes from 20% of your activities. And you focus on them ruthlessly, cutting out the banal stuff you're not good at.

For most people, it's really hard to distinguish their Zone of Genius because it comes so naturally. Not only that, many people give their Zone of Genius away for free because they don't actually understand how unique and valuable it is. Top performers operate naturally from this place; and they've almost always found a way to monetize it.

Warren Buffett is considered by some to be one of the most successful investors in the world. He is consistent-

ly ranked among the world's wealthiest people. And in 2012 Time named Buffett one of the world's most influential people.

There's a story of Buffett joking to his pilot that he wasn't doing his job because he'd been working for him too long. He offered to help him go after more of his goals and dreams.

Buffett asked his pilot to list the 25 most important things he wanted to do in his life. And then he asked him to review each goal and choose his 5 most important ones.

Things got interesting when Buffett then asked him, "What about these other 20 things on your list that you didn't circle? What is your plan for completing those?"

His pilot said he'd focus mainly on his top 5 goals but work on the others when he had spare time with just as much dedication.

And that was the moment, Buffett turned serious.

He said, "You've got it wrong. Everything you didn't circle just became your "avoid at all cost list. "No matter what, these things get no attention from you until you've succeeded with your top five."

As Buffett once said: "The difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say "no" to almost everything."

Unique Ability

Dan Sullivan, is the founder and president of Strategic Coach and has over 35 years "experience coach entrepre-

neurs. Dan defines “Unique Ability” as:

“First, it is a superior ability that other people notice and value; second, we love doing it and want to do it as much as possible; third, it is energizing both for us and others around us; and, fourth, we keep getting better, never running out of possibilities for further improvement.”

High performers naturally work in their Unique Ability. You create on a level that can’t be matched by others, and you become an energy source and inspiration for others. When you’re leading a team, your team members feed off your energy and take their cues from your patterns, because they see the success you’re having. When each member of a team is working into their Unique Ability area, the team thrives. It buzzes with creation.

You already know what your own Zone of Genius is. You wouldn’t be at the level you’re at if you’d never worked into your Unique Ability, or seen a glimpse or had a taste of your Zone of Genius. If the guilty secret of feeling lazy resonates with you, ask yourself: what is gained by working outside your Zone? Why should creation, accomplishment, true achievement, necessarily be difficult?

Monique, is an award-winning singer songwriter and an immensely talented jazz singer. She’s released two albums; she’s highly respected. And she’s performed across the globe from Amsterdam to Beijing, from Delhi to Los Angeles. She’s the very image of success in her field. She also happens to be my wife.

When we were first together, she’d come home from

a gig and I’d ask her how it went; invariably, she’d reply, “It was terrible.”

Now, obviously the gig wasn’t terrible, or she wouldn’t keep getting booked. Yet that’s what she always said: “It was terrible.” I realized that I was asking her the wrong question. With her high performance mindset, she was hyper-focused on the tiniest of flaws in her singing. These are flaws no one in the audience ever would have noticed, but they drove Monique crazy, and caused her to write off her performances as failures.

I changed the question. “What was the reaction at your gig tonight?” I’d ask.

Her responses to this question were much different. “I got a standing ovation,” she’d tell me. “They loved it!” Or “I talked to someone after the show and they gave me great feedback.”

Monique is a hypercritical extraordinary top performer whose own opinion of her achievement is never as high as the opinions of those around her. Asking her what she thinks of her work will get me a list of ways she thinks she can improve. Asking her what other people think of her performance gets me closer to the real picture of what she’s doing professionally. Welcome to the world of being a top performer.

Top performers rarely think they’re working hard enough. They rarely think they’re doing well enough. They agonize over that one extra mile they could have pushed, because when they believe that only working at a percentage of their capacity has brought them this far, then what could be accomplished if they worked at 100%? What worlds could they build with the full weight

of their drive for accomplishment fueling them?

Think of the greatest thing you've ever done, professionally speaking. Think of your proudest achievement, or even the thing that brought you the most success or notoriety in your career so far. When you were doing it, was it a struggle? I'd wager you were in flow; you were buzzing with creation; you were exploring the landscape of your Unique Ability, and your output reflected the depth of your passion.

Mindset #1 on the Scorecard you completed earlier at www.RichLitvin.com/scorecard is what we've been talking about here. This is the High Performance mindset. At the Conventional Success level, you're still operating with the guilty secret that you're lazy, that you're not as hard a worker as everyone else thinks, that you're not fulfilling your potential and working to the full extent of your capacity.



At the Exponential Success level you begin to let go of the idea of hard work. You're not afraid of it. You'll work extremely hard if and when you need to. But you focus on your Zone of Genius—on only those things that have an exponential impact on your life, relationships and business. You spend almost no time on the little things that don't inspire you, or that you aren't exceptional at.

In the context of exponential success, the feeling that you're not working hard becomes your inner compass. It means you're doing the right work. When you're working into your Zone of Genius, you're doing things no one else on the planet can do as well as you. You choose to spend your time and attention on the tasks best suited for your skills, and most exciting to your passions. That's when businesses take off and thrive: when the people running the show feel like they're barely working at all.

In your Zone of Genius, hard work isn't hard. It's thrilling. But when you don't understand this principle you're left with a deep feeling of guilt.

When I shared this concept with a multi-millionaire business owner who owns and runs nine business—each of which pulls in several million dollars a year—he said, “Oh, my God, you are so right. But truthfully, I'm not operating at 60% capacity—I feel like I'm only operating at 5% capacity. I've got 95% more to give!”

Provocative Questions to Help You Challenge Guilty Secret #1

These questions are designed to provoke your thinking. Use them to look for gaps in how you see the world. Read them and then close the book. Let your intuition make the connections it needs for your answers to arise.

1. Email 8-10 friends or colleagues and ask them to be as honest with you as they can:
 - Ask each person for five words to describe your impact on them. How do they feel when you leave the room?
 - Ask them to describe your talents and abilities that make you extraordinarily different from anyone else they know.
2. How do you inspire yourself and others?
3. What activities do you have limitless energy for?
4. If you were allowed to choose just one single focus or activity that will keep you absolutely fascinated and motivated for the rest of your life—what would it be?
5. What does your heart long for?
6. What problem would you love to wake up to try to solve, every morning?



“I have lots of money and recognition but I’m not happy.”

As a young child, I felt that I needed to prove myself to my father, in order for him to love me. It was partly because my dad worked so hard and such long hours himself. *If only I can work that hard, then he’ll really love me.* It was partly because he set high standards for me as a youngster. *If only I can get an A on the next test, then he’ll admire me.* And it was partly because he wanted to support me to keep improving myself that any success I had, he’d challenge me to do even better next time.

To this day, after any success in life or business, I give myself about twenty seconds of acknowledgement before I tell myself, *You should have done it bigger or better or differently.*

Without knowing it, I spent much of my life trying to earn my father’s love by proving myself to him and by

achieving more and more. This was the story I lived into. And at one level, it worked for me because achieve I did. I became successful. I became well-known in my field. I accumulated money and status. I proved myself, and then some, many times over.

But something was missing. So, I pushed harder. *If I can just chip away at this success mountain, then I'll get to the top and finally my dad will say he's proud of me.*



Not long ago my father passed away. It was a really challenging time and I am very fortunate that my brothers and I got to be with him at the end, telling him how much we love him.

Soon after my uncle came said to me, “You know how much your dad loved you, right? You know how proud he was of you?” I heard him and I knew it was true but I was a little confused. And in the months after he passed, countless people told me how proud he’d always been of me and how often he spoke of everything I’d achieved.

It turns out that I took on a message at a very young age that I needed to prove myself. I’d been wrapped up in a narrative for decades, one created by a child’s way of interpreting his experiences. I’d spent my whole life trying to make my dad proud of me, and somehow I never

got that he already was.

Because of the narrative I’d made myself believe, I’d always shown up in a certain way. It made me work hard, it made me succeed, but it also impacted my behaviors subconsciously. I was laser-focused, deep down, on a perceived lack of approval.

One of my own coaches listened to me talk about my frustration in not being acknowledged and praised by certain people in my life. After a while, he stopped me. “You know you’re creating that?” he said.

“What?” I replied.

He continued, “Look, I could train everyone in your life to give you approval for everything you do, to acknowledge everything you do, to praise you constantly—I could do that. But you’d still find a way to focus on what’s missing. Your navigation system is designed to look for places where you feel approval is lacking.”

This blew my mind. It was painful hearing it, of course, but it was also eye-opening.

Feeling a void of approval and praise was the driving force that made me successful. When it came to happiness, though, that focus was the very thing holding me back.

You Can Never Have Enough of What You Don’t Really Need

“I’d just sold my business for millions of dollars...” a well-known entrepreneur told me. “And I was about

to begin my second business when I realized that I'm not happy. And the only reason I started my business in the first place was because I thought it would make me happy..."

The hidden challenge that high performers face is that we can never have enough of what we don't really need. So we're chasing success, money, recognition, profit, fame—yet deep down inside something is missing. Despite myriad accomplishments we're unhappy. What's more, we have no one to talk to about it, no one who can commiserate. Who's going to take seriously the deep-seated unhappiness of someone who appears to have it all?

An article in the *UK Telegraph* profiled businessman and philanthropist John Caudwell, who is worth an estimated two billion pounds. In the profile, he frankly spoke about his low level of happiness, claiming that on a scale of one to ten, he's usually around a two.

"If you think having money means that life is going to be fantastic all the time, that you can move from one wonderful thing to the next even more wonderful thing," he said, "then you need to recalibrate."

Here's the thing: it's not that success leads to unhappiness. But it often leads to a lack of fulfillment. Maybe, as a child, your survival or your family's survival meant that you took on responsibilities that surpassed your age. You spent your life becoming overly responsible and extremely dependable. You over work and have trouble relaxing and having fun.

So the very skills, talents, and drive that make you so successful are actually what stand in the way of true ful-

fillment. Simply succeeding isn't enough to fill the happiness void; but, unfortunately, that's all top performers know how to do.

Many ultra-successful people can't seem to find happiness and fulfillment. They expect that the massive volume of time and talent they pour into their ventures will reap emotional benefits as well as financial ones. *What am I doing all this for, if not to be happy? Where is happiness, if not at the end of a long journey to success?*

Over years of coaching ultra-achievers, I've seen similar patterns of behavior that go really deeper—patterns written far back in childhood.

Xavier is a highly successful hedge fund manager who manages billions of dollars of investments. He built his fund out of nothing; he has friends who lead governments in several countries. He has beautiful homes, he travels constantly and—on the outside at least—an amazing life.

Xavier arrived in the United States as a teenager. He was bright and was accepted to good schools but he felt that he was never truly accepted by his peers because of he was born in another country. Some of the kids back then mocked him and bullied him by calling him an immigrant.

And four decades later it seems that no amount of money, success or status has allowed him to let go of that label that he continues to feel envelop him.

The wound that was created at a young age had a profound impact on him, and shaped the course of his life. All his life, he heard the message: you don't fit in. This became his focus point, the thing he always saw in every

situation, without realizing it, just like I always saw a lack of approval and praise.

He worked hard to fill the void of a constant sense of rejection. His hard work brought him immense success, but it didn't bring him what he truly wanted; he's never felt like he fit in.

Hurt by the taunts of kids who didn't know any better, his bullies wrote a script for him that he has lived into his whole life. That script was never real.

You can never have enough of what you don't really need.

For many entrepreneurs and leaders, it turns out that trying to prove yourself can result in real success in business and life.

However, there's a cost.

Non-stop achievement will make you rich. It may make you famous. It'll make you respected, admired, and praised. The one thing it can't provide is fulfillment. Achievement itself won't fulfil you; what you do with the freedoms afforded by your achievements is what will earn you fulfillment.

Leaving A Legacy

Most people have heard of the Nobel Peace Prize. Few know of it's creator, a Swedish chemist, engineer, inventor and businessman named Alfred Nobel. He was a chemist by training who discovered that by mixing nitroglycerin and diatomaceous earth, one could make stable sticks of high explosives, known as trinitro-

toluene. It's known more commonly as dynamite. He marketed his invention as "Nobel's Safety Blasting Powder" and made a fortune.

One day his brother died and the local newspaper accidentally printed Alfred's obituary instead of his brother's. The headline read: "The Merchant of Death is Dead." The article went on to say, "Dr. Alfred Nobel, who became rich by finding ways to kill more people faster than ever before, died yesterday."

He was horrified. He had no wife, no children. His legacy, as it stood, would be remembered as one of destruction. He continued his work in explosives, but funneled his dynamite fortune into a trust. Upon his death, it was revealed that the money was to be used to reward and fund scientists annually, no matter their nationality. The Nobel Foundation was born. And ever since, millions of dollars a year have been awarded to further the cause of peace.

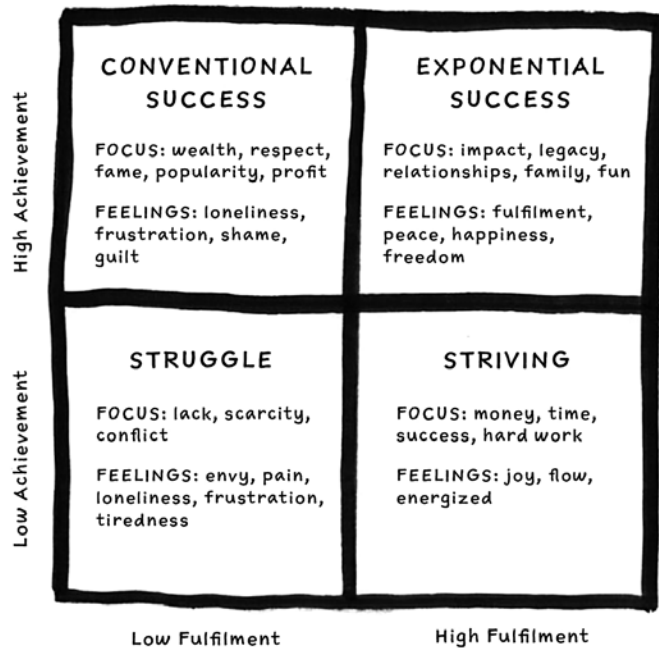
What a legacy.

How fortunate Alfred was to have an insight into the impact of his own death—*before* it happened.

Glimpsing a future where his only remembered contribution was death and destruction refocused his energy toward creating a lasting and positive impact. His vast fortune could have been spent, or passed down to family, but it wasn't; it was used for the pursuit of human discovery and achievement.

Extraordinary top performers often find themselves stuck at a high level of achievement but a low level of fulfilment. Something is missing and they can't figure out what; they're unhappy, and they can't figure out why.

They're unmatched in achieving money and respect; they have no idea how to achieve fulfillment, the one blank spot in an otherwise picture-perfect puzzle.



The space on the Achievement-Fulfillment grid where they exist is Conventional Success. Look at the focus in that space: wealth, respect, status, popularity, profit. Extraordinary top performers need no help in accumulating those things. They're experts in that regard. The shift from low fulfillment to high fulfillment requires a completely different focus: on impact, legacy, relationships, contribution.

To be fulfilled, you can no longer just focus on money and status. They won't fill the void that's making you un-

happy. They're wonderful, yes, and they're the wonderful perks of high achievement, but a focus on them alone at the level a high performer has already achieved, leads to a conventional life.

As Gay Hendricks, executive coach to more than 800 executives at Fortune 500 firms, wrote:

As we climb up the ladder of career and success, we tend to get attached to the perks that come from our skills: money, security, respect and a clear path to advancement. Slowly but surely, we start to become afraid to move out of our comfort zone into something that makes our hearts sing.

We settle for something respectable but not inspiring.

Your legacy, and how you contribute to it, are up to you. Know that what got you to where you are—rich, influential, and respected—is now what's holding you back. You've been so focused on achieving conventional success to fill the fulfillment void that it's tough to switch your focus to what will be here after you're gone. It's imperative, however, if you want to move from conventional to exponential success.

A shift from exclusively focusing on the question "How can I make more money?" to "How can I change the world?" is an important step towards exponential success. It's when, despite the narrative you've lived into for most of your life—and despite the long-standing reasons you've been unable to find happiness—you finally begin to create a sense of lasting fulfillment.

Provocative Questions to Help You Challenge Guilty Secret #2

These questions are designed to provoke your thinking. Use them to look for gaps in how you see the world. Read them and then close the book. Let your intuition make the connections it needs for your answers to arise.

1. What contribution would you love to make?
2. What world will you leave behind when your time here is over?
3. What legacy will bear your name?
4. What will you create that will last beyond your own lifetime?
5. What transformational ideas do you want to be remembered for?
6. What successful collaborations do you want to be remembered for?



“I’m bored. I could do this with my eyes closed.”

When I first met Andrea she was a super successful entrepreneur and mother, happily married for many years. She ran three separate businesses, two of which were each making over a million dollars per year. She was respected and admired, with the the financial success to show for her achievements.

By any conventional measure, Andrea shouldn’t have been surfing on a jobs listing site. But she was bored. She had a great marriage, an amazing child on her way to college, and three businesses that she loved. But over two decades of work in her field left her with the feeling, *I’m bored. I could do this with my eyes closed.* She had more than twenty five years of business success behind her, but something was missing. And that morning she was scanning job ads online.

It turned out that was the morning, I'd placed an ad for an extraordinary personal assistant. And she immediately sent me a lengthy email applying for the job. When she told her friends that she was seeking a job as my personal assistant, they thought she was crazy. But Andrea was missing something from her life. She was able to run her businesses with just a little attention each week and she was craving a way to make a bigger impact in the world. Remember that sense of excitement you had when your business was just beginning to take off? That sense of joy—no matter how many hours you worked? That sense of flow—hours could pass without you noticing and you'd feel more energized at the end of the day than when you began? Ever notice that those feelings are long gone? Well, they were for Andrea.

Now, I knew I'd written an extraordinary job ad because because I had over 60 responses. But there was one that stood out for me because she so clearly did not 'need' to work for me. I could literally feel her desire to make a contribution from the text of her email.

We were sold on each other after a single meeting and Andrea has been the Focus Director for my business for over two years now. She still runs her three businesses on the side but now she's as full of energy as was twenty years ago. She's part of a company that literally makes an impact on people's lives and she loves it. She works more hours than I could possibly pay her for. And she spends more time taking care of our clients than I could have ever imagined.



Entrepreneurs and leaders are often innovators, mavericks and rule-breakers. They challenge the status quo on a regular basis. Why do I do things this way? What would happen if I did things differently?

Invisible Rules

The Paradox of Success is that your very success takes you on a path away from one of your greatest mindsets because you become trapped by a new status quo. You know that feeling of being locked in to paying for multiple homes, new cars, the kids' school fees or spousal support, plus making payroll every month?

People who follow rules hardly ever make it to the top of the success mountain. And you might even see that it's mostly a construct of your own fears and anxieties but from the top of that mountain, it's a lot harder than it used to be—to innovate, to be a maverick or a rule-breaker.

You can't be outstanding if you don't stand out, you're a rule-breaker by habit but as you become more and more successful, you actually began to create invisible rules of your own without realizing it. Your new rules became the

rules. You built yourself the same social construct you originally broke out of.

Paula is a Stanford law professor. When we first met, she was at the very top of her game, professionally. There was no one else in the world who could do what she did, and her reputation exceeded her qualifications. However, she'd begun to realize there was nowhere else for her to climb, no higher peak to reach for. She was quite literally at the summit of her chosen career. This would have been fine, but the problem was, she was bored. Lecturing simply wasn't exciting anymore. She was teaching the same stuff semester in and semester out; the energy had gone out of her career, and she wasn't inspired anymore. Once again, when she came to me, I heard those exact words: "I'm bored. I could do this with my eyes closed."

There were opportunities for her outside academia, of course; she was a highly sought-after speaker and lecturer. But being a full-time professor brought with it a certain inflexibility. To do her job, she needed to be present at Stanford, and this left little opportunity for growth on the side. She wanted to branch out and lecture on the side, but she was rooted by fear; if she left her ultra-successful position at the university, where would that leave her reputation? She'd already spent her career building it to an unmatched level; how could she do it again? Did she even want to?

Being able to say she was a Stanford law professor was a huge part of her identity, too. She was paralyzed by the fear of walking away from her reputation.

When I take on a client like this, the first thing I do is get a sense of the scope of their dreams. There's al-

ways a limit, some made-up boundary, that's been fabricated by years of conditioning and the positive reinforcement of success on a certain path. Straying from a path that's brought you incredible wealth and repute is absolutely terrifying for most people, and especially for top performers, to whom even the possibility of failure is anathema.

It took months of coaching for Paula to see that this fear holding her back was a false trap she'd created for herself. It wasn't real. She wasn't even bound by the constraints of her career; she could be and do anything, really, she just hadn't conceived of an option besides teaching.

I asked her what her dream job was. If she could do absolutely anything in the world, what would it be? How would she contribute in her dream reality?

She told me that she'd always had a dream of consulting with leaders at the World Bank. She wanted to advise and guide the world's top financial experts and have a more immediate hand in the workings of the global economy. When I asked her why she didn't just go do that, then, she responded that she didn't believe she could. How could she be a consultant at the level she dreamed of, without first building that career over decades?

When I'm coaching people, what I'm really doing is breaking up their thought patterns. I'm challenging the pathways their brains are comfortable in, and forcing them to form new ones. With coaching, she began to see that, rather than being trapped in a role that bored her, she was actually perfectly positioned to move into consulting. As an academic, she'd built up a huge array

of contacts in just about every field imaginable, but especially in government and finance. And she'd built a reputation that preceded her no matter which room she walked into, which door she knocked on. She had only to go out and do exactly what she dreamed—but first, she had to let go of the false traps that had been holding her back.

Within a few months, she had landed her first client at the World Bank. These days, she advises two of the top leaders in the organization. Her career looks nothing like what it did a year ago; she's earned even more acclaim, and her reputation continues to skyrocket.



A Cure For Your Pain

Cynthia Kersey is an author whose books have sold over 500,000 copies worldwide. But a few years back she was at a low point in her life, grieving and heartbroken because her marriage had broken up. Desperate for a fresh perspective, she spoke to Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat for Humanity. “When you have a great pain in your life, you need a greater purpose,” he told her. Why don’t you build a house for a family in need?”

Cynthia asked herself a simple yet powerful question

“How many houses would I have to build to get rid of this pain in my life?” The number 100 felt bigger than her pain. She wrote, “I would think about these families that don’t even have a place to live and that would get me out of bed.” And that year she raised \$200,000 toward her goal.

A couple of years later, she was about to turn 50—a fact she was rather depressed about! When she heard that the son of a friend had, for his bar mitzvah, asked people to donate money to help build a school in Uganda, she found a new purpose. For her birthday that year, she invited 100 people and asked them to each donate some money instead of giving a gift. By the end of the night, they’d raised \$25,000, enough money to build a school in Africa.

Cynthia was astonished and soon after, founded The Unstoppable Foundation—an organization that has now built dozens of schools across Africa, changing the lives of countless children forever. The Foundation also helps women become entrepreneurs, strengthening communities from the inside out by empowering its members to create their own wealth.

The pain of her situation, provided a lightning bolt of deep reflection. And that was the moment that Cynthia shook herself out of the life of boredom and frustration she’d been stuck in. She created a whole new paradigm for contribution, and added a new frontier to her career path.

Sarah was running a \$20 million business when we met. She’d founded the company in her twenties. From the outside, she couldn’t have looked more suc-

cessful. On the inside, though, she was bored. “I could do this with my eyes closed,” she told me. “I miss having a community of high performers around me.” She’d started something when she was young, and her natural talents had built it into something huge, but it was no longer what she truly wanted to be doing; it didn’t inspire her. She loved working with people and solving problems, so she’d decided to sell the business and become a coach/consultant instead. That’s how she found me.

She’d begun the process of launching a consulting business by the time we met. I looked at her materials and I was frank with her. Her website was boring. It was predictable and dull, and it blended invisibly into the huge crowd of consultants and coaches out there vying for clients. This was an exceptionally talented woman with a world-class mind and skill set; why was she presenting herself in this way?

We began a series of powerful conversations. Instead of answering her questions about how to grow her new business, I helped her create some new, more powerful questions to live into. Through these conversations, she came to the realization that her greatest gifts were ones she’d already fulfilled at a young age—that her greatest qualification was who she was as a business owner, and her personal history of success. “You have a built-in pool of 20 or so clients who can kick off a brilliant specialized coaching program,” I told her, “and it’s your own senior leadership team.”

This blew her mind. She’d been under the impression that her ideal client was anyone who would pay her; she

was still shooting for conventional success, the simple accumulation of money and customers and experience. She’d forgotten that she’d already built a foundation of freedom with her existing company, and her mindset could shift from wealth-building to inspiration.

She began to focus was on what really ignited her passion and funneled her talents and experience best. We crafted a lifestyle for her where she’d work just three days a week. Mondays are now a free day for her to do whatever she wishes. Tuesdays to Thursdays, she coaches and mentors her senior team to empower them to take her business to new levels. And on Fridays she has one private consulting client and one non-profit to guide and advise to create the contribution she really wants to make.

She’s working less than ever before, because she’s now leaving the work to her increasingly capable team. And she’s begun an MBA at an Ivy League business school, where she’s once again surrounded by a community of top performers.

The problem with being ultra-capable and ultra-successful is that you can’t see the limitations of the world you’ve created for yourself. Everyone else around you assumes naturally that you know exactly where to go next. When this isn’t the case, you’re rudderless, and seemingly trapped by your world.

The trap is your own mindset. Instead, boredom and frustration can become your new compass, to help you break free and in doing so, discover paths you didn’t yet know existed.

Provocative Questions to Help You Challenge Guilty Secret #3

These questions are designed to provoke your thinking. Use them to look for gaps in how you see the world. Read them and then close the book. Let your intuition make the connections it needs for your answers to arise.

1. What is boring you most, right now?
2. What are you tolerating?
3. What is your greatest frustration?
4. What's missing from your life?
5. How do you keep it out?
6. What could you do that would have people call you a rule-breaker and a maverick, once again?



“I’m so good at solving problems I unconsciously create new ones just to solve them.”

Teo Alfero is the founder of Wolf Connection, a wolf sanctuary that takes care of 30 wolves and uses them to help rehabilitate at-risk youth.

Teo comes from Argentina, and he spent most of his youth and young adulthood outdoors. After a period in the army, he focused on rock climbing and outdoor adventures. He constantly came across kids that benefited immensely from being mentored in the outdoors.

For many years, he headed in a different direction, as he became a successful entrepreneur. But sometimes your true calling simply comes calling for you. And one day, he offered to help friend who was struggling to take care of a young wolf-dog he’d been given. A while later, an old lady—the owner of a dozen wolf-dogs — died and the local dog pound where Teo had been

volunteering was about to have them put down because they couldn't cope with them. Teo couldn't conscience this happening and before he knew what he was doing, he told them, I'll take care of them!

He quit his job, sold what he owned and moved to a plot of land, north of Los Angeles, where he could take care of these animals. He used his background to develop programs for at-risk youth that took them outdoors and acted like a rite of passage to help them build a sense of confidence and accomplishment.

Wolf Connection is a non-profit, and because Teo is such a unique individual, he has built incredible connections with celebrities in nearby Hollywood. They have helped raise funds and awareness and put a spotlight on the cause that is so dear to this man's heart.

Now, when these celebrity partners come visit the ranch, Teo is the only one who can spend time with them. Because Teo is a lightning rod of inspiration he's the one they come to see. Teo spends a portion of his time with them, doing the things only he can do, and bringing resources to the organization like only he can. However, he also feels the need to have his hands deep in the day-to-day of the organization. It's his baby, and he can't step away from all the little pieces of running it, even though his team could handle that part perfectly.

White Knight Syndrome

Top performers find it difficult to step back and let others do what they do so well. After all, one of your gifts is that you are good at scanning the horizon for danger.

You become attuned to potential problems and you anticipate them so you can fix them before they grow out of control. You become incredibly good at solving them, too. Every time you do, every time you fix something, you get a little thrill of accomplishment. You start to feed on this because you relish the feeling of saving the day and so you unconsciously create problems where none existed, just so you can solve them. We call this White Knight Syndrome.

The problem with being a White Knight is that your team become disempowered and are reticent to make decisions. Why solve a problem, when your Superhero leader will save the day, anyway?



What's detrimental about this mindset is that, with so much practice looking for problems, soon problems are all you can see. You fall into a trap many entrepreneurs are stuck in – problem-solving mode. Your whole existence in your business is putting out fires, and when there aren't any fires to put out, you unconsciously create some so that you can save the day. You begin to equate solving problems with getting things done. They're not the same thing. If you're in problem-solving mode, then all your time is taken up with fixing what's wrong. You have no time to work at the higher level of creating a

more powerful vision.

Plus, when you're the White Knight you force other members of your team to retreat into undesirable roles. After all, when you play the role of 'hero' in every situation the only roles left are 'victim' and 'villain'. It's the classic storytelling triangle that humans naturally fall into. You'll look around at your team one day and wonder why no one is living up to the potential they showed when they were hired. It's because every time you charged into a situation to save the day, you took away their power; you turned them into victims rather than empowering them to greatness.

Your shift to exponential success comes as you let go of your need to be the hero—and instead, you start to create more heroes. Help your team to save the day themselves; empower them to swoop in and tackle challenges.

As Teo began to step outside of problem-solving mode and enter visionary mode, he began to see that the scope of what he could do was so much bigger than saving the day on the ground at Wolf Connection. And as he indulged his visionary side, the side of him that had thrived outdoors on his adventures so long ago came alive once again.

There's a reason the brightest people in the world retreat to nature; the best ideas, the most expansive thinking, happens away from people and out in the wild. And Teo has moved beyond his initial vision of creating a center to support at-risk youth that relied on a steady influx of donations and attention. He's now building a retreat center that will be self-sustaining, and will actually generate the funds to support itself indefinitely, where

young people can grow and learn alongside the wolves in a beautiful setting.

Before, he was constantly solving problems. Where are we going to get the next donation from? How will we pay for the resources the animals need? Where will our next volunteer group come from? Now, he's able to step into the unique lightning-rod role that he was born for, and he can let his team solve the daily challenges as they arise.

Teo has stopped being the only superhero in his organization and started creating superheroes within his team. You don't need to save the day in every single moment. Save the White Knight mode for the big stuff—like creating the vision that makes it all possible.

Thriving On A Challenge

Another challenge that arises when you're energized by challenges and threats is that you sometimes avoid things — taxes, relationships, income, etc. — until they reach problem-level status.

There's a deep-seated thrill to know that, when time is tight and tension is great, you can deliver. It's like a high when you swoop in and solve the problem at the last minute. You thrive on the adrenaline. You tell yourself that you work best under stress. And it does work—for a while. You can achieve a high level of conventional success by constantly working at a red-alert stress state.

And as a high performer, if you're not playing a big enough game, you'll actually often screw up the one you're playing so you'll have something to work on.

Provocative Questions to Help You Challenge Guilty Secret #4

These questions are designed to provoke your thinking. Use them to look for gaps in how you see the world. Read them and then close the book. Let your intuition make the connections it needs for your answers to arise.

1. What's working about your business/life-style/family/relationship?
2. What's not working about your business/life-style/family/relationship?
3. When was a time in your life that you felt most alive? What were you doing?
4. Why are you committed to doing the things that you 'say' you don't want to do?
5. What's the upside of keeping your problems?
6. What's the downside of getting rid of your problems?



4 More Secrets of Extraordinary Top Performers...

So far, you've seen and heard just half of the story. In the complete book, you'll read the four other secrets as well as much more detail on the 4% Shift.

Guilty Secret #5

"My big mission, that inspires so many people, doesn't inspire me any more." And the story of the man who sold his \$100 million dollar business...

Guilty Secret #6

"If I stop working so hard it will all go away." And the story of the woman who turned down \$10 million dollars...

Guilty Secret #7

"I'm not lonely but I feel very alone." And the story of the lonely bomb disposal expert...

Guilty Secret #8

"I'm exhausted but I won't accept help." And the story of the Olympic athlete selling calendars to fund her Olympic bid...

The 4% Shift



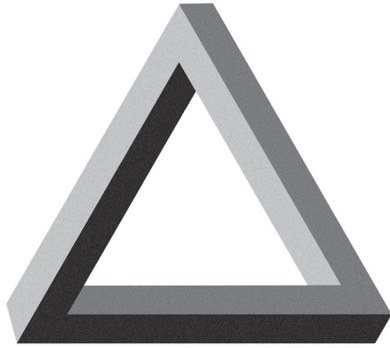
Stephen Kotler has studied elite athletes who achieve “impossible” athletic feats on a regular basis. These are the kind of people who jump off a mountain in a wing-suit or who surf the world’s highest waves.

Being a leader or an entrepreneur can sometimes feel like life or death but for these athletes, the tiniest slip-up could actually result in their death. And yet they are high-achievers who want to continually push themselves to perform at a world-class level.

What Kotler discovered is that to perform at an elite level, to keep building your skills and yet to not push yourself so far that you risk your own death, the challenges you face need to be just 4% greater than your skills. Because this will trigger flow and high level achievement.

The problem is that a 4% increase in challenge is too high for the average person but actually too low for most high performers who try to push far past it and end up limiting themselves.

When I’m coaching a high performer the most important word I hear is not ‘Wow!’ but ‘Hmmm....’ The job of a top performer is to seek out the tiniest shifts that make the biggest impact. You’ll discover—once the book is published—how applying The 4% Rule in your life can result in a huge impact...



**Be the first to know
when *The Success Paradox*
is published.**

RichLitvin.com/successparadox

About Rich Litvin

A highly-acclaimed thought leader and Success Coach, Rich is co-author of the book *The Prosperous Coach*, which has sold over 30,000 copies. He is the founder of The Confident Woman's Salon and The High-Achieving Introvert Project. He is a member of the Association of Transformational Leaders. And his big picture is to mobilise \$100 million for charity, through his connections.



A scientist by training, he has a background in Behavioral Physiology and Psychology. He trained to teach at the University of Oxford and he has a master's degree in Educational Effectiveness & Improvement.

Rich has lived and worked in eight countries and on four continents. His wife, Monique, is an award-winning singer/songwriter. They are the proud parents of two little boys. An introvert at heart, Rich still gets nervous walking into a party. He has at various times in his life been extremely talented and high-performing and at others a complete mess.

Rich gives talks on The Success Paradox and The Power of Deep Coaching. Several times a year, he runs a private evening Salon in Los Angeles and London for extraordinary top performers.

For more about Rich visit www.RichLitvin.com.

Exponential Success

Rich Litvin is an expert at taking high-achieving entrepreneurs to the greatest levels of success. He runs a boutique leadership consultancy serving a select group of world leaders. He provides the world's most influential people with the guidance, support and coaching to achieve what they cannot imagine on their own.

Our clients are high performers, functioning at what appears to be the top of their game. They include Olympic athletes, Presidential candidates, Hollywood film directors, Special Forces operatives and serial entrepreneurs. They create exceptional results, hyper-growth and remarkable products and services.

Most top performers lack an experienced, independent trusted adviser to whom they can reveal their complete truth. And they are surrounded by people who have neither the skill nor the confidence to guide them to a higher level

We understand the high level challenges you face and the effect they have on you. We challenge your thinking. We don't answer your questions. Instead, we create the questions that catapult your life.

Rich works with just 5 one-on-one clients a year. Many clients are by referral.

**To learn more and apply, visit
www.RichLitvin.com/clients**

Exponential Community

Being a leader can be lonely. And if you're the most interesting person in the room, you're in the wrong room. Which is why Rich founded 4PC — a highly curated community of the top 4% of coaches and entrepreneurs.

Our members include a consultant to The White House, a coach to leaders at The World Bank, an ex-navy bomb-disposal expert, a top surgeon, a woman who was the Assistant Chief Scientist of the Human Performance Wing of the Air Force Research Laboratory and the CEO of a Wolf Sanctuary!

Membership is for a year at a time and many members renew their membership—year after year. 4PC is designed to be uncomfortable and challenging. You should be a little intimidated by us. And we should be a little intimidated by you. And that's not an interesting concept, it's an entrance requirement.

4PC is by application only and—if accepted—we ask you to risk the success you've become to get to your next level of success. Space is limited to 40 select members and there are usually only a few spots available each year.

**To learn more and apply, visit
www.RichLitvin.com/4PC**

*Great work is done
by people who are not afraid
to be great.*

— *Fernando Flores*

“Rich is a man of deep authenticity, passion & courage. He is also one of the most skilled & intuitive coaches around. I strongly recommend Rich to anyone looking to take their lives to the next level.”

—Jamie Smart, best-selling author of *Clarity and Results*

LEADERSHIP IS LONELY. AND IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY.

The Success Paradox: Everything you've done to be as successful as you are today is precisely what is holding you back from your next level of success. Many high performers have a life of achievement but still feel like something is missing, deep down inside. Success can be lonely because high performers rarely have anyone in their life to whom they can reveal their complete truth. In the quiet of their mind, these extraordinary leaders experience a range of guilty secrets:

- *“People admire me but I feel lazy.”*
- *“I have lots of money and recognition but I'm not happy.”*
- *“I'm bored. I could do this with my eyes closed.”*
- *“I'm so good at solving problems I unconsciously create new ones just to solve them.”*
- *“My big mission—that inspires so many people—doesn't inspire me any more.”*
- *“If I stop working so hard it will all go away.”*
- *“I'm not lonely but I feel very alone.”*
- *“I'm exhausted but I won't accept help.”*

The Success Paradox teaches top performers that having the right questions—rather than the answers they are seeking—can catapult their life into the realm of exponential success.

RICH LITVIN is the president and founder of The Litvin Group, a boutique leadership consultancy based in London and Los Angeles. His clients include Olympic athletes, Presidential candidates, Hollywood film directors, Special Forces operatives and serial entrepreneurs. Learn more at RichLitvin.com